



National Aboriginal
Forestry Association

Association Nationale
De Foresterie Autochtone

NAFA encourages Canadian leadership on Indigenous rights in the forest and welcomes Ainu representation to the Permanent Indigenous Peoples Committee of FSC

Press Release via NationTalk: <http://nationtalk.ca/newswire>:

National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA):

Ottawa/Kuala Lumpur/Hokkaido (June 14, 2016) – The Permanent Indigenous Peoples Committee (PIPC) of the Forest Stewardship Council International met June 7-9, 2016 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Hosted by Orang Asal representatives of Malaysia, Indigenous peoples from Canada, Scandinavia, Africa, Latin America, and Hokkaido attended the seventh meeting of the PIPC, chaired by the National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) last week. They were gathered to recognize and invigorate on-going dialogues dealing with landscapes, market certification, and Indigenous Forests. Importantly, Canada's catalytic role in human rights implementation, including Free, Prior, and Informed Consent to advance sustainable forest management and self-sufficiency on forested Indigenous homelands, was front and centre.

In support of all forest based Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the world, NAFA hereby calls on governments, leaders, and society to work with First Peoples to unlock the healing nature of Indigenous people building their communities through implementation of human rights. According to Bradley Young, Executive Director of NAFA and chairperson of the PIPC: "We must not only speak for the ones who cannot speak, but also continue to inhabit and honour homelands by sustainably making a living - pimatisowin. Only by working together in peace and friendship can we truly drive environmental, economic, and social performance and investment in forests around the world, the collective lungs of our planet."

From Turtle Island (North America), to the land of the Condor (Latin America), to Sapmi (Scandinavia), to Africa, to Asia, to Hokkaido, Indigenous representatives called for a reorienting of regional economic engines away from extraction to hope generation, anchored by investment in Indigenous Cultural Landscapes. These unique areas are beginning to become centers of Indigenous led forest management and local manufacturing, with the best of ecosystem service management, as guaranteed by FSC certification.

Based on these principles, in Canada, some provinces now boast that over 31% of employment in regional forest sector economies is Indigenous. Nationally this encompasses tens of thousands of family supporting jobs, guaranteed by Indigenous owned regional forest management corporations, forest product manufacturing mills, and dynamic Indigenous community land research units. We point to Indigenous entities, owned and co-owned, such as NorSask Forest Products, Manitou Forest Products, Taan Forest, Mistik Management, Nawiinginokiima Forest Management Corporation, Lake Nipigon Forest Management Corporation, the Whitefeather Forest, North Superior-Chapleau Forests, and Stuwix Resources as examples that could also start delivering similar results for Indigenous Peoples and

governments all over the world. Sub-national governments in Canada, including British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Ontario, are due acknowledgement here as well, being partners with the Indigenous Peoples entities mentioned above. For sure, more can and must be done to accelerate efforts, but together with Indigenous Peoples they are beginning to approach reconciliation concretely. Importantly, we remind the world that our forests are not just about money. We can systematically protect Indigenous Cultural Landscapes, while at the same time responsibly feeding forest manufacturing facilities with sustainably managed Indigenous fibre. Inexorably and with much complexity, Indigenous Peoples, governments, and markets are advancing respectful Indigenous territorial development for the benefit of all.

Finally, after three days of deliberations, the PIPC announces the appointment of Mr. Koichi Kaizawa, representative of the Ainu Forestry NGO in Nibudani, Hokkaido, Japan, to the PIPC. Mr. Kaizawa leads Ainu efforts for recognition of Ainu land rights and recognition on Hokkaido. He comments here, “Together with the FSC PIPC, we look forward to advancing regional Indigenous human rights implementation, including the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. With the 2020 Olympics approaching, Japan can now encourage regional economies to advance Indigenous rights in the forest, being a major purchaser of forest products in the region.” NAFA and the PIPC are thus honoured to welcome Mr. Kaizawa to the PIPC.

NAFA is Canada’s national Indigenous forest sector voice. With over 80% of First Nations found in the Canadian forest, holding over 21 million cubic metres of annual allowable harvest on aggregate, driving performance and growth with these communities can create over 5,800 new jobs and over \$2.6 billion in new GDP. Guided by stringent certification standards, Canada’s forests anchor the environment by storing carbon, maintaining ecosystem services, housing Peoples and providing sustenance on a global scale.

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