



Cree-Québec Forestry Board

PLAN D'ACTION DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE 2023-2028

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Coordination and drafting

This publication was produced by the Cree-Québec Forestry Board Secretariat.

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Legal deposit – 2024

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

ISBN 978-2-923825-04-2 (PDF)

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Board Chairman's Message

We are pleased to present the Cree-Québec Forestry Board's 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP), a modest contribution to the Government Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS). This action plan reflects the Board's ongoing commitment to greater integration of sustainable development principles.

The Board's contribution is closely linked to sustainable forest development on the territory governed by the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (Agreement). Under this Agreement, an Adapted Forestry Regime must provide for forest ecosystem protection to ensure sustainability, for greater consideration of the Cree traditional way of life, for Cree communities' greater autonomy and for greater economic viability of forest resource use.

The Board's main responsibility is to monitor, report on and assess implementation of the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Agreement, more commonly known as the Paix des Braves. Our "watchdog" role aims to ensure that the parties to the Agreement implement the Adapted Forestry Regime provided for therein. In addition to monitoring the application of Agreement provisions, the Board also monitors the provisions' effectiveness in meeting the four key objectives or original principles of Chapter 3 of the Agreement, which are:

1. greater consideration of the Cree traditional way of life
2. greater integration of concerns relating to sustainable development
3. Cree participation, in the form of consultation, in the forest planning processes
4. Cree and Jamesian collaboration, in the form of concerted action, in the TGIRTs (integrated land and resource management panels)

A Monitoring Framework implemented in the past five years allows the Board to prioritize our actions and conduct systematic monitoring. Centred on the four key objectives of Chapter 3 of the Agreement, this Monitoring Framework also addresses the various sustainable development concerns specific to Adapted Forestry Regime territory and Cree users. Consequently, our sustainable development action plan presents the actions the Board intends to take that are aligned with the objectives of the Government Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Organization in brief

Mission

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board's main purpose is to allow close consultation of the Crees at the various forestry activity planning and management stages in order to implement the Adapted Forestry Regime.

The Board's prime responsibility is to monitor, report on and assess implementation of the forestry component of the Paix des Braves Agreement from a sustainable development perspective by increasingly taking the Cree traditional way of life into consideration and through Cree participation and collaboration in the forest activity planning and management processes.

The Board is involved in forest management activity planning processes on Agreement territory and in reviewing these processes. It drafts advice on forest plans for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forests and is responsible for making the Minister aware of its proposals, concerns and comments relating to the legislation, regulations, policies, programs, management guides, practical guides for forestry-related intervention in the field, guidelines, directives and instructions linked to preparing all forest management plans.

The Board makes its recommendations to the parties to ensure compliance with the Agreement's measures and spirit in order to contribute to the Adapted Forestry Regime's evolution.

Vision

By working in synergy with its partners, the Board commits to playing the role of a catalyst in the implementation of the Agreement's Adapted Forestry Regime. The Board hopes that all partners will fully participate in the forest sector's development, both for the Cree communities and for Québec society as a whole. To support its mission, the Board has formulated the following vision statement to guide its actions in the coming years:

To be recognized as a leader and an inspiring reference for its ability to develop harmonious relations between the stakeholders working on the Agreement's implementation and monitoring in Adapted Forestry Regime territory.

Values

To support and strengthen the achievement of its mission and promote its vision, the Board bases its actions on four core values. These values guide Board members' and employees' behaviour as they carry out their roles and responsibilities at the Board.

Respect

Board members and staff are attentive, open-minded and empathetic, both to each other and to the various partners, thus fostering a work environment conducive to dialogue.

Collaboration

The Board encourages its members and staff to work with their colleagues and partners. This collaboration helps support growth and maintenance of harmonious relationships, while promoting the Board's visibility.

Expertise

The Board draws on the highly diverse expertise of its members, its staff, representatives of the parties to the Agreement and outside experts as needed, while making sure to foster their long-term development.

Transparency

The Board uses and disseminates objective, fair, accessible information to all partners. It is proactive and rigorous in communicating information. This helps maintain the Board's credibility and public confidence.

Contributions to Sustainable Development via Public Policies

Name of organizational document	Document's direction/objective	Link with 2023-2028 Government Sustainable Development Strategy
Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec	Chapter 3 on Forestry	Agreement contributing to several Strategy objectives: 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 4.3. It aims to implement an Adapted Forestry Regime whose objectives are closely linked to the three pillars (social, environmental and economic) of sustainable development.

Internal Context

Certain internal factors impact the Board's abilities as an organization to implement an ambitious sustainable development action plan according to the criteria prescribed in the Government Sustainable Development Strategy.

Socioeconomic factors

- The Board's limited human and material resources
- The impending relocation of the Board's offices to the territory and its significant impact on the organization's operations (both a challenge and an opportunity)
- The distance separating the work environments of Board members and collaborators (travel time involved, etc.), while in-person meetings are an asset for effective Board operations

Technological factors

- Use of new technologies for communications and to facilitate analysis and information transfer
- The accessibility of spaces for dialogue between members (e.g. videoconferencing), while the reliability and accessibility of these new technologies remain a challenge until they are adequately deployed throughout Adapted Forestry Regime territory
- The protection of Board information, including information related to confidential documents

External Context

Many external factors affect the Board's action priorities, including those linked to increasingly taking sustainable development principles into account. Here we have cited observations taken from our latest status report on implementation of Chapter 3 (Forestry), which influence our action and monitoring priorities and, as a result, our sustainable development action plan.

- Although provisions relating to the Adapted Forestry Regime's wildlife objectives and management approaches that have a definite impact on the Cree traditional way of life (areas of wildlife interest, protection of riparian buffers, development of the road network) are being implemented, they continue to result in discontent and dissatisfaction among Cree users of the territory
- Many issues were raised with regard to the mechanisms promoting Cree participation in the forest plan process and conflict resolution
- Not all provisions relating to the economic component provide the spinoffs expected for the Crees.

Other, bigger external issues also influence the Board's actions relating to sustainable development. The following are some examples.

Socioeconomic factors

- Demographics of the Cree population
- Labour challenges in the forestry industry, including labour scarcity
- Training of new workers and retention of expertise in the territory
- Major fluctuations in national and international timber and timber products markets

Environmental factors

- Impact of climate change on:
 - The evolution of Cree traditional practices, the Cree living environment and Cree use of the territory
 - Wildlife and forest biodiversity, forest composition and quality of wildlife habitat in the territory
 - The movement of different species throughout the territory (e.g. moose)
 - Access to land and resources
 - Increased risk of natural disasters (e.g. forest fires, drought, disease and insect epidemics)

Sustainable Development Action Plan

Action 1: Following the 2023 forest fires on AFR traplines, relocate areas of special interest for the Cree

Chapter 3 of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Quebec and the Crees of Quebec (the Agreement) is closely linked to sustainable development. It describes an Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) that must take into consideration the protection of forest ecosystems in order to ensure their sustainability, a better consideration of the traditional way of life of the Crees, greater autonomy for communities and increased economic viability of use.

The Adapted Forestry Regime of Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves contains provisions aimed at implementing a number of complementary, innovative conservation measures. Various areas of specific interest for the Crees benefit from protection measures and/or a specific management approach. The positioning of these protected areas is determined by the territory's Cree tallymen. Sites of special interest for the Crees account for 1% of the total area of Cree traplines and benefit from special protection measures. Sites of wildlife interest for the Crees account for 25% of a trapline's productive forest area and benefit from specific forest management approaches that call for conserving the Cree traditional way of life and improving wildlife habitats of importance to the Crees.

More specifically, the territories of special interest to the Crees respond to several principles of sustainable development, including access to knowledge, participation and commitment, environmental protection, protection of cultural heritage, and the health and quality of life of the Cree users of the territory. Through his knowledge of the land and traditional knowledge, the tallyman is at the heart of the implementation of these principles of sustainable development.

Chapter 3 also specifies that, in case of major natural disturbances, new areas of specific interest for the Crees may be identified at the Cree tallyman's discretion.

The forest fires that ravaged Nord-du-Québec in the summer of 2023 significantly affected Adapted Forestry Regime territory. Preliminary data show that more than 800,000 hectares of forest burned on Adapted Forestry Regime territory. Numerous calculations are needed before we know more about the scope of the fires' impacts on the territory as well as the need for identifying new areas of special interest for the Crees.

Consequently, the Board intends to ensure that the parties to the Agreement relocate these areas of special interest for the Crees, when need be, so that they can continue to

play their role in conserving the Cree traditional way of life (1%) and maintaining or improving wildlife habitats (25%).

GSDS sub-objective no.	Indicators (starting point)	2023-2024 target	2024-2025 target	2025-2026 target	2026-2027 target	2027-2028 target
2.1.1. Enhance Québec's network of protected and conserved areas	1. Activities to monitor provisions relating to natural or human-induced disturbances	Establish a portrait of the areas of territories of interest to the Crees to be relocated	25% of the areas of territories of interest to the Crees have been relocated	50% of the areas of territories of interest to the Crees have been relocated	75% of the areas of territories of interest to the Crees have been relocated	100% of the areas of territories of interest to the Crees have been relocated

Action 2: Improve processes aimed at consulting the territory's tallymen and at harmonizing Cree traditional land use with operational forest management plans

Chapter 3 on forestry of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Quebec and the Crees of Quebec (the Agreement) is closely linked to sustainable development. It describes an Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) that must take into consideration better consideration of the Crees' traditional way of life, greater integration of sustainable development concerns, and Cree participation in the form of consultation in the planning processes and collaboration, in the form of consultation, between the Crees and the Jamesians, at the Integrated Resource and Land Management Panels (TGIRT).

Participation of the territory's Cree users in forest management activity planning on Adapted Forestry Regime territory certainly constitutes a sustainable forest management practice.

More specifically, the participation of Cree tallymen in the forest planning process responds to several principles of sustainable development, including access to knowledge, participation and commitment, environmental protection, protection of cultural heritage, and the health and quality of life of Cree users of the territory. Through his

knowledge of the territory and traditional knowledge, the tallyman is at the heart of the implementation of these sustainable development principles.

For example, Chapter 3 of the Agreement provides that, within the framework of the operational integrated forest management plan (PAFIO), the Minister and the Cree tallyman shall consult each other on the content of the said PAFIO project, in particular with regard to the location of residual forest blocks in forest territories of wildlife interest to the Crees, as to the development of the road network and the improvement or repair of impassable roads, and as to the identification of spawning grounds and harmonization measures to prevent conflicts of use. The exercise aims, among other things, for the Crees to share Cree knowledge that will make it possible to identify any concerns.

Consulting the Cree tallymen on development of the integrated operational forest management plans is one of the Adapted Forestry Regime's cornerstones, allowing greater harmonization of forestry-related activities in the territory with Cree traditional hunting, fishing and trapping activities.

Three mechanisms established by Chapter 3 of the Agreement contribute to the implementation of the Agreement, including the consultation of tallymen on integrated forest management plans, namely the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB), the Joint Working Groups (JWGs) and the JWG coordinators.

In the Board's last status report on implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime (2013-2018), stakeholders drew our attention to uncertainties and frustrations linked to applying the tallymen consultation processes and monitoring the harmonization measures determined in the context of these consultations.

A Board project carried out between 2017 and 2019 enabled us to obtain a portrait of the critical steps in the process and arrive at a diagnostic of its strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations and action priorities to be implemented were determined in collaboration with the parties. These recommendations and avenues for improvement were used as a basis for developing an action plan designed to improve consultation processes involving the territory's Cree tallymen.

Some of these priorities were achieved in recent years, notably by creating two guides, one for harmonization measure management and one for conflict resolution management. More recently, with the pandemic, the parties relegated training activities, workshops and get-togethers designed to improve processes to the back burner. Board action priorities over the coming five years are increasingly directed at information sharing, communication and transfer with the stakeholders concerned. A number of specific actions are planned to improve monitoring of the harmonization measures agreed on during the consultations.

GSDS sub-objective no.	Indicators (starting point)	2023-2024 target	2024-2025 target	2025-2026 target	2026-2027 target	2027-2028 target
2.2.1. Promote sustainable agricultural, forestry, aquacultural and fishing management and practices	<i>Collaborative activities between the three Agreement implementation mechanisms aimed at improving processes were interrupted in 2020 and must be reactivated</i>	<i>One training activity per year that includes the three Agreement mechanisms</i>	<i>One training activity per year that includes the three Agreement mechanisms and the tallymen</i>	<i>One training activity per year that includes the three Agreement mechanisms</i>	<i>One training activity per year that includes the three Agreement mechanisms and the tallymen</i>	<i>One training activity per year that includes the three Agreement mechanisms</i>

Action 3: Continue enhancing the value of the Crees' cultural contribution through the Board's work and forest planning on Adapted Forestry Regime territory

Chapter 3 on forestry of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Quebec and the Crees of Quebec (the Agreement) is closely linked to sustainable development. It describes an Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) that must take into account better consideration of the Crees' traditional way of life.

Incorporating Cree traditional knowledge into forest management processes and activities remains a real challenge. However, it certainly represents a sustainable forestry practice. The increasing involvement of the Crees in decision-making spheres and their participation as stakeholders in Adapted Forestry Regime implementation on the Agreement's territory reflect the greater value attributed to Cree knowledge in forest management and development.

More specifically, the integration of Cree traditional knowledge into forest management processes and activities responds to several principles of sustainable development, including access to knowledge, participation and commitment, environmental protection, protection of cultural heritage, and the health and quality of life of Cree users of the territory. Through his knowledge of the territory and traditional knowledge, the tallyman is at the heart of sustainable development implementation.

Virtually all actions resulting from Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves are carried out in collaboration with representatives of the Cree communities or the Cree Nation

Government. For the next five years, the Board intends to assess the number of initiatives (or projects) that specifically incorporate Cree traditional knowledge.

GSDS sub-objective no.	Indicators (starting point)	2023-2024 target	2024-2025 target	2025-2026 target	2026-2027 target	2027-2028 target
3.2.1. Foster social cohesion through cultural dialogue	<i>The number of initiatives incorporating Cree traditional knowledge is very low.</i>	<i>Define a work plan and significant, measurable indicators for carrying out the assessment.</i>	<i>One initiative that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge monitored by the Board.</i>	<i>One initiative that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge monitored by the Board.</i>	<i>One initiative that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge monitored by the Board.</i>	<i>One initiative that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge monitored by the Board.</i>

Action 4: Promote implementation of the Paix des Braves’ economic provisions aimed at increasing economic benefits for the Crees

Chapter 3 on forestry of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Quebec and the Crees of Quebec (the Agreement) is closely linked to sustainable development. It describes an Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) that must take into account greater autonomy for communities and increased economic viability in the use of forest resources.

The economic development of Cree communities is certainly a sustainable forest management practice. One of the Agreement’s goals is giving the Cree nation greater empowerment over its economic development. Via the Agreement, Québec commits to encouraging and facilitating Cree participation in forest development projects. The Agreement contains numerous provisions of an economic nature aimed at promoting the development of business opportunities for the Crees and maximising economic spinoffs for the Cree communities.

More specifically, the economic development of Cree communities responds to several principles of sustainable development, including equity and social solidarity, economic efficiency, and responsible production and consumption.

The Board’s most recent status reports on Adapted Forestry Regime implementation reported virtually unanimous comments to the effect that the economic aspect constitutes a weakness in Chapter 3’s implementation.

In addition to the impressions revealed by the survey conducted for the 2013-2018 status report to accurately assess the Paix des Braves’ contribution to greater economic benefits for the Crees, a benchmark must be established. This will make it possible to measure changes in the economic indicators contained in the Board’s Monitoring Framework.

GSDS sub-objective no	Indicators (starting point)	2023-2024 target	2024-2025 target	2025-2026 target	2026-2027 target	2027-2028 target
4.3.1. Support sustainable regional development	<i>Establish a portrait of the economic benefits for the Crees, allowing the progression of spinoffs from the economic provisions of Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves to be monitored</i>	<i>Establish a list of significant, measurable indicators and obtain a list of up-to-date data available</i>	<i>Produce a current portrait of the economic benefits for the Crees resulting from the economic provisions of Chapter 3 of the Agreement.</i>	<i>Increase economic benefits by 5% compared to the base year (2024-2025)</i>	<i>Increase economic benefits by 10% compared to the base year (2024-2025)</i>	<i>Increase economic benefits by 15% compared to the base year (2024-2025)</i>

Action 5 : Assess the sustainability of the Board’s structuring actions to ensure that sustainable development is taken into account within these

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board shares the State’s desire to more effectively and concretely assess its impacts from a sustainability perspective. Sustainability assessment allows us to take into account the principles of sustainable development and thus establish the issues, opportunities and risks associated with our organization’s interventions.

Hence, over the next five years, our organization’s structuring actions will be monitored from a sustainability perspective.

GSDS sub-objective no	Indicators (starting point)	2023-2024 target	2024-2025 target	2025-2026 target	2026-2027 target	2027-2028 target
5.1.1. Assessing the sustainability of government interventions	<i>Percentage of the number of structuring activities of the organization having been the subject of a sustainability assessment</i>	<i>Establish the list of structuring activities in connection with our Monitoring Framework and our strategic planning</i>	<i>10% of our structuring activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment</i>	<i>20% of our structuring activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment.</i>	<i>40% of our structuring activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment</i>	<i>80% of our structuring activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment</i>



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