



Forest Products Sector Council
Conseil sectoriel des produits forestiers

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Forest products industry sector study –

the need for data

The Canadian forest products industry is experiencing an unprecedented period of crisis, change and uncertainty. A number of economic and non-economic factors have combined to create significant, and structural, challenges for the industry.

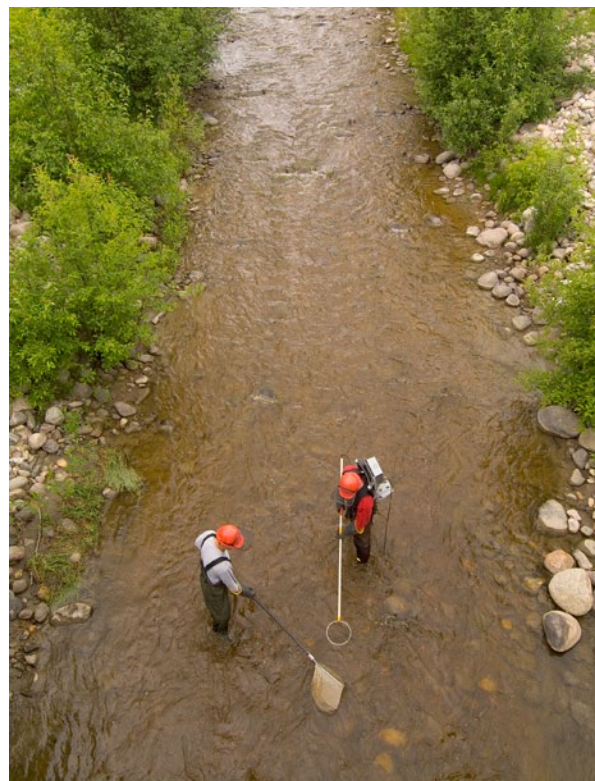
Economic factors such as a high value Canadian dollar, the crisis in the United States housing market, significant reductions in demand for newsprint, and the emergence of “low-cost” global competitors have resulted in significant number of plant and mill closures, company bankruptcies, and upwards of 50,000 workers laid off during the last four years.

While the current crisis is real and substantive, many industry leaders remain optimistic about the future of the sector, pointing to an eventual rebound. And new value-added products, such as nanotechnology and biomass, will open up new markets for Canadian producers.

To meet future demand levels, new workers will need to be recruited and trained, while older workers may need retraining. Current data and demographics suggest the industry will lose significant numbers of workers to retirement within the next decade.

In order for the industry to remain competitive now and in the future, the solution lies in a national human resource strategy. The critical first step in this strategy is to develop comprehensive and updated labour market data.

The Forest Products Sector Council (FPSC-CSPF) has begun a two-year critical study, **Labour market intelligence for Canada’s forest products industry**, to provide a sound, empirical basis for strategic decision making and ongoing action on the part of the Council and the sector.





Through this study, FPSC will obtain industry sector insight and statistics on current and future demographic trends and factors within the forest industry workforce. Areas of inquiry include: the impact of changing technology, industry restructuring, skills and knowledge requirements for industry workers, employee motivation, job satisfaction, workplace recruitment and retention, barriers to entry for new workers, and worker mobility.

FPSC will undertake primary and secondary research and analysis including stakeholder and key informant interviews and surveys, literature reviews, and the compilation of updated demographic data and information.

This research will aid the development of a series of tools and recommendations for business, labour, workers, communities, governments and other sector stakeholders.

Recommendations will focus on identifying ways to better meet current industry needs and focusing on ways to ensure industry has access to workers with the skills and knowledge needed in future.

In addition, the project will gather examples of best practices – and lessons learned – used by various stakeholders in response to similar human resource issues.

About the Forest Products Sector Council

The Forest Products Sector Council (FPSC-CSPF) is an independent, not-for-profit organization, funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program. FPSC-CSPF provides national leadership and coordination in the development of strategic responses and interventions that address current and emerging human resource and labour market issues in the Canadian forest products sector. At the heart of FPSC's mandate is the necessity to address these human resource issues through partnerships and collaborative efforts. Established in 2008, FPSC-CSPF is governed by a Board of Directors who represent business, labour, Aboriginal and educational stakeholders.