

# Proposing a Forest Sector Sustainability Table

## DRAFT DISCUSSION PAPER

### *Introduction*

Environment Canada has proposed the creation of sector tables to bring stakeholders together to establish a cooperative, long-term sustainability agenda based upon environmental need, competitiveness considerations and economics. The forest sector is well suited to the establishment of a national, results-oriented sector table. Sustainability is part of the industry's everyday business reality – indeed a cornerstone of the industry's social license to operate. The Canadian forest industry's commitment to continuous improvement in reducing its environmental footprint is evidenced by its national and global leadership on issues ranging from forest certification to climate change to air and water issues. Both the federal and provincial governments have significant responsibilities with our sector in the environmental arena.

As a continuation of our exploration of this approach, the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) has prepared this discussion paper for the Deputy Ministers of Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada outlining our views on key considerations regarding the establishment of a Forest Sector Sustainability Table.

### *1.0 Objectives*

The objectives of the Forest Sector Table and its associated sub-tables would be to:

- Ensure sound and responsible environmental goals and standards are established in a manner that is informed by competitiveness, economic and social considerations;
- Build consensus around the development of an environmental agenda for the forest sector that is world-class both in terms of the levels of performance it achieves and the efficiency with which it achieves them;
- Improve overall predictability by operating in the context of this environmental agenda and by providing a single window between federal and provincial governments, community leaders and the industry; and
- Provide a national forum where key decision-makers and influencers share and learn from one another as they strive towards setting the sector's sustainable development agenda.

FPAC is ready and willing to explore, with the federal government and other stakeholders, the opportunity of being the first sector to establish and pilot the sector table concept. We believe a number of existing multi-stakeholder initiatives within our sector would provide a solid foundation for testing and optimizing the approach.

## **2.0 Overall Approach**

The structure of this process would include two key operating levels:

### **2.1 Forest Sector Table**

A standing Forest Sector Table would have the following responsibilities:

- Set overall vision
- Establish key priorities
- Create sub-tables
- Define negotiating mandates, timelines of sub-tables
- Synthesize and make decisions on recommendations

### **2.2 Issue-based Sub-tables**

The following approach is proposed for sub-tables:

- Individual sub-tables established for individual priority areas.
- Each sub-table created for set timeframe with specific deliverables, and an emphasis on early action.
- Each sub-table to deliver recommendations to the Forest Sector Table on an innovative long-term approach to managing that priority area.

## **3.0 Forest Sector Table**

### **Mandate**

A Forest Sector Table would work to prioritize environmental decision-making in a manner that is informed by economic and competitiveness issues. By taking an integrated approach to environmental management, the Forest Sector Table could maximize opportunities and co-benefits as the sector addresses its long-term environmental priorities. The Forest Sector Table would provide the opportunity for a 'single window' for environmental prioritization and deliberation between federal/provincial/industry and community leaders.

FPAC believes that an effective model for the Forest Sector Table would be to work towards the establishment of negotiated agreements between industry and respective governments on key environmental issues.

We see this high-level engagement occurring twice per year to direct and guide the sub-table efforts.

## Potential Participants

FPAC has been asked to suggest participants for consideration by the federal government. In identifying potential candidates we have considered the following points:

- To ensure that members have the authority and perspective necessary for the table to meet its objectives, participation from senior representatives of the various parties must be secured.
- Federal government participation should cover the three key departments that FPAC works with in the areas of environment and competitiveness – Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada and Industry Canada.
- Industry participation should include the FPAC President and industry CEOs from both Pulp and Paper and Wood Products sub-sectors. Also, the geographic diversity of the sector's activities should be reflected in the industry representation on the table.
- Provincial representation should be aligned with the significance of the sector within the provinces (i.e. British Columbia, Quebec and either Alberta or Ontario at the table). Furthermore, a mix of forestry and environment department representatives would be beneficial.
- ENGO representation should be national in scope and should have a credible voice on key issues facing the industry with broad stakeholders. Expertise of participants should be a combination of forestry and manufacturing-related environment issues.
- First Nations representation should have a national perspective and a mechanism for broader outreach with aboriginal peoples.

Total membership: **15 – 17 senior participants**

Co-Chairs: George Anderson, DM, Natural Resources Canada  
Avrim Lazar, President & CEO, FPAC  
Provincial DM (TBD)

3 Federal Gov't: George Anderson, DM, Natural Resources Canada (Co-Chair)  
Samy Watson, DM, Environment Canada  
N. Yeates, ADM, Industry Canada

3 Industry: Avrim Lazar, FPAC (Co-Chair)  
2 CEOs

4 – 6 Prov. Gov't: TBD, mix of DMs from forestry, environment from BC, Quebec, and Ontario or Alberta. (1 DM as Co-Chair)

3 ENGO: Executive Director Levels selected. Some potential candidates would include: Friends of the Earth (B. Olivestri), WWF (M. Hummel or M. Russell), Sierra Club, Pembina, CPAWs (S. Karins).

2 First Nations: TBD

## **Rules of Engagement**

As with any multi-stakeholder process, a number of 'rules of engagement' could be defined to assist the proceedings. While it is often best to have these defined by the participants themselves, a number of examples could include:

*Each participant will:*

- Respect that all players represent their particular constituencies and interests;
- Recognize the federal and provincial governments authority to develop environmental protection measures in the public's interest;
- Support the goal to seek flexible approaches to protecting the environment; and
- Commit to support the sector table process through their full and consistent participation (strict policies on the use of alternates should be adopted).

### **3.0 Sub-Tables**

#### **Mandate**

It is expected that the Forest Sector Table would define the mandates of the individual sub-tables. Basic considerations for sub-table work should include:

- The need for a long-term approach;
- Consideration of the policy objectives and requirements of the federal and provincial governments;
- The technical and economic plans of the industry;
- Community/public concerns and those of Aboriginal groups.

Recommendations from the sub-tables would be made to the Forest Sector Table.

It is anticipated that 3 – 4 meetings per year of each sub-table may be necessary.

#### **Sub-Table Participants**

In general, we would expect participants of each sub-sector table to be different from the Forest Sector Table. Participant expertise should be aligned with the specific issue being discussed. For example, one would expect to have Health Canada and Environment Canada as the key federal departments on air issues and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans join Environment Canada on water issues. Also, one would expect different provincial governments, ENGOS, Aboriginals with expertise and interests on each key area/topic.

#### **Key Topics**

While it is important that the key topics be identified and prioritized by the Forest Sector Table, FPAC would propose the following sub-tables be considered:

- a. Air Quality
- b. Forest Sector Climate Change (Biomass, Renewable Energy, Forestry Sinks, Adaptation)
- c. Water
- d. Forestry (with Boreal emphasis)

Note: Air Quality will be captured through the upcoming launch of the Pulp and Paper Air Quality Forum scheduled for early February 2005. This multi-stakeholder forum could easily become the Air sub-table and would be well positioned to demonstrate early success of the overall sector table process.

#### **4.0 Proposed Forest Sector Table Roll Out**

FPAC proposes the following steps and target dates for the next 10 months:

- **Design Meeting (mid-December)**

It is proposed that a small team of representatives from each of the main stakeholder groups be struck to test the concept of the Forest Sector Table as soon as possible. Ultimately this group's feedback would provide critical advice on how, when and what key steps may be necessary to officially launch the Forest Sector Table.

- **Announcement of the Establishment of the Forest Sector Table (PaperWeek International 2005, Montreal)**

Paperweek International, which attracts more than 10,000 government, industry and interested organizations from over 40 countries, would make an excellent event from which to announce the establishment of a broader Forest Sector Table. The official announcement would also coincide with the first meeting of the Pulp and Paper Air Quality Forum.

- **Air Quality Forum Launch (February 7, 2005)**

This multi-stakeholder process is scheduled to be launched in early February and could be positioned as a first step in the road towards establishing a Forest Sector Table. The launch will be in conjunction with PaperWeek International, a major forest industry event in Canada.

- **Forest Sector Table Kick-Off Meeting (April, 2005)**

- **Potential Launch of other Sub-Tables (May, 2005)**

## ***5.0 Linkages to Other Processes***

It is our understanding that a Forest Sector Table would function within a broader structure of sector tables. Environment Canada has proposed the formation of approximately 7 sector tables. It has further proposed that Co-Chairs from each of these 7 sectors would come together to form a larger integrated table to address horizontal issues.

FPAC suggests that the Departments of Natural Resources Canada and Environment Canada adopt a systematic, measured approach to rolling out the sector tables and their associated sub-tables in order to gain valuable insight and knowledge, which can be built upon to continuously improve the sector table process. Furthermore, concentrating on early successes will assist in generating interest and support from other sectors and stakeholders on the approach.

It is expected that a horizontal table would look at cross-cutting environmental issues (i.e. Canadian Environmental Protection Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, etc) where there is broadly supported common ground amongst stakeholders. Determining the mandate, timing and expected outcomes of a horizontal table will be a time-consuming exercise linked in large part to the successful establishment of all seven sector tables. In order to launch the Forest Sector Table in a timely manner and build momentum around the sector table process, FPAC suggests that existing mechanisms be utilized for horizontal issues in the interim until all sector tables are activated.

## ***6.0 Other Issues***

### **Outreach to Other Stakeholders**

From our discussions with different stakeholders, we suggest that there is an urgent need to begin to broaden and strengthen support for the sector table concept as soon as possible. While the design team meeting mentioned in the roll-out proposal will begin this dialogue it will fall far short of the level of effort required to seek ENGO and Aboriginal stakeholder support. Alternative mechanisms need to be explored.