



SYNOPSIS

Annual Meeting of MegaForestais in Canada
Communities, Commerce and the Bioeconomy:
Innovations to Sustain the World's Forests

*October 15-20, 2017
Vancouver and Quadra Island
British Columbia, Canada*

Canada 



MEGAforestais
Canada 2017

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

MegaFlorestais is a truly unique forum: this informal network brings together leaders from forest agencies of the 12 most forested countries in the world and helps them to improve forest governance and find solutions to the challenges they encounter. Over its 10+ years of existence, it has quickly become an effective tool to accelerate learning, innovation, and implementation of a common suite of new policy decisions among forest agencies in three ways:

Informs: It creates a framework enabling forest leaders to exchange experiences and ideas in informal setting, influence their vision of the world, and come away with new information, concepts, approaches or policies that are useful in addressing the challenges they are facing.

Influences: It promotes the implementation of new practices and policies for strengthened forest governance and agencies. It enables forest leaders to be better informed and equipped for national and international negotiations.

Leads to impact: It reinforces leaders' ability to anticipate emerging issues and helps generate and disseminate lessons and best practices that can be used by other countries. It accelerates innovation and implementation of actions that support key policy objectives.

MegaFlorestais was created in 2005 by a small group of forest agency leaders that met at a conference in Beijing, China, convened by Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), the State Forestry Administration (SFA) of China and the Chinese Center for Agriculture Policy (CCAP) to discuss public forest tenure reform. These leaders from Brazil, China, Mexico, and the US reflected on the few opportunities they had to discuss the real issues facing forests in their respective countries, problems like climate change and forest fires; volatile forest products markets and their impact on forest management; deforestation; new demands and pressures on forest lands; and the decline in support for forest agencies within their own governments. The group has been meeting annually ever since and has been growing to include the most forested countries, collectively managing half of the world's forests.ⁱ



At a Glance

During this twelfth meeting of MegaFlorestais, held in Vancouver and Quadra Island, in British Columbia, Canada, leaders of public forest and land affairs agencies of 9 countries (Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, DR Congo, Peru, Sweden, and the USA) gathered to discuss innovations in local governance, community forest enterprises, and the bioeconomy. Several international experts participated in the meeting to share their expertise and stimulate thinking. As always, the meeting was held under Chatham House rules to ensure all participants could speak freely, without the pressure of politics.

At the meeting, leaders discussed the importance of recognizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and forest communities to their lands as a strategy for preventing or resolving land-related disputes; the value of encouraging community forest enterprise, estimated to be worth at least \$869 billion globally; the urgency of addressing gender justice in forestry and the benefits of greater representation of women within forest agencies; the value of addressing the role of technical and social innovations in forestry; and the necessity of constructing a viable and sustainable bioeconomy.

Further, the meeting underscored the value of trust and collaboration within forestry. As an international forum, MegaFlorestais strengthens global alliances and coalitions to advance sustainable forest management, builds trust across these partners, and allows them to share innovations. Such collaboration comes in the context of a world where forest agencies face cross-cutting challenges such as mitigating conflict over forests; the urgency of respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth to forests; the need to adapt to the presence of other sectors in forests while facing reduced budgets and decision-making capacities; and the need to construct a sustainable bioeconomy.



One leader noted that the meeting fostered important relationships, adding that "given the complexity of forests and global systems, there is a huge role for MegaFlorestais in fostering creative collaboration."

Another leader summed up how the network achieves this, noting: "it's been a really rich exchange, and I think I see that as the biggest benefit for MegaFlorestais: that by convening these countries together, it provides an incredible forum for dialogue, for information sharing, and for advancing the health of our forests and our communities globally."

Day 1 - Welcoming session

Glenn Mason, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Forest Service-Natural Resources Canada, and one of the co-chairs of MegaForestais, wished a hearty welcome to the group and noted that the meeting is taking place on the traditional unceded territories of the Musqueam people. He indicated that Canada was thrilled to celebrate with all participants its 150 anniversary and host for the second time a MegaForestais meeting in British Columbia.

The two current co-chairs of the MegaForestais network, Glenn Mason and **Sally Collins**, former Associate Chief of the US Forest Service, gave a short [presentation](#) on the network and highlighted its origin and purpose, which allows leaders to discuss informally critical issues facing the world's forests today, share ideas and innovations, and identify collective ways to better manage forests.

Tim Sheldan, Deputy Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Province of British Columbia, welcomed the group to British Columbia (BC). Forests cover 60% of the province (57Mha), with a timber harvesting land base of 22Mha. As such, forestry is BC's most important industry, supporting one in every seven jobs, accounting for 15% of all economic activity, and contributing to the wellbeing of dozens of communities.

John Innes, Dean of the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Forestry, welcomed the group to the university campus and was pleased that this meeting would provide a valuable opportunity to reflect on how institutions are responding to the present and adapting to the changes they face.

Finally, **Trevor Stuthridge**, Executive Vice President of FPIInnovations (a not-for-profit company that specializes in the creation of scientific solutions in support of the Canadian forest sector), welcomed participants and noted that industries are facing a difficult challenge—how to meet demand for products while also responding to the ability of forestry to lead the global bioeconomy and the fight against climate change.



Day 2 - Indigenous forestry and community forest enterprises: Innovation and strategies to scale



SESSION 1: STATUS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY FOREST ENTERPRISES (CFES)

The morning panels were chaired by **Andy White**, Coordinator of the Rights and Resources Initiative, who reminded the group of the three key reasons to talk about CFEs (defined as enterprises focusing on broad farming and forest activities): 1. It is a huge issue from a spatial footprint, with 500 million ha of forests owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the world or 30% of forests in low and middle income countries; 2. Hundreds of millions of people are affected, and CFEs have a great potential to encourage rights recognition and hence reduce poverty, restore peace, and conserve resources; and 3. This potential has been mostly ignored and underappreciated, with much more focus and support given to big operators.

While **Stefania Pizzirani**, Postdoctoral researcher at UBC's Faculty of Forestry, presented the highlights of [research](#) on CFEs at the global level and in British Columbia, **Duncan Macqueen**, Principal researcher on natural resources at the International Institute for Environment and Development, went through the [lessons from locally controlled forestry](#): its incredible scale (1.5 billion smallholders farmers and non-timber forest product (NTFP) users; generating about a trillion US dollars a year), and key elements for its creation, development and growth. Finally, **Richard Donovan**, Senior Vice President and Vice President of Forestry, Rainforest Alliance, showed the diverse forms [CFEs](#) can take depending on the national context and shared examples from around the world along with key elements for success.

The following discussions highlighted several key points:

- *how to deal with the increasing demands on forests (preservation, carbon, production, etc.)?* Participants indicated that they saw some success with "clustering" in the US (e.g., bringing together interests of different sectors like fishing and recreation) or in China as a result of the collective forest and tenure system reforms with a promotion of ecotourism activities and revenues for local farmers. Other elements to explore were: highlighting more clearly the services forests provide (e.g., clean water supplies) and that could be negatively impacted by other activities; or collaborating more closely with other key sectors like agriculture.

- *how to encourage CFEs?* There are several ways of doing this: promote the development of consortia, farmers unions or associations to increase capacity building; reduce the burden on forest family (e.g., China established centres that helped people register their lands); and leverage policy interventions or international commitments (e.g., restoration commitments should be seen as a great opportunity for the forest sector and forest-dependent communities).

PANEL: KEYS TO SUCCESS AND SCALE: REMOVING BARRIERS AND INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES TO ENABLE AND PROMOTE CFES

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The second panel dove into specific examples of CFEs starting with the experience of [Dryad](#) in Cameroon with **Cécile Ndjebet**, President of Cameroon Ecology. Dryad is a new system developed by international donors to provide financial support, training and technical assistance to sustainable CFEs through a network of locally-based implementing organizations monitoring performance of key indicators. It supported the development of various models bringing significant socio-economic benefits, and could be scaled up. **John Mason**, Founder and CEO of the Nature Conservation Research Centre in Ghana, presented the case of Ghana's Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) mechanism, an innovative natural resource governance and landscape-level planning tool that authorizes communities to manage their natural resources for economic and livelihood benefits. This model was developed over 25 years and has been powerful for women empowerment and scaling up.

Lastly, **Mayra Morales Aldana**, Vice-president of the Association of Forest Communities of Petén (ACOFOP), explained how [ACOFOP](#) has advanced the development of CFEs in the Northern part of Guatemala. As part of the Peace accords in the 90s, the government gave forest concessions to communities that are now harvesting timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). These activities have generated income and significantly improved their livelihoods, as well as better preservation of the Maya Biosphere with a drastic reduction in deforestation and forest fires. The three speakers emphasized that South-to-South opportunities to share learnings were key to scale up these successful models in other countries.

Participants gave additional examples of what their countries have done to support local management of natural resources, like the wood innovation grants awarded to communities to substantially expand and accelerate wood energy and wood products markets in the US; or the development of cooperatives operated by farmers in China. Other countries mentioned that their regulations were often hampering the development of CFEs, or indicated that reforms were underway. Most identified funding as a key issue and highlighted the importance of collaborating with other sectors or stakeholders (NGOs, private sector, international donors) to support these efforts. Sharing tools and initiatives with each other would also be critical to increase forest agencies' influence and impact.

"We, as the forest sector, need to enhance our engagement with other sectors to increase our influence over landscape level decision making and secure additional funds to do what we have to do. By engaging more with each other, we can advance our common agenda. We, the "Big Forests" must collaborate to move things forward."

- GLENN MASON

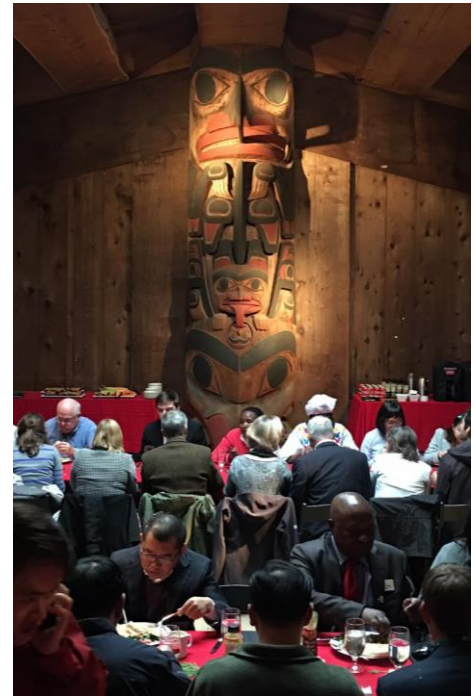
Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Forest Service-Natural Resources Canada

INNOVATION IDEAS SHOWCASE

Hosted by FPIInnovations in the beautiful Museum of Anthropology, **Trevor Stuthridge** opened the innovation ideas showcase by stating that innovation was absolutely essential to protect forests around the world. To do so, FPIInnovations has been working closely with the government, private sector and communities. Participants were given free time to enjoy the various displays from local First Nations groups and meeting organizers (Rights and Resources Initiative, Natural Resources Canada, Province of British Columbia, University of British Columbia, and FPIInnovations). Several students participated and presented their research to the group.

The innovation ideas showcase prompted a follow up discussion amongst leaders on innovations implemented in their countries they would like to share. Examples included:

- In Cameroon: implementation of a traceability system to track all the timber produced in the country from harvest to export and reduce illegal logging.
- In Peru: development of a national forestry and wildlife plan to implement the new policy and guidelines in collaboration with civil society: workshops held in 24 departments.
- In the state of Alaska in the US: using schools to engage youth to grow produce on site in areas where conditions are cold.
- In Sweden: leveraging the boom in tourism in forested areas to create guidelines and contractual models for agreements between landowners and entrepreneurs in tourism.



Day 3

SESSION 2: LOCAL INNOVATIONS IN FOREST GOVERNANCE

After flying to Campbell River, the group stopped at the Maritime Heritage Museum for a panel discussion on local innovations in forest governance. **Diane Nicholls**, Chief Forester of the Province of BC, Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, chaired the meeting. She first provided an [introduction to BC](#) and indicated that the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development's main responsibilities included forest tenure, resource use, wildfire management, timber sales and pricing, recreation, land use and data, and compliance.



Christine Gelowitz, CEO of the [Association of BC Forest Professionals](#) (ABCFP), spoke about the role of the association. First, all foresters must be a registered ABCFP member to practice forestry in BC and ensure forests are safeguarded for the public (95% of the province's land is owned by the BC government). The ABCFP acts as a regulator and holds its members accountable, as part of a larger forest governance management model. **Tim Ryan**, Chair of the [Forest Practices Board](#), explained the Board was created to address any public complaint regarding the way forests were managed by the government and the industry in BC, and serve as an independent watchdog for sound forests and range practices. It had to face many challenges but it is now an excellent model unique in Canada. **Domenico Iannidinardo**, Vice President of Sustainability at [TimberWest](#), spoke about the role of private sector actors. TimberWest is Western Canada's largest private timber and land management company, with more than 325,000 hectares of private land on Vancouver Island. It has been operating for over 100 years, and the forests it manages are twice as productive as public forests while responding to rigorous standards and preserving biodiversity. It is critical to incentivize forest managers to optimize their operations and invest.



Participants were curious to learn more about BC forestry and further details were provided on the qualifications to be a forester, annual audits, and the multiple tenure forms in the province. As many participating countries, BC forests are facing threats from oil, gas, and mining exploitation and forest land is sometimes withdrawn for a compensation once an environmental assessment has been made. Another big threat is fire, and BC just ended its largest fire season ever. According to the speakers, the biggest opportunities will come from working with First Nations and producing more innovative products.

SITE VISIT: ELK FALLS PROVINCIAL PARK

The group then went on a tour of Elk Falls Provincial Park hosted by the Campbell River District forestry staff as well as BC Provincial Park staff. The park was established in 1940 on an area that had been heavily logged. It now covers 1,055 ha and is a popular area for recreation. A portion of the park (16 ha) became a protected area in 2013.

As participants strolled the park with their local guides, they saw examples of old and second growth forests, and discussed how to manage the forest for multiple user groups and purposes. Meeting delegates crossed the BC hydro John Hart Replacement Project that is renewing the existing generating station and pipelines built in 1947 in the middle of the park, and enjoyed the new suspension bridge that offers gorgeous views of the canyon and waterfall.



Day 4 - Innovations to address climate change & governance

DEBRIEFING

The group reflected on topics such as:

- Opportunities opened by programs encouraging reforestation (e.g., the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative).
- Tensions between national parks/conservation areas and local communities customarily living on or around those lands and relying on them for their livelihood.
- New innovations holding actors accountable for deforestation, through monitoring technologies, databases, etc.
- Increase of forest fires and its significant impact on the budget of forest agencies.
- Trade disputes, its impact on exports of timber products, and the need to diversify to new markets.
- Urban forestry and its role in reaching more people.
- Handling pests and collaborating with other agencies to prevent their spread.
- Tensions between wildlife management and forestry.

"We tend to live in a small bubble and this international meeting through MegaFlorestais is critical to share knowledge and gain influence."

- HERMAN SUNDQVIST
Director General of the Swedish Forest Agency

The panel's chair, **Tim Sheldan**, Deputy Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development of the BC Province, provided an [overview](#) of the Great Bear Rainforest (GBR) Story (see box), one of the world's largest temperate coastal rainforest (6.4 MHa), and shared a [short video](#). This story is a great example of complex problem solving involving multiple partners and stakeholders and had a large ecological significance. Key lessons from this 20-year negotiation process included: the need for involved parties to find common ground, listen to one another, and be constructive; the agreement that each party will give and get something. However, there were significant costs involved (financial, human resources and time).

Dallas Smith, Indigenous leader and President of the Board of the Nanwakolas Council, explained that establishing trust with the other stakeholders took several years and that the negotiation required a lot of energy and a continued investment of indigenous leaders to create institutional memory. Throughout the process, First Nations wanted to ensure that change will benefit them and that they would be able to live off the land.

Ric Slaco, Vice President and Chief Forester at Interfor, spoke from industries' perspective. He reiterated that it was a difficult process that took some new thinking, leadership, and collaboration between many different stakeholders. Many were pessimistic about the outcome but industry was motivated to secure a greater certainty over some of the largest concessions in the area.

Jody Holmes, Science Director at Rainforest Solutions Project, a unique coalition of environmental NGOs created for the GBR, explained that what triggered the search for a solution was the threat of \$1 billion in contract cancelations to industry. She highlighted the value of conflict as a way to trigger a radical shift in our systems and challenged the group to think about transformational system change and the need to be problem solvers.

The discussion highlighted key conditions needed to solve conflicts and achieve change that could be transportable: trust, understand the different viewpoints at the table, agree on a common vision, focus on human wellbeing, rely on a solid coalition where each party can keep each other in check. In terms of rules of engagement, they indicated the importance of documentation and commitment of institutions (not only key individuals) beyond economic considerations (e.g., cultural, spiritual).



The GBR Story
(based on Tim Sheldan's overview)

The area was part of the "war in the woods" in the 1990s, with tensions with First Nations over land rights and environmental groups supported by consumer groups demanding more environmental sustainability and old growth protection. These pressures brought together key stakeholders to find a joint solution: environmental organizations and the industry on one side, and the BC province and First Nations on the other, leading to the signature of socio-economic agreements to ensure First Nations would benefit economically, socially and culturally from future development and conservation within their traditional territories. Government and indigenous actors then reviewed the recommendations made by the other groups to find a consensus. After 20 years of negotiation, it was agreed by all parties that 85% of GBR would be protected from logging; 15% would be open to logging under new and stricter forest regulations; and a \$120 million fund was set up to support economic and conservation projects with local First Nations communities. This new approach enabled to meet 2 key objectives: ecological integrity and human well-being, and created new, flexible, inclusive decision-making processes, new coalitions, and the development of a collective vision for management of the area that kept parties at the table and ensured the project endured over different political administrations.

SITE VISIT: NORTHERN GULF ISLAND FIELD TRIP

The group went on a 3-hour boat tour to see some sections of the Great Bear Rainforest and discuss how the area is managed for multiple-use. During the visit, they had the opportunity to exchange with representatives of BC Timber Sales and logging companies operating on site. Local woodlot owners also joined and shared how they contribute to small and medium size CFEs in the region.

Participants then reflected on the field trip and noticed that they were surprised about the efforts to reduce the visual impact of logging and attention to the esthetics and ways to extract timber. They also noted the trust between the multiple stakeholders and their joint care for the forest.



"We are often scared of conflict but it can be tremendously valuable because the increased energy of conflict creates the impetus to gather all stakeholders around an issue and, if we are willing to tolerate the discomfort and BE in conflict together, this can trigger a radical system shift."

- JODY HOLMES

Science Director at Rainforest Solutions Project

SESSION 4: STRATEGIC FORESIGHTING FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE

The panel, chaired by **Sally Collins**, focused on how to build resiliency from a forestry perspective. After defining resilience as the ability to survive, adapt, and possibly improve despite shocks and new contexts, **Andy White** [presented](#) on the role of secured property rights as a foundation for peace, prosperity, and an equitable distribution of power across the world's forests. Since 2002, forests are increasingly managed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (over 510 MHa), even though 73% of the world's forests still remain in the hands of governments. And the potential for recognition is much larger: if all the laws were to be implemented on the ground, an additional 200 MHa of forests would be legally managed by communities, directly benefitting 400 to 500 million rural people. Several new initiatives, such as the [Tenure Facility](#) or the [Interlaken Group](#), have focused on addressing this implementation gap. **Don Roberts**, CEO of Nawitka Capital Advisors Ltd., focused on [Industry, Markets and Trade](#). The consensus outlook is positive for the global timber market with increasing demand for packing, tissue, and construction and expected demands for plantation timber. But some technological changes could be disruptive, namely synthetic biologyⁱⁱ (which has become much cheaper and is creating new species with higher yields) and 3D printing, now called "the source of the next industrial revolution". These technologies are expected to have big impacts, especially on construction, since most of the material used is petrochemical plastics, rather than biomass. Lastly, the presenter focused on one of the biggest players, China, pointing out that its imports of hardwood and softwood logs have become much more geographically diverse. Another element was the dramatic rise of China's imports of softwood lumber since 2000, especially from

Russia that has successfully shifted from exporting raw logs to lumber after a massive investment in its sawmills (a model countries like DRC could follow).

The presentation triggered a discussion on what role MegaForestais can play in helping its members develop an industry in the next decade. Several elements of response were put forth: 1. Build relationships to secure investments; produce value-added products and invest in distribution systems; and 2. Show good governance, address corruption, and invest in solid chains of custody to attract solid industrial partners.

Lastly, **Cécile Ndjebet**, President of the African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF), highlighted the importance of [supporting women's tenure rights](#). Globally, still a lot remains to be done: a recent [RRI study](#) looked at national laws and regulations concerning women's rights to community forests in 30 low- and middle-income countries and showed that even though they ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), they all failed to meet the minimum international standards. Despite this, Ms. Ndjebet shared various examples of successful business enterprises developed by women in the forest sector in several African countries, many involving NTFPs. She also gave detailed examples of effective advocacy efforts targeting different actors within the government, and highlighted the importance of increasing gender sensitivity and awareness within national administrations. Overall, empowering women will be critical to promote social and economic development in rural areas and meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants reflected on the presentation and were challenged to think of ways to promote women in forest leadership within their agencies.

SESSION 5: BIOECONOMY STATUS AND TRENDS ACROSS MEGAFLORESTAIS COUNTRIES

As an introduction to the next MegaForestais meeting in Sweden on the topic of bioeconomy, **Peter Blombäck**, Head of the Policy and Analysis Division at the Swedish Forest Agency, shared with the group the [results of a survey](#) of the MegaForestais network, including participants in the [Next Generation of Forest Agency Leaders seminars](#), completed in 2017. Results showed that there are no universally accepted definitions of these concepts but amongst the 9 countries that contributed, 80% have a national strategy for the bioeconomy and the forest sector is recognized as a major contributor. However, the link between bioeconomy and forest policy differs between economies from the North (more focused on biofuel research and development) and the South (bigger focus on carbon sinks and carbon credits). Delegates discussed how the bioeconomy could open pathways to new markets, innovative forest products, and contribute to mitigate climate change.

Before opening the discussion to the rest of the group, **Rory Gilsonan**, Director General of the Science Program Branch at the Canadian Forest Service, shared Canada's newest [Forest Bioeconomy Framework](#) that is seen as critical for the transformation of the forest sector, and reflects new policy direction. Countries expressed interest in learning more about the bioeconomy as they are developing their new strategies and action plans. Brazil shared their new national program to promote the use of biomass in concession areas and provide cheaper and legal timber for the construction industry.

"There is no solution to climate change without the forest sector. This is why we must understand how our forests will change in the future and why we need to continue to innovate."

- GLENN MASON

Assistant Deputy Minister of the Canadian Forest Service-Natural Resources Canada

Day 5

ROUNDTABLE ON CONFERENCE TAKE-AWAYS:

- Recognition that the world is much more complex, while our human capacities haven't changed. Forests are one of the most complex ecosystems, and no one and no single agency has the resources or capacity to deal with this new complexity. There is a critical need for creative collaboration and we need to rethink together, be stronger, share, and be leaders of innovation.
- One collective challenge is for people to understand the work we do, how we see the forests. What we want are healthy working forests, logging should not be seen negatively —wood is good—, as long as it is done sustainably and while respecting local stakeholders.
- We need to better show forests' contributions to the economy (both direct and indirect contributions) in relation to our GDPs —as such, ministries of finance and economy would take forestry more seriously.
- It was inspiring to see how UBC and the Canadian Forest Service are collaborating, and how industry innovation is being fostered through organizations like FPInnovations. It is critical for forest agencies to establish such partnerships to increase our knowledge and be more innovative. The forest industry should move into more value-added products.
- We need to work with other sectors: start with common issues and seize opportunities to gain political power when possible. For example, the Brazilian Forest Service took advantage of the need to ensure monitoring and compliance with the new Forest Code to develop a land registry. There are already 400Mha of rural properties registered online, accessible by all citizens and showing overlap/boundaries/conflicts. The forest service is now sitting on one of the most important assets about the rural economy and this land cadaster could have significant impact (the Brazilian government and banks could issue credit or loans only to areas without tenure conflict or evidence of deforestation).
- Involving youth and women in forestry should be a priority.
- We recognize community management is key to guarantee sustainability in forest management and supporting community enterprises is important. We need to analyze what is the current status, demand, and think about new models to ensure community enterprises are able to adapt to diverse regional contexts. Connecting the dots better between bioeconomy, restoration, and CFEs will give us an opportunity to push several agendas forward simultaneously.
- The Great Bear Rainforest is a very powerful example of conflict resolution and a way to make transformational change.



"I greatly enjoyed the format for MegaFlorestais that creates space and opportunity for listening, learning, dialoguing and reflecting, which we don't often get the chance to do during our day jobs."

- BETH PENDLETON

Regional Forester of Alaska at the US Forest Service

SESSION 6: NEXT STEPS FOR THE MEGAFLORESTAIS NETWORK

Leaders reaffirmed the value of the network in helping them deal with the challenges they are facing, and its role as catalyst of new ideas and collaboration, and hoped to see a greater collaboration between agencies throughout the year. They supported the principles that guided the new funding mechanism, providing a few adjustments be made based on national contexts. The Secretariat will follow up with countries by the end of the year. They also highlighted the importance of building new leaders within their organizations and the value in hosting the Next Generation of Forest Agency Leaders seminar again. They supported the idea of funding this seminar through tuitions, like the main meeting.

"This is my fifth participation in MegaFlorestais and my main take-away from this network is that it has contributed a lot to the implementation of some reforms in the forest sector. Indeed, after each meeting, we think about what we can do to improve. For example, after the meeting in Santa Fe, we made significant progress on watershed management."

- VICTOIRE EHETH

Head of Cooperation at the Cameroonian Ministry of Forests and Wildlife

Participants discussed what product they wanted out of the meeting and agreed on a blog and synopsis.

Additional commitments included:

Activity	Lead	Timeline
Organize MegaFlorestais 2018	Swedish Forest Agency	By June
Draft a paper on bioeconomy that would be a starting point for the meeting in Sweden and could help with the development of a statement for the meeting	Swedish Forest Agency	By June
Participating countries come prepared to share their perspective about bioeconomy	All	By June
Support the development of enterprises in native communities	SERFOR, in collaboration with RRI and Rainforest Alliance	
Learn more from Brazil about plantations and the CAR	SERFOR	
Collaborate on technological innovations	SERFOR, in collaboration with USFS and CFS-NRCan	
Share key outcomes of the meeting with the new Chief, senior executives, and the international programs	USFS	Short-term
Send teams to Brazil and the US to learn more about silviculture tree breeding	CFS-NRCan, in collaboration with BFS and USFS	
Look into organizing an international conference to accelerate the application of remote sensing and forest inventory	CFS-NRCan	

Look at opportunities for MegaForestais to share best practices (CAR, etc.) at the next COFO	CFS-NRCan	Next July
Look into organizing a conference on women in leadership in forestry	CFS-NRCan – USFS and RRI interested in collaborating	
Contemplating and running foresighting exercise similar to future forests	CFS-NRCan	
Look into organizing a visit to Canada to learn about tourism and recreation in forests	MINFOF	
Look into organizing a workshop on technological innovations for registering land	RRI, in collaboration with the BFS and the Tenure Facility	
Share the GBR story on conflict resolution and promising path forward	RRI, in collaboration with CFS-NRCan	
Discuss the Tenure Facility with Peru, Cameroon, DRC, and Indonesia	RRI and the Tenure Facility	

At the closing of the meeting, MegaForestais Co-chairs thanked all the participants for their participation and contributions to the meeting. Leaders thanked the Canadian Forest Service for their organization of the meeting and the opportunity to discover such a beautiful part of Canada.

More information about the meeting, presentations and resources can be found on the MegaForestais [website](#).

ⁱ For more information, visit www.megaflorestais.org.

ⁱⁱ Synthetic biology is a new interdisciplinary area that involves the application of engineering principles to biology. It aims at the (re-)design and fabrication of biological components and systems that do not already exist in the natural world. Synthetic biology combines chemical synthesis of DNA with growing knowledge of genomics to enable researchers to quickly manufacture catalogued DNA sequences and assemble them into new genomes.