

Indigenous Forest Sector Retrospective

Harry Bombay

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“FPIC AND INDIGENOUS FORESTS: LANDSCAPES,
CERTIFICATION AND NATIONHOOD”

NATIONAL FORUM



Indigenous Forest Sector Retrospective

Retrospective on:

- 1) The Indigenous Forest Sector
- 2) NAFA as the national support organization for the Indigenous forest sector

From retrospectives we should gain insights into future actions needed.

Indigenous Forest Sector

- A hybrid of traditional forest values/land use activities and commercial/contemporary
- A new form of forestry
- Numerous articles on definition of Aboriginal forestry
- Qualitative in nature but quantitative data on some values, i.e. forest tenures
- Key characteristics; community-based and controlled, respectful of traditional values and rights

National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA)

- National conference 1989 “Ethic to Reality” – 450 delegates, call for national organization
- Intertribal Forestry Association of B.C., the first national secretariat for Aboriginal forestry
- NAFA incorporated in 1991, national board of directors
- To promote and support Aboriginal involvement in forest management and related commercial opportunities (mission)

NAFA Objectives:

1. Standard of land care reflective of traditional knowledge and Aboriginal values (activities related to forest policy, national and international)
 - National Forest Strategies (1992-2008)
 - UNCED & UNFF and related bodies
 - Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) 1991-1996
 - NRTEE, NABFOR, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Network (1995-2010)
 - CCFM Criteria and Indicators for SFM
 - Forest certification, FSC (1993), CSA, SFI

NAFA Objectives:

2. Capacity-building, human resource development
 - AFTER Committee (1991-1994)
 - Forest research partners
 - NAFA courses, analysis, etc.
 - FNFP and Network (1996), NMC, PTMC's, AFI

NAFA Objectives:

3. Aboriginal forest land rehabilitation

- Indian Forest Lands Programme (before FNFP)
- First Nations Forest Resources Management Act (1994)
- Aboriginal Forest Land Management Guidelines (1996)

4. Highest value from forest resources, tenures. NAFA papers, workshops and directory on traditional use, NTFP's, commercial activities, harvesting, forest management activities.

NAFA Objectives:

5. Advocacy and Support (Congruency) with First Nations Governance and Aboriginal and Treaty rights (Processes)
 - Tools, best practices
 - Consultation and accommodation
 - FPIC

6. Networking, communications
 - NAFA newsletters, workshops, conferences

NAFA Success in the Early Years

- SFM generally inclusive of Aboriginal issues
- Aboriginal and Treaty rights advanced through the courts, conflicts
- Merging interests RCAP, NFS, UNDRIP
- Increases in Aboriginal forest tenures

Later Trends and Waning of SFM

- Reduced government programming, i.e. FNFP
- Termination of national and provincial level SFM processes, i.e. NFS
- Decline in traditional forest industries with focus on other fibre use, i.e. biomass
- Greater reliance on certification to achieve SFM

NAFA Involvement with Certification Bodies

CSA

- Based on CCFM Criteria and Indicators
- At first, a member of technical committee
- Argued for 7th Criterion (1995)
- 2015 CSA accepts NAFA proposal

SFI

- US industry dominated
- Correspondence exchange “Aboriginal People and SFM?”
- Canadianizing of SFI over past 15 years

NAFA Involvement with Certification Bodies (Cont'd)

FSC

- Aboriginal at founding meeting (1993), Board representatives
- 4th Chamber, IP Principle #3
(explicit objective to raise the bar)
- NAFA Board Resolution: FSC Preferred System

Observations

- Indigenous forest sector has changed - Rights to Responsibilities
- Governmental support reduced
- NAFA in continual adaptive management mode
- Greater need to learn from other Indigenous organisations
- NAFA reliant on external funding sources and work focussed on “hot” items
- Forest certification the priority to-day but lacking institutional/political support
- Taking the reins . . .