

FFP Winnipeg Workshop, 2008 10 21 - Results of Scenario Discussions

Forest Futures Project of the Sustainable Forest Management Network

Transcribed from flipchart notes and workshop recorder (Cristi Frittaion) files by Kyle McKenzie, Project Research Associate

Scenario A - Goods from the Woods

Important Messages

- Lack of society input into how forest is managed
- 'Elite' governance of forest
- 'Wood is good' – forest products are carbon sinks
- Investments in new technologies
- Aboriginal economic prosperity, but no improvement in political component
- More pressure on forest for product (e.g. bioenergy)
- Consumerism + conflict
- Shift in people's views – away from environment
- Disconnect of urban dwellers from hinterland forests
- Information-sharing, while important, is too impersonal (to have influence, it needs personal passion)
- Societal values in this scenario have signs in today's youth
- The contemporary world is so complex and so terrifying, that youth behaviour today is understandable (national discouragement)
- Land-use and resources conflict has increased
- Disagreements over how to manage woodlots (within and among families)
- Woodlot owners will have lots of incentive to harvest timber
- Dichotomy between business and ecological model these days
 - Conflict; conservation districts → gaining power
- Climate change and wildlife diseases
- Water enterprises flourishing!
- Non-viability of small rural communities – in both A and D, very small rural communities might be non-viable especially considering water and sewage
- Lack of awareness of multiple resource values
- More/larger city-states – their own economic engines

How people feel

- Mixed feelings
- Good economics, but comes at a cost of other considerations (high costs to socio-ecological system)
- Who is responsible to resolve conflicts? (corporations or government (provincial, federal)?)
- 'Stakeholders' have no say in how conflicts are resolved
- All people here at the table have environment-related careers

Implications for Manitoba

- Most forested land is currently crown land, but will go into private owners
- How would this scenario affect Treaty Land Entitlement?
- Could First Nations create and own forest products mills?
- Requires regulation to ensure forest values are conserved, because of such a heavy emphasis on major companies managing land base (or other private groups)
- Less chance for transparency and accountability when management is in the hands of others
- Bioenergy replacing use of natural gas
 - shipping to Alberta
- Energy independence for Manitoba (both for corporations and home owners); diversifies our energy mix
- Big corporations owning rights to multiple natural resources
- Winnipeg is up from 800 000 to 1 400 000 people – this could be good depending on patterns!
- Manitoba is vulnerable because of newsprint production (needs a shift?)
- QUESTION: how will Manitoba aboriginal groups thrive economically?
 - Diversity of economic opportunities
- Manitoba is unique in North America as a future winner!
 - o e.g. hydro-electricity, transportation, wildlife, polar bears [early warning], geese, abundance of water

Responses

- Protect forest values through regulation that corporations might not otherwise protect
- Regulations must address ecosystem services as well as the trees
- Need a suite of regulatory tools (innovative mixes of tools)
- Reporting mechanisms that have to be more third party and independent rather than relying on companies and province
- Ensure better public participation processes
- Ensure better conflict resolution processes
- Better land use zoning?
- Need increased education/training (must address large influx of immigrants (who come with different values))
- Training for integrated natural resource management
- Strong conservation policies are needed
- Education (both scientific and traditional knowledge) to reconnect people to the forest (e.g. eco-tourism)
- Must have incentives for research and development
- Need to move to value-added
- No greater emphasis on bioenergy
- Much greater emphasis on environmental education warm-style!
 - Also skills-based training! (education for sustainability)

- Need better calculation of forest values, especially environmental services (protected forests vs. clear-cut forests, recreational/ecotourism ventures) (interpretive centres)
- Disney Forest is potentially useful for Manitoba

Scenario B - Peace in the Woods

Important Messages

1. Management of many forests has shifted to communities.
 - What policies get us there from here?
 2. Aboriginal empowerment as part of Point 1 – essential to Manitoba
What policies would facilitate the devolution of responsibilities?
 - Currently not aware of any
 - Appropriate training, encouraging more First Nations people to enter higher education
 3. Current actions to meet 'low demand/supply' future scenario
 - Move to 'more sustainable' building products
 - Wood supply in future would be lower; part of slack taken up by massive increase in efficiency with which wood material is used
 - What actions could we take to cope with this?
- More decentralization, more local control, more community forest models
 - Increased volunteerism
 - Increased co-operation
 - Hopeful scenario
 - Less resource conflict

How people feel

- Incredulous
- Typically Canadian
- Optimistic, and not that it was actually going to happen but that it would be a nice thing to have
- We were feeling pretty sceptical at this point

Implications for Manitoba

- Divestment to community control
- Can forest sector join forces with agriculture to become a driver of innovation in Manitoba?
 - Agriculture is a big player in Manitoba compared to other provinces
 - Push toward more value added and diversification of wood products, a framework to facilitate cooperation between foresters and farmers in terms of driving innovation. Not just wood in provision of fibre
- Future Structure, capitalization, and geographical position of Manitoba Forest Industry

- Right now the Manitoba industry has dollars to survive, but not necessarily to drive innovation that seems to be required. Where are the dollars going to come from?
- What is the role of TRIAD/QUAD silvicultural strategy in Manitoba, given forest area may decline under even modest warming?
- Future of forest/forestry education
 - If awareness/volunteerism scenario is to be realized
 - Current trends seem to be away from increasing awareness, volunteerism, and education of forest professionals
 - There has to be a reacquaintance with the younger generation and jobs in the woods, and the natural environment
- More empowerment to communities and First Nations
- Smaller forest companies with more local input
- Need for more cooperation between First Nations and others
- Management of forest needs 'sustainability' approach
- More protected area means less forest available to meet demand
- Fewer m³ harvested, but more non-timber products
 - How do we do this sustainably?
 - Certification of non-timber forest products
- Industry transforms to reward innovation
- Social implications mean need for more job training, diversification
- Shift from 'export' driven economy to more local focus
- Industry would be concerned about who has input
- Maybe a change to focus more on local governance
- More jobs in recreation
 - Camping?
 - Hiking?
 - Off road vehicles?
 - Environmental concerns?
- More land base
- The focus on non-timber forest products was exciting, but maybe the focus needs to be on certification
- Social implications, need for more training, diversifying job descriptions
- Might be positive because if global market is weak; the local focus could be on non-timber forest products or value-added products

Responses

- Possible dichotomy of urban/rural reactions to the Peace in the Woods scenario
 - Traditional conflict between urban environmentalists and rural dwellers demanding products and jobs
- Need to build capacity in forest communities (a long-term project would need to begin now)
 - Forest management

- Education
- Incorporate wide range of values into education
- Have to ensure communities can see an economic return for their efforts
 - Small forest dependant communities in order to invest time/resources in becoming educated/capacity increase, need to see economic return
- People will embrace diversity if dollars, social capital, and community stability are in it
 - Otherwise they might not be so eager
- Industry would need to be more concerned about input around allowable cuts, etc.
- More focus on local governance
- How are decisions made around recreation that occurs? Are all types allowed? How would decisions be made around land-use?
- How do land use planning exercises take place if most of the population lives in urban areas?
- More best management practices needed around ecotourism and recreation
- Rural depopulation is a concern as we urbanize
- Land use planning needs to be more inclusive ('grass roots')
- There are implications for alternative energy sources
 - i.e. nuclear (centralized or decentralized?)
- Who takes inventory? Industry or government or local level?
- There is need for an overarching body that could take overall inventory across whole province
- Find a balance for local planning and harvesting vs. knowing overall general health of forest province wide
- Industry may resist change as the focus shifts to the local level
- Role of private land?
 - Agroforestry
 - Sale of carbon credits
 - Private companies purchase private land for timber supply
 - Biodiversity
- Role of private landowners should be to be more involved. More private companies need to work with landowners. Landowners could get credits for biodiversity on their land (carbon credits in short term)
- Policy shift? Perhaps less timber sourced from crown lands – more from First Nations and private lands
- I.e. certification of non-forest industries
- It's positive that more emphasis on is urban forests
- This might lead to more planting on empty land
- Urban population 'disenfranchised' from forest management issues; they might feel that they don't have enough say about what's going on in rural areas
- The main element is who is Canada? Roles of First Nations, English Canada, French Canada? Are we a federation? If we're an equal partner, then change the structure in order to have discussion

- Issues such as these have legal implications, i.e. treaty, land entitlements, jurisdictional issues

Summary

- Hopeful scenario with fairly dramatic changes
- Issues between rural and urban...
- Traditional-non-traditional forest products
- Centralized-decentralized
- Decreased demand for wood products → industry must evolve! (develop viable alternatives as we transition away from the past)

Scenario C - Turbulence in the Woods

Important Messages

- Rural depopulation due to water shortages or lack of economic base or reduced importance of Hydro-activity due to low water levels
- Increased family dysfunction, increased addictions, increased social disorder
- Connection between (positive feedback) increased temperature, increased invasive species, and use of dead wood as fuel resulting in release of carbon
- Danger of weak governance
- Embittered at actions of grandparents (i.e. consequences of past actions felt by current generations)
- Depressed - cold and spiky
- Opposite of warm and fuzzy
- Individualistic – survival mode

How people feel

- Troublesome
- Lots of work to do
- Some optimism re: more forestry jobs (even if not secure) and urban forests
- Positive: people are ignoring hinterland forests, so they may be left to 'recover'
- Negative: too much emphasis on one-industry approach (i.e. biofuels)
- Doubling of population → more stress on urban forests
- Fewer forest industries
- More 'bickering' and suspicion between urban and rural; user groups – potential for conflict

Implications for Manitoba

- Desertification (loss of aspen parkland – no water, no agriculture)
- Loss of forest and agricultural communities → limits ability of two industries to work together and innovate
- Drying of Lake Manitoba

Our forests:

- Forests having a lot of problems, diseased
- Smaller → shifting north due to climate change
- More disease as forests come under stress, i.e. disease; invasives
- Increased conflict a result of the greater interest people are beginning to show...
- But maybe this increased conflict means that at least people are showing interest – could be the beginning of change – could eventually turn into something positive [talking about the future/future scenarios]

Forest sector:

- Shifting from traditional lumber/pulp to biofuels
- Fewer non-timber forest products: this will affect First Nations and other rural people
- 'Economy of necessity' which is reactive; not proactive
- A lot of this driven by outside influence, so international conflict, outside drivers leading us to make bad decisions and very little political will to do anything positive and be strong to make needed changes. So: perhaps a complete restructuring of political situation, might be threats from U.S. so provincial government needs to step up
- Unpredictability makes it difficult for communities to thrive
- International conflict

Responses

How would Manitobans respond?

- Protest by Manitobans in reaction to depressed state and dysfunction
- Shift to alternative energy sources
- Conservation: levels of water and consumption
- 1. More grassroots involvement to find solutions
- 2. Political restructuring – more cooperation – less partisan
- 3. Annexation with U.S.?
- 4. Provincial government must step up to protect remaining forest

Policy response?

- Diversify forest renewal program
- International policy to prevent/deal with runaway climate change
- Potential out of province migration
- Need to develop global policies now while we still have leverage to act (no effective local response to this so far)
 - Act provincially now to affect federal policies, which in turn will affect global policies
- Co-ordinate action of provincial premiers to influence federal action on climate change
- Collectively concluded that under the 2010-2020 part of the scenario, that unless Provincial Premiers came together as a body to force the Feds to be a player in future climate talks, that if this scenario is allowed to transpire, by this time we will

have lost all policy options and be stuck with adaptation, so unless policy is formulated now, we'll be completely impotent in this future scenario

- What gives hope that the Premiers would agree to gang up on the Feds?
 - It has happened on occasion
- Government needs to go to province wide control on water, transportation fuels, energy, have some way to get things back into control. Things are beyond our ability to make change.
- Need will on the part of Manitobans, which we didn't see in scenario, so look at European problems
- One policy implication would be that forestry practices might change so that we're not planting same trees we've cut but replacing them with faster growing trees
- Targeting immigration to Manitoba with people who can help with issues is great
- Policies need, re biofuels
 - Water use
 - Fossil fuel consumption
 - Air pollution
- Government must eliminate:
 - 'Timber baronism' (provincial forestry branch would control) water, transportation fuels, energy, and ration fuels until problems resolved (nationalize)
 - Plantations?
 - Enforcement?
- Political will to act
- Examine some 'European' solutions to environmental problems
- Northern areas are more important than ever due to 'Arctic War'
 - Develop Port of Churchill?
- Alternative supply to north, i.e. dirigibles/zeppelins
- Favour immigration to bring in more people knowledgeable in drought relief/management
- Fewer players in forest sector
- Climate change could trigger a wood supply crisis → this would bring change to the way we manage our forests
 - More northern development as we push the boundary northward
 - More planting of faster growing (i.e. hybrid poplar) species
 - Farmland → plantations
- Urban forest would gain a higher profile

Scenario D - Restoration in the WoodsImportant Messages

- Adaptation to realities of climate change
- Canada is a small player in forest product markets, including bioenergy
- People working cooperatively
- Divestment of forests from province to communities... but less ability of communities to manage the forest
- People really care (but adaptation not mitigation)
- Climate change, air pollution, ecosystem productivity
 - Cumulative effects!
- Small rural communities are gone, mini-cities are flourishing
- Water needs → larger communities

How people feel

- Mixed – people working together but ecological disaster!
- Social conscience kicked in too late!
- Did not learn the lesson on greenhouse gasses and fossil fuels for transportation
- Canada has less influence on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change
- Overwhelming feeling
- Less ability to change things
- 'Technology will save us' mentality
- For forest-based communities, there will be a shift in employment to other industries, but also out-migration of people
- We will need to reinvent the forest industry – newsprint industry is going down hill

Implications for Manitoba

- Need to reinvent forest industry (new products) newsprint to composites
- Worse water quality in Manitoba – need more expensive treatment
- Out migration from small, forest based communities
- Climate impacts on other industries (e.g. agriculture)
- New training needed
- Aboriginal communities – access to natural resources, but little ability for economic development from forest products
- Opportunities for recreation-based employment, and non-traditional forest products
- Overuse of non-traditional forest products
- In Manitoba, agricultural expansion in the North, First Nations opportunities
- Churchill-based transportation is up
- Hydroelectricity production is up – implications for southern plants
- Expansion/diversification of fruit production
- Northern tourism – cruise ships into Churchill

Responses

- Focus on new markets associated with improved transportation
- Go get the good wood now?
- Focus on alternative energies and water management
- More progressive long term municipal planning for development
- Prop up the conservation district concept – strengthen
- Increasing forest diversity
 - Range of tree species planted (but carefully)
- University College of the North (The Pas) – new training programs anticipating new forest opportunities
- Research x10!
 - Land use values
 - Trees to plant
- ‘Smart’ restoration!

Policy shifts needed

- Co-management of natural resources (move away from provincial responsibilities) (need for interjurisdictional cooperation and governance)
- Stewardship training as a result of co-management
- Support for local economic opportunities
- Need to address issues of non-traditional forest product sustainability
- Focus on reduction of fossil fuel use, especially in transportation
- Promote low energy use and low carbon
- Support/fund collaboration of diverse interest groups (but must be a formal arrangement); coalition