An Assessment of the Practices and Outcomes of Community Forestry in the Canadian Context

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Project Background

- Community forestry is a concept with wide appeal

    - initiatives aimed at giving local people greater role in the management of local forest resources

- Growing literature on community forestry, stemming from academic and NGO milieus

- Practical examples of community forestry in Canada still relatively few

Project Background (2)

- Little systematic knowledge about the practical experiences of community forests in Canada

  - How do community forests differ from corporate management regimes?
  - How do they seek to integrate community values?
  - How are they faring? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
  - How do we measure these things?

- Represent important sites for social learning

- Their existence in various places is evidence of capacity in those locales.
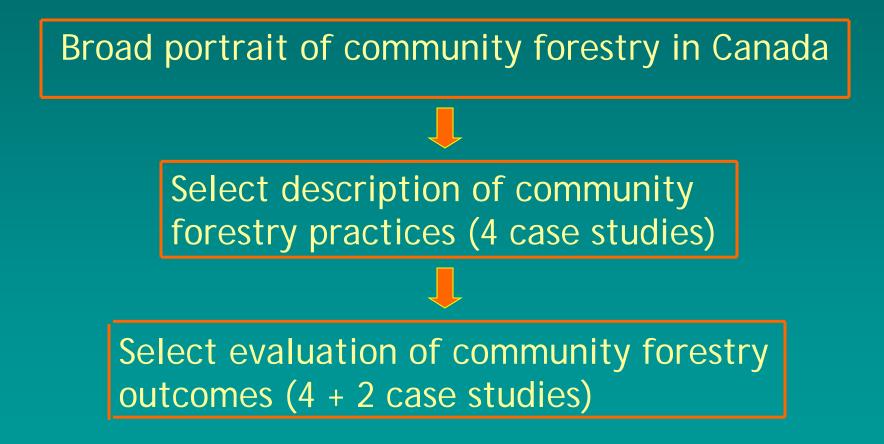
Project Objectives

Objective 1: to describe the main models of community forestry in Canada through a national survey of initiatives

Objective 2: To document the practices community forests have adopted in order to meet objectives of local benefits, multiple forest use and public input

Objective 3: To evaluate the progress community forests have made in reaching these objectives through comparison with corporate management regimes

Defining Community Forestry

- Many social experiments in forestry have been described as community forestry
  - Municipal forests, pilot projects, coops

- Definitions commonly include the following elements:
  - Local benefits
  - Community management/Community input
  - Multiple values
  - Sustainable forest management

Defining Community Forestry (2)

- Project definition:

"a public forest area, managed by the community as a working forest for the benefit of the community"

Approach and Methodology

Objective 1: describe the main models of community forestry in Canada

- Nation wide survey of initiatives which fit project definition

- Snowball sampling method

- Typology of institutional types (administrative, decision-making, tenure)

- Matrix for case study selection

Approach and Methodology (2)

Survey information:

Name	Type of tenure
Province	Administrative structure
Objectives	Decision-making structure
Year Started	First Nation participation
Type of landbase	% of operating funds from different sources
Size of landbase	

Approach and Methodology (4)

Objective 2: Document the practices community forests have adopted in order to meet objectives of local benefits, multiple forest use, public input

- 4 case studies, 2 in BC and 2 in Quebec
- Purposive sample, with variety of institutional types
- Semi-structured interviews with key people from each community forest

Approach and Methodology (4)

Objective 3: To evaluate the progress community forests have made in reaching objectives through a comparison with corporate management regimes

- Same 4 case studies plus 2 corporate regime case studies – one progressive (FSC certified) one less progressive

- Evaluation framework will be designed based on quantitative and qualitative indicators

Approach and Methodology (5)

Examples of indicators:

Local benefits	•% local processing •Job satisfaction •Job creation
Public input	•Number of activities/year •Quality of activities • worker and/or community involvement in management decisions
Multiple forest use	•Level of participation in educational activities •Quality of recreational opportunities

Implications of the Research

1. Provide a more accurate picture of alternative forest management regimes in Canada

2. Clarify how community forests work and highlight innovative strategies they have adopted in order to contribute to community sustainability

3. Provide an assessment of the extent to which community forests are meeting socio-economic objectives and the reasons for their successes/failures

Questions?