

BC Forestry Climate Change Working Group

The Climate Change Competitive Advantage

There are good reasons to believe that British Columbia will become the global supplier of choice as the world economy changes—and its role in tackling climate change will help to make that happen.

Over the next 20 years, economists predict that global GDP will double and per capita income in developing countries will triple. At the same time, the forest industry is all too aware that the global production of wood and paper products will be insufficient to meet rising demand. Competition for the land base will be fierce, and this will give a significant market advantage to those jurisdictions and companies that can produce sustainably goods without displacing additional land that could be used for other purposes. In other words, it will give a significant advantage to British Columbia.

BC is already recognized as a source of high quality forest products. We also have some of the most innovative and strictly regulated forest management practices in the world, and more independently certified forests than any other provincial jurisdiction.

Many of the greenhouse gas reduction strategies related to forests and wood products provide opportunities for improved competitiveness, innovation and growth. These include:

Intensive forest management – By implementing forest management policies that maximize the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) absorbed from the atmosphere while adjusting for future climatic conditions, BC will increasingly be viewed as a leader, not only in sustainable forest management, but in climate change mitigation.

Wood use – Because wood products store carbon and have a lighter environmental footprint overall, there is a strong argument for substituting wood for alternate materials—e.g., building a wood-frame home instead of using steel or concrete. As with all natural resources, there will be increasing demand for sustainable sources.

Bio-energy – BC as a region is North America's largest producer of green biomass power. Rising demand for green energy will enable the industry to increase its use of biomass from forestry and mill processing many fold, utilizing sources such as forests devastated by the mountain pine beetle.

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Research and development – The BC forest industry has a long history of partnerships with leading research organizations. The urgency of climate change creates new opportunities for innovation, and for the industry to share its knowledge and technologies with others seeking to follow our example.

For more information on the BC Forestry Climate Change Working Group and the role of BC's forests as a tool to combat climate change, visit: www.BCclimatechange.ca

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