

## FORESTS, FISH AND FURS

Forests, fish and fur-bearing animals were sources of shelter, food and clothing from the time of earliest habitation in what is now Canada. Development of these resources and the industries resulting from their use have played a continuing role in Canada's growth.

Canada is a major exporter of forest products. Exports of wood, wood products and paper in 1981 amounted to \$13.0 billion which was 16% of the value of all commodity exports. This was up from the total of \$12.8 billion in 1980 which was 19% of the value. Paper and paperboard constituted 36% of all forest product exports; newsprint alone accounted for 30%.

The value of Canadian fishery product exports in 1981 exceeded \$1.5 billion, 20% higher than 1980 when they were almost \$1.3 billion. The United States remained the most important market, followed by the European Economic Community and Japan. Although the value of exports had declined in 1980 by 9% from 1979, Canada was still the world's leading fish exporting country in dollar terms. The 1980 drop in overall catches and value was attributable to resources declines, particularly Pacific salmon and herring, and to labour disputes and depressed markets.

In the fur industry, Canada's exports of undressed fur pelts in 1981 decreased by 16% from the previous year to total \$131 million. Exports of ranch-raised mink were the most valuable at \$26 million followed by beaver and muskrat.

### 8.1 Forestry

The forest sector is undergoing a transition from exploitation of the natural forest to one of more systematic forest management. In 1983 the federal government announced that \$15.5 million would be spent to support forestry training over the next three years. This would include federal funding for university contract research and development, grants to forestry schools and for student employment. Forestry programs are offered at the University of New Brunswick, Laval University, University of Toronto, Lakehead University, University of Alberta and University of British Columbia.

Another \$5.5 million for research and development was allotted to the areas of production, protection, basic research, harvesting and forest products.

The forest land area of Canada bears largely coniferous forests and makes up 64% of the land area in the provinces; of this forest land area, little more than 3% is reserved — parks and military areas where, by law, it is not available for growing and harvesting forest crops. In 1981, 145 million cubic metres of roundwood were cut, continuing a downward trend from 155 million cubic metres in 1980 and 162 million cubic metres in 1979. Timber harvesting and processing generated work for about 292,000 persons with \$6.6 billion in salaries and wages in 1981. The total value added by processing beyond the raw materials stage amounted to \$10.4 billion which was over 13.3% of the value added of all goods-producing industries.

British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec are the leading timber-producing provinces. In 1981 British Columbia sawmills produced 62% of all lumber in Canada, down from 68% in 1980, and most of the sulphate pulp and softwood plywood. Ontario and Quebec produced most of the groundwood pulp, newsprint and hardwood plywood.

There is a growing awareness of the importance of the forest in recreation, wildlife habitat and stream flow regulation. Recognition of these values is fostering a broader concept of forestry.

#### 8.1.1 Forest resources

Forests cover a vast area in the north temperate zone but wide variations in physiography, soil and climate cause marked differences. Eight fairly well-defined regions can be recognized.

**Boreal forest region.** This region represents 82% of total forested area and forms a continuous belt from Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador west to the Rocky Mountains and northwest to Alaska. White spruce and black spruce are characteristic; other prominent conifers are tamarack, which ranges throughout, balsam fir and jack pine in the eastern and central portions, and alpine fir and lodgepole pine in the west and northwest. Although primarily coniferous there is a general admixture of deciduous white birch and poplar in the central and south-central portions. Spruce and larch increase to the north and the close forest gives way to open lichen-woodland finally changing into tundra. In the east along the southern border there is an intermixture of species: eastern white pine, red pine, yellow birch, sugar maple, black ash and eastern white cedar.