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Select Committee on Wood Supply  
C/O Office of the Clerk,  
Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick  
P.O. Box 6000, Fredericton  
New Brunswick, E3B 5H1

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To the members of the Select Committee on Wood Supply:

On behalf of the Ecology Action Centre I would like to register our strong opposition to the recommendations contained in the Jaakko Pöyry Study on the future of Crown land management in New Brunswick. There are a many good reasons why these self-serving recommendations from the pulp and paper industry should be rejected outright by the New Brunswick government. I am sure you have heard many by now but I would like to highlight a few in particular:

- The conversion of up to 40% of Crown Land forests from a native mixed-wood Acadian forest to an agri-forestry plantation is biologically indefensible. Such a conversion from a natural to an unnatural state will have significant negative impacts to native biodiversity and wildlife through increased habitat loss.
- Unduly restricts government from managing publicly owned Crown land for a variety of values and objectives and instead locks-in pulpwood production as the overriding purpose and use of the forest resource.
- Seeks binding guarantees for increasing amounts of wood fibre from Crown land and for increasing levels of government subsidies while providing no guarantees for employment levels for New Brunswickers. They get more wood and taxpayers get more bills meanwhile, as technology evolves, there will almost certainly be a continued corresponding reduction in employment.
- Places government in a position of legal jeopardy (i.e. can be sued for compensation) if wood supply objectives for the pulp mills are not met and/or if new community-based allocations or new wildlife conservation measures are undertaken that reduce fibre supply to the mills.
- Seeks to eliminate government oversight and regulatory authority. The fox is asking to guard the henhouse unsupervised.
- Virtually eliminates government's ability to apply any significant future wildlife conservation measures on Crown forestland such as establishing new protected areas, increasing the size of riparian buffer zones, etc. On this point it is important to note that according to World Wildlife Fund Canada's recent Nature Audit, at only 21% New Brunswick ranks dead last behind every other province and territory in the country in terms of meeting its national commitments to complete a network of protected areas (*Tri-Council Agreement, 1992*). Obviously more land needs to be set aside for New Brunswick to meet its outstanding conservation commitments and the measures proposed in the Jaakko Pöyry report will make that impossible.

In conclusion, the misguided and extremely self-serving recommendations contained in the Jaakko Pöyry report amounts to a wholesale takeover of New Brunswick's Crown land forests in order to increase profits for the big multinational pulp companies while increasing the costs to taxpayers and dramatically decreasing the long-term options and benefits of Crown forests to New Brunswickers. It also virtually guarantees a decline in wildlife over the long term and will most likely see employment levels drop as well.

For these reasons and many others we urge the New Brunswick government to reject the recommendations of the Jaakko Pöyry report and to instead direct forestry policies towards maximizing sustainable benefits for local communities, for native wildlife and for the ecological health of the forest. As a native son (Bathurst, NB) I can assure you that, in the long run, the province of New Brunswick and the lives of New Brunswickers will be the better for it.

Sincerely yours,  
Raymond J Plourde  
Wilderness Coordinator  
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