

BC's Green Advantage



Globally, forests and oceans together absorb about 60% of the global emissions attributed to burning of fossil fuels and land use change. BC's green advantage is our 60 million hectares of forest, equivalent to more than 13 hectares for every resident.

CARBON STORAGE IN BC FORESTS

During the 1990s, BC's forest ecosystems were sequestering carbon at a rate of 60–90 Mt of CO₂ per year. Extensive wildfires in 2003 and 2004 pushed that balance down to close to zero net gain for those years. The extensive mountain pine beetle losses combined with other disturbances will influence carbon stocks and balances over time.

Policies, incentives and decisions about land use, forest management, and services used by society can all affect carbon stocks and emissions to the atmosphere. Management of BC's abundant forests may, in future, provide many opportunities to sequester carbon, meet society's needs through carbon in harvested biomass, and supply a broad array of other values.



A CARBON-SMART FUTURE

BC has already made considerable progress in reducing fossil fuel use through cogeneration of energy and production of wood pellets. BC's wood pellet industry is rapidly expanding. In 2005 it produced 1.2 million tons of wood pellets, employed about 400 people, and generated \$150M in revenues. Increasing overseas demand is leading to construction of three new pellet mills in 2008.

BC BIOENERGY STRATEGY

The forest industry creates much of the energy it requires from residues produced during the wood conversion and manufacturing processes. The mountain pine beetle epidemic has provided a near-term opportunity to diversify our product mix. Opportunities may exist in the future to increase the use of wood biomass as a source of fibre for additional power to the utility grid: heat for industry, institutions and residential housing, bio-chemicals, and ethanol.

The BC Bioenergy Strategy commits government to supporting new market opportunities using biomass, which favours rural communities. Government has committed to provide \$25 million to support the BC Bioenergy Network, and set a goal to use BC-grown biomass to produce 50% of BC's renewable transportation fuels by 2020. These actions will spur new investment and innovation, help reduce GHG emissions, and promote sustainable economic development.



Forest Products are Carbon Smart

In a life cycle assessment of building materials, wood from sustainably managed forests compares favourably with other building products such as concrete and steel. Encouraging the use of BC wood products for building products can reduce the need for other energy intensive materials, and relieve pressure on forests in parts of the globe where the commitment to sustainability is lower.



Climate Change and Forest Carbon
Strategic Unit



BRITISH
COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth