

**COMMUNITY FORESTRY
IN CANADA**
Lessons from Policy and Practice

Edited by Sara Teitelbaum



UBC Press · Vancouver · Toronto

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Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Community forestry in Canada : lessons from policy and practice /
edited by Sara Teitelbaum

Includes bibliographical references and index

Issued in print and electronic formats

ISBN 978-0-7748-3188-8 (hardback). – ISBN 978-0-7748-3190-1 (pdf).

ISBN 978-0-7748-3191-8 (epub). – ISBN 978-0-7748-3192-5 (mobi)

1. Community forestry – Canada. 2. Forest policy – Canada. I. Teitelbaum, Sara, editor

SD567.C644 2016

333.750971

C2016-901668-4

C2016-901669-2

Canada

UBC Press gratefully acknowledges the financial support for our publishing program of the Government of Canada (through the Canada Book Fund), the Canada Council for the Arts, and the British Columbia Arts Council.

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

UBC Press

The University of British Columbia

2029 West Mall

Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2

www.ubcpres.ca

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Introduction

A Shared Framework for the Analysis of Community Forestry in Canada

Sara Teitelbaum

This book is about community forestry in Canada. It focuses principally on those instances in which local communities have acquired some rights and responsibilities for specific public forest lands in their vicinity in order to achieve some collective benefit. In Canada, this type of institutionalized arrangement remains on the margins of policy and tenure development. The vast majority of public land is allocated to the corporate sector through large industrial licences. However, since the 1990s, through a combination of public pressure and intermittent legal reform, there has emerged a collection of initiatives on public land that combine the qualities of formalized local governance with a place-based approach. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal actors have identified these initiatives as an important alternative on the forestry landscape due to their potential to embrace a form of development that is more adapted to local aims and conditions.

The qualities of these initiatives – including their relationship to government policy, forms of collective action, and local patterns of development – is a central focus of this book. In bringing together a wide group of researchers with experience related to community forestry, this book sets out to provide a geographically inclusive and empirically rich portrait of community forestry policy and practice in Canada. This type of in-depth examination of community forestry, at both a macro and a micro scale, allows for the emergence of a more nuanced and representative portrait of community forestry. This book, the first to capture a representation of community forestry from coast to coast, is part of a growing research tradition that seeks to bridge the gap between empirical research and theoretical propositions associated with

community forestry. Most of this literature concerns cases in the Global South and includes numerous comparative case studies and meta-analyses, providing some of the best evidence for how community forestry implementation is faring (Glasmeier and Farrigan 2005; Pagdee et al. 2006; Charnley and Poe 2007; Bowler et al. 2012; Porter-Bolland et al. 2012; Hajjar, Kozak, and Innes 2012). While there are success stories, the general consensus is that adoption of community forestry in the Global South is hampered by constraints. These are apparent both at the community level, where the impediments include such things as limited capacity, internal conflict, and corruption, and at the state level, where there is clear evidence of an unwillingness on the part of governments to devolve substantive authority to the local level (Shackleton et al. 2002; Ribot 2010; Larson et al. 2010).

This level of detail and generalization has not yet emerged in the literature about community forestry in the Global North, including Canada, perhaps because of the absence of a critical mass of long-standing studies. The concept of “community forestry” is not well defined in the Global North, nor has it been implemented to the same extent. While examples are cited in countries such as Canada, the United States, Scotland, France, and Italy, these examples are better described as policy outliers than as the result of clear and sustained commitment on the part of national governments (Inglis 1999; Jeanrenaud 2001; Baker and Kusel 2003; Bullock and Hanna 2012; Lawrence et al. 2009). And yet in Canada, as in several other northern countries, there is a growing interest in community forestry and similar “hybrid” modes of governance, such as co-management and collaboration.¹ In Canada, this can be tied to a mounting social critique aimed at the perception of an entrenched pattern of industrial use and corporate control of public lands. The growing social mobilization around forests – which includes environmentalists, Aboriginal peoples, labour unions, and some rural organizations – has targeted a number of intersecting issues, including the perceived mismanagement of public forests, job losses, and the perception of a systematic pattern of exclusion of Aboriginal and local-level actors from forest-management decisions (Bernstein and Cashore 2000; Tindall, Trospen, and Perreault 2013). The unresolved nature of Aboriginal rights and title over public forest lands has become an issue of critical importance, with recent court rulings (e.g., *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia*, 2014) pointing towards the need for a radical redefinition of relationships between governments and Aboriginal peoples in the matter of environmental governance. Overall, this growing politicization of forestry issues has opened up new space for

discussions of alternative governance arrangements that include both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. Since the 1990s, there has been evidence of increased experimentation with participatory forms of forestry governance in Canada, including the Model Forest Program, co-management arrangements with Aboriginal peoples, a diversity of stakeholder advisory groups, third-party certification, and the development of community forestry tenures in several provinces (Parkins 2006; Teitelbaum, Beckley, and Nadeau 2006; Tollefson, Gale, and Haley 2008; Wyatt 2008; Howlett, Rayner, and Tollefson 2009).

In parallel with advancements at the policy and practical level, a distinct body of research literature has developed around community forestry in Canada. The early literature was instrumental in defining this approach and provided the first select surveys and descriptions of specific initiatives (Matakala and Duinker 1993; Allan and Frank 1994; Dunster 1994; Masse 1995; Beckley 1998; M'Gonigle, Egan, and Ambus 2001). This literature played an important role in exploring the potential of community forestry within a Canadian context, including enabling factors (Bouthillier and Dionne 1995; Duinker, Matakala, and Zhang 1991; Duinker et al. 1994; Harvey and Hillier 1994; Burda and M'Gonigle 1996). It also helped to set out the underlying principles of community forestry in Canada, which have since become the barometer by which these approaches are understood and evaluated. These principles, which align closely with those expressed in the international literature, emphasize community forestry's potential to meaningfully involve local people in forest decisions as the key to ensuring appropriate and beneficial ecological and socio-economic outcomes for local communities. Thus, the early literature quickly established an association between community forestry and the principles of participatory democracy, community development, and ecological stewardship (Baker and Kusel 2003; Charnley and Poe 2007; Davis 2008).

The academic community has not only played an important role in generating knowledge about community forestry but has also been active in advocating for this approach among a broad set of publics (Duinker et al. 1994; Bouthillier and Dionne 1995; Beckley 1998; M'Gonigle, Egan, and Ambus 2001; Haley 2002; Ambus et al. 2007; Teitelbaum 2010; Smith, Palmer, and Shahi 2012). This work has included the organization of numerous conferences and workshops on the topic, which have brought together academics, policy makers, Aboriginal peoples, and practitioners for the purposes of learning and networking. Some academics have worked with non-governmental organizations on the production of educational materials, while others

have collaborated directly with government on the design of community forestry policy. While these activities have most certainly helped move implementation forward, the combined research-advocacy role may also have contributed to what some have described as an idealistic tendency apparent in the community forestry literature (Beckley 1998; Bullock and Hanna 2012). In 1998, Beckley described the literature this way: “Much of the theoretical literature is written by proponents of these models who wish to see more widespread adoption of community forestry and co-management. Their discussions are more about what community forests or co-management could be or should be, rather than what the few nominal, empirical examples of these models actually are” (737).

While this depiction is no longer completely accurate, it is still possible to discern a certain tension between enthusiastic support and a more detached stance. The tendency for community forestry research to draw on qualitative methods – mainly interviews with key informants – may reinforce this tension. Few studies present measurable evidence of socio-economic and ecological outcomes; most prefer instead to rely on descriptive accounts. However, since the early 2000s, the theoretical frameworks associated with community forestry research have broadened considerably. Many new initiatives have been implemented, elevating the status of community forestry and creating new research interest, especially in British Columbia. The issue of devolution and the extent of power sharing with communities has been examined, revealing patterns of top-down governmental authority, particularly with regard to the more strategic dimensions of forest management (Chiasson, Andrew, and Leclerc 2008). Researchers have analyzed the economic trajectories of community forests through various lenses, including that of multi-functionality (Luckert 1999; Ambus et al. 2007; Chiasson, Leclerc, and Andres 2010). This work highlights the difficulties faced by community forests in breaking out of commodity-based approach to forest development, an approach that reflects the narrow economic base within many rural regions. Still others have analyzed community forestry through the theoretical framework of neoliberalism in order to clarify governmental motivations for policy reform and analyze the manoeuvrability of local forest-related objectives within the broader political climate (McCarthy 2006; Pinkerton et al. 2008). Some attention has also been given to the relationship between community forestry and the rights of Aboriginal peoples, revealing strong potential for commensurability, albeit under conditions of mutual respect and shared jurisdiction (e.g., Booth 1998; Bullock 2012; Smith,

Palmer, and Shahi 2012; Smith 2013). Overall, this research has helped connect community forestry scholarship to the broader fields of environmental governance. It has also helped identify a number of structural constraints to the full implementation of community forestry, including insufficient institutional arrangements, a lack of organizational resources, and a challenging economic context (McIlveen and Bradshaw 2005–6; Bullock, Hanna, and Slocombe 2009; McIlveen and Bradshaw 2009).

A smaller portion of the research examines conditions at the local level through in-depth case studies, pointing to the presence of an enduring empirical gap, as was highlighted by Beckley over a decade ago. One original contribution is Reed and McIlveen's (2006) case study of governance and civic science at the Burns Lake Community Forest in British Columbia. In examining governance practices, the authors observed a tendency for the organization to concentrate on capturing forestry expertise at the expense of a more pluralistic approach, illustrating "a tension between the traditional economic objectives of forestry and the expectation that community forests will also address a broader social agenda of taking care of local people" (602). This article spurred a lively debate on "success factors" in community forestry and the tension between inclusivity and effectiveness (Bradshaw 2007; Pagdee, Kim, and Daugherty 2007; Reed and McIlveen 2007). In another study, Davis (2008) examines the relationship between local control and ecosystem-based management, comparing case studies from British Columbia and Mexico. In a similar vein, Bullock and Hanna (2012) describe the challenges involved in adopting ecologically oriented practices at the Creston Valley Forest Corporation (CVFC) in British Columbia, pointing to insufficient local support, degraded site conditions, and weak provincial support.

This book is designed to fill key gaps within the Canadian research literature. It brings together twenty-eight researchers with expertise in the field of community forestry research in order to respond to three distinct objectives. The first is to provide a more complete portrait of community forestry policy and practice across *all* jurisdictions in Canada, through a series of regional portraits covering all ten provinces (Part 1). Thus far, the community forestry literature has focused almost exclusively on those jurisdictions with clear tenure arrangements, with a disproportionate amount of attention given to developments in British Columbia. Some provinces, such as Quebec, have a long tradition of collective action around forests but have generated few publications, especially in English (some exceptions include Chiasson

and Leclerc 2013; Chiasson, Boucher, and Martin 2005). Still other regions, such as the Prairie provinces and the Atlantic provinces, are even further beneath the radar, perhaps because of an assumption that community forestry does not exist there. An important objective of this book, therefore, is to expand the horizons of community forestry research by spotlighting those regions that have not yet been sufficiently explored. What is the history of social mobilization around community-based forestry? What do patterns of governance look like? How are Aboriginal peoples engaged in forest governance? What has prevented or stimulated community forestry in particular regions? What have been the key drivers for community forestry development? These questions are equally relevant in those provinces that do have a documented tradition of community forestry practice as in those that don't, since this type of concise historical overview has rarely been produced. Indeed, this book represents the first attempt to synthesize and compare the evolution of community forestry across all Canadian provinces.

The second aim of this book is to address the empirical gap discussed above through the presentation of new case study work. The five chapters of Part 2 present original research findings from eleven different community forests across Canada. A critical mass of community forests now exists in Canada – more than one hundred overall, many with more than a decade of experience (Teitelbaum, Beckley, and Nadeau 2006). These provide an excellent opportunity for in-depth and comparative analysis, yet only a few of them have been the focus of academic research. The research reported in this volume enhances our knowledge of the range of experiences that exist in Canada and seeks to answer some key questions: What are the driving orientations of community forests? What kinds of benefits are being generated by community forests, and how are these benefits being distributed within communities? Is community forestry governance facilitating a shift towards more collaborative and inclusive forms of decision-making? Are community forests innovating with regard to ecological sustainability? The contributors to this book engage critically with these questions through new case study work in order to “bridge theory and practice” (Charnley and Poe 2007). These case studies draw on a common conceptual framework featuring four principles: participatory governance, rights, local benefits, and ecological stewardship. These principles are widely recognized as being underlying aspirations of community forestry, and as such, they provide a common foundation for the analysis of socio-economic and ecological outcomes.

The third objective of the book is to create a space for new reflections about community forestry, including its symbolic and practical importance within the mix of governance arrangements in Canada. As we have seen, community forestry has taken root in some parts of the country, yet its peripheral status has remained unchanged despite several decades of advocacy. Meanwhile, forestry reforms across the country indicate a continued preference for large-scale and globalized forms of production. This points to a potential incommensurability between the underlying ideological tenets of community forestry and the dominant economic model. In order to understand the full significance of community forestry, as a set of ideas *and* practices, we need to investigate the origin of this incommensurability. Can community forestry go beyond its current role? How do we navigate the tension between utopian ideals and pragmatic realities? Is community forestry really a viable option for Canada? If so, what is required for the strengthening of community forestry? The three chapters in Part 3 are conceptually rather than empirically driven, offering different perspectives on the future of community forestry and its transformative potential.

Theoretical Framework

Four principles make up the conceptual framework for this book: participatory governance, rights, local benefits, and ecological stewardship. Expressed in different ways, they appear frequently as goals of community forestry, whether in the academic literature, in government policy, or in the mission statements of community forests themselves. Clearly, these are idealized terms; in adopting them as principles for this book, the idea is not to set unrealistic expectations for community forestry but rather to create a theoretical basis for exploring community forestry practices and outcomes. Indeed, these principles are unlikely to be present in equal force within every community forest initiative but will manifest with different degrees of importance. Krogman and Beckley (2002) propose a control-benefit continuum, which envisions a minimum threshold of local control and community benefit as being integral to the identity of a community forest. We might suppose something similar: that some minimum level of effort and achievement towards these four principles and goals must be in evidence for an endeavour to be identified as a community forest.

Participatory governance speaks to the proposition, described in the literature, of ensuring that local people have the opportunity to meaningfully participate in decision-making concerning forests in their

region. This has been a key driver for community forestry in Canada and beyond, since community forestry has been envisioned as a means to correct the legacy of top-down and exclusionary forestry policies. However, the literature reveals that participatory governance requires much more than the simple transfer of power from central governments to communities; increasingly, studies document an absence of accountability at the local level due to corrupt or elitist practices within local institutions (Shackleton et al. 2002; Ribot 2010). Ensuring good governance therefore requires clear rules, accountability mechanisms, and redress mechanisms, as well as forms of community engagement (Tyler, Ambus, and Davis-Case 2007; World Resources Institute 2009; Secco, Pettenella, and Gatto 2011). This is reflected in Kearney et al.'s (2007, 2) definition of participatory governance: "the effort to achieve change through actions that are more effective and equitable than normally possible through representative government and bureaucratic administration by inviting citizens to a deep and sustained participation in decision-making." The analysis of participatory governance therefore speaks to a number of questions, including the following: Who decides? How is the community represented? How does the community participate? What are the accountability mechanisms, both upward and downward?

The second principle, *rights*, speaks to the level of authority that a community has over forest decisions (Fennell 2011). This is encapsulated by the concept of devolution, which can be described as the transfer of rights and responsibilities from central governments to local communities through legal arrangements such as tenures (Shackleton et al. 2002; Larson et al. 2010). While gaining legal rights is not a strict requirement for community forestry – there are examples in Canada where communities have few formal rights – it is widely seen as a facilitating step in gaining meaningful decision-making power and capturing benefits over the long term. Indeed, recent research indicates that positive results are more likely to be achieved if tenure reforms are fully implemented (Larson et al. 2010). Schlager and Ostrom (1992) provide a useful classification for the different degrees of rights transferred from the state to the local level. Rights at the operational level include the ability to access and withdraw the resource, while rights at the collective-choice level include management, exclusion, and alienation. These collective-choice rights represent more strategic dimensions, including decisions about how the resource should be used and managed. In the Canadian context, tenure arrangements often

limit community forests to operational-level rights, an observation echoed in the international literature (Burda and M'Gonigle 1996; Clogg 1997; Ambus and Hoberg 2011; Cronkleton, Saigal, and Pulhin 2012). The issue of rights raises a number of questions: How much influence does the community have over decisions? Are these rights formalized through legal arrangements? Does the community have the right to establish rules concerning how the forest will be used?

The third principle, *local benefits*, relates to the aspiration that community forests generate various benefits for local communities (McDermott and Schreckenberg 2009; Colfer 2005). Some researchers have hypothesized that community forests are more likely than private forest companies to lead to enhanced benefits for communities, because private companies aim to generate profits for distant shareholders rather than to reinvest in the communities where they operate (Freudenburg 1992; Krogman and Beckley 2002). By contrast, descriptions of community forestry make reference to a type of locally centred economic development vision according to which keeping the wealth generated by the forest in the local area creates new opportunities, which in turn contribute to the revitalization of rural communities (Duinker et al. 1994; Burda and M'Gonigle 1996). The benefits associated with community forestry include economic ones such as the generation of employment, processing opportunities, and direct investments in services and infrastructures. However, benefits can also be socio-cultural (educational opportunities, trails, and recreational services, etc.) and ecological (water, wildlife, and forest protection; Colfer 2005). The idea that community forestry can help facilitate a diversification of activities, and thus movement away from a timber-production model, has often been asserted (Pinkerton and Benner 2013). Research indicates that many community forests adopt a mix of commodity-based and environmental-based goals (Luizza 2011). The concept of local benefits can be articulated through a number of questions: What are the activities of the community forest? What benefits do they bring to local people? How are benefits distributed among community members? Are inequalities being reinforced or lessened?

The fourth principle generally associated with community forestry is that of achieving higher levels of *ecological stewardship*, including protection of water quality, viewsapes, wildlife, and biodiversity (M'Gonigle, Egan, and Ambus 2001; Davis 2008; Furness and Nelson 2012). Indeed, the desire to counteract what have been characterized as the destructive forestry practices of industrial forestry has been an

important point of mobilization for the community forestry movement. In Canada, some community forests have been given management responsibility over ecologically sensitive areas, precisely because of their particular orientation towards alternative harvesting techniques. However, there is also evidence that not all community forests are inherently “conservationist”; like other forestry actors, community forests face economic pressures as well as capacity limitations (Bradshaw 2003; Western, Wright, and Strum 1994). Given the small size of community forests, researchers have also raised the question of whether communities have the capacity to address landscape-level environmental issues such as biodiversity loss or climate change (Agrawal and Gibson 1999). Increasingly, community forestry scholars are drawing on interdisciplinary and systems-based approaches – such as complexity theory, resilience theory, and adaptive management – in order to present a more integrated perspective on how ecological dimensions intersect with broader issues of socio-economic and cultural sustainability (Folke et al. 2005; Gunderson 2003; Armitage et al. 2009). In this book, the issue of ecological stewardship is encapsulated in a number of questions: Is community forestry applying ecologically adapted management practices? Are there strong policies and norms in place to ensure oversight? Does the capacity exist to address landscape-level issues?

Part 1: Creating a National Portrait

The first section of this book responds to the first objective: namely, to create a more complete portrait of community forestry policy and practices across all jurisdictions. This section features six regional portraits (Newfoundland, the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairie provinces, and British Columbia). Weaving together policy history, analysis of social movements, and description of initiatives, these chapters help us to understand what inroads community forestry has made in each province.

The national picture that emerges is marked by clear differences in the extent to which community forestry policies have been implemented from one province to the next. There are also, however, strong similarities across all jurisdictions with regard to their overarching political landscapes. Without exception, authors describe policy regimes characterized by a strong preference for building relationships with corporate-industrial actors rather than with non-traditional actors

such as rural communities and Aboriginal peoples. This bilateralism is accompanied by a focus on prioritizing commercial harvesting over the range of other forest values. Erin Kelly and Sara Carson (Chapter 1) describe the dynamic within Newfoundland's forest managers: "The tendency at DNR Forestry was to optimize commercial harvest, which the department considered 'eroded' by competing uses, including domestic harvest, municipal watersheds, wildlife habitat, and cabin building."

That being said, a type of continuum can be distinguished: at one end of the spectrum are those provinces that have chosen to remain wedded to conventional public participation mechanisms (public review of plans, stakeholder advisory groups), and at the other end are those that have recognized community forestry legally through the creation of tenures. In between are provinces that have embraced what John Parkins and his coauthors (in Chapter 5) call "enhanced public input" or "community-based forestry." While these arrangements do not necessarily confer direct management rights or commercial benefits to communities, they nevertheless facilitate collaborative governance arrangements through models such as comanagement boards, partnership agreements, and regional corporations (see Chapters 4 and 5 for further details).

Table I describes the status of community forestry arrangements on public (Crown) land across Canada. Based on material presented in Chapters 1 through 6, with the addition of a few statistics (Canada, NRCAN 2014), Table I reveals mixed progress towards implementing community forestry. Four out of ten provinces have established community forestry on area-based tenures: British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. Of these four, British Columbia and Quebec have the highest concentrations of community forestry initiatives.

The chapters in Part 1 provide important insights as to the reasons for these marked regional differences in the level of community forestry implementation. Social mobilization and public pressure emerge as enabling factors in several provinces where community forests are well established. In Chapter 6, Lisa Ambus presents a historical overview of British Columbia's first community forestry tenure, the Community Forest Agreement (CFA), tying its creation to the conflictual political climate surrounding forestry at the time. "The mid-1990s saw the emergence of a community forestry movement consisting of a loose coalition of communities and other groups, which aimed to capitalize on potential opportunities for alternative and community-based approaches to forestry as government sought out policy solutions to

TABLE I Status of community forestry on public (Crown) land in Canada

Province	Crown forests (provincial and federal, as % of forest lands)	Progress towards community forestry	Approximate number of initiatives on Crown land	Name of tenure or enabling legislation
Newfoundland	99%	Absent	0	NA
Nova Scotia	32%	Emergent	1	Forest utilization licence agreement (standard Crown licence)
New Brunswick	50%	Absent	0	NA
Prince Edward Island	9%	Absent	0	NA
Quebec	89%	Established	67	Forest management contract Territorial management agreement
Ontario	92%	Established	3	Algonquin Forestry Authority Act Sustainable forest licence (standard Crown licence)
Manitoba	97%	Absent	0	
Saskatchewan	94%	Absent	0	
Alberta	97%	Absent	0	
British Columbia	97%	Established	49	community forest agreement

Source: Crown forest statistics drawn from Canada, CFS, NRCAN (2005).

the War in the Woods.” Ambus describes an evolving dynamic of civil society support, which has since coalesced in the creation of a provincial association that is uniquely positioned to provide a common voice for community forestry actors in British Columbia. Similarly, in Chapter 3, Solange Nadeau and Sara Teitelbaum describe a long tradition of collective action originating within rural communities in Quebec. These collective efforts, described by the authors as a response to economic decline and centrist policies, spawned a diversity of community-based forestry models, including joint management groups, cooperatives, and tenant farms. While few of these models were successful in gaining direct access to public lands, the authors describe a parallel development in the form of small-scale tenures allocated to municipal and, to a lesser extent, Aboriginal communities. Nadeau and Teitelbaum’s chapter provides a rich account of endogenous forest development strategies in Quebec and their unsettled relationship to forest policy – the first such account produced for an English-speaking audience.

The chapters in Part 1 also tell a story of compromise. The translation of ideals into practice, in all those jurisdictions that have established community forests, has been arduous, in part because of what Ambus calls a situation of “constrained devolution,” meaning the limited transfer of management rights:

With the institutionalization of community forestry in the CFA, the vision of the community forest movement became bound within a set of rules determined, ultimately, by the provincial government. As a result, CFA holders struggle to work within the limitations of their management mandates and strive to balance the high, and sometimes contradictory, expectations of diverse local stakeholders.

Ambus’s observation is echoed in Nadeau and Teitelbaum’s exposé of Quebec, where the implementation of community forestry tenures has been restricted to a narrow set of actors and involves only small parcels of unallocated forest lands rather than a wholesale redistribution of industrial forestry allocations.

The stories of other provinces, including Ontario and the Prairies, follow a different path, one that arguably aligns more closely with the concept of “enhanced participation.” A distinguishing feature of policy in these provinces is a preference for wedding governance innovations to large industrial tenures. In Chapter 4, Lynn Palmer, Peggy Smith, and Chander Shahi draw on complexity theory to describe the different stages of policy-making in Ontario and the place of community forestry

within each historical period. The chapter reveals repeated moments of tenure reform and governance experimentation that resulted in some large-scale examples of community forestry, such as Westwind Forest Stewardship and Algonquin Forest Authority, and recent partnerships between First Nations and municipalities. Overall, however, the authors describe insufficient change: “The rigidity of the command-and-control approach meant the system was able to accommodate only minor variations ... As a result, all community forestry attempts, whether enduring or not, have amounted to localized experiments only, failing to transform the system.” Along similar lines, in Chapter 5, John Parkins, Ryan Bullock, Bram Noble, and Maureen Reed explore the landscape of governance arrangements in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, provinces that are virtually unmentioned in the community forestry literature. The authors identify three initiatives that encompass some of the qualities of community forestry, several of which are agreements established with Aboriginal communities. However, the authors stop short of characterizing these as community forests because of an absence of shared jurisdiction. They speculate that in the Prairies, where forestry is a more recent development and has been less controversial than in neighbouring British Columbia, provincial governments have opted for a strategy of large-scale industrial development combined with enhanced community participation because such an arrangement “appeared to offer government the best of both worlds: that is, the potential benefits of larger, international companies (such as access to capital and markets) while ensuring that the interests of local, northern, and Aboriginal communities were also included in decisions. Given this policy thrust, governments and communities were much less interested in smaller-scale, community-oriented development.”

The distribution of public-private property rights has created a different context for the implementation of community forestry in the Atlantic provinces. The Maritime provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) have a much higher proportion of private land, held under small-scale property ownership. In Chapter 2, Thomas Beckley posits a novel thesis to explain the lack of progress towards community forestry. He attributes this deficit to the high proportion of small private forest holdings, which meet many of the same socio-economic objectives as community forests, but at an individual level. “If we scale this up one level of social organization (Beckley 1998) – that is, if we consider that communities comprise individuals – we

can argue that much of the forest land in the Maritimes is managed for community benefits, which is a cornerstone of community forestry. This ownership pattern is virtually non-existent in Newfoundland, however, where there are no institutionalized examples of community forestry.” As Erin Kelly and Sara Carson point out in Chapter 1, community-based management can take different forms, as evidenced by the strong tradition of subsistence activities in Newfoundland. However, the authors point to an entrenched pattern of disregard for citizen concerns in planning characterized by “one-size-fits-all rules and planning, limited access and decision-making power for local users, and top-down fixes for local resource needs.” Drawing on the example of the Great Northern Peninsula, Kelly and Carson describe the opportunities for renewal in the form of community forestry partnerships between government and local development organizations.

Finally, the chapters in Part 1 emphasize the growing connection between community forestry and Aboriginal rights. Across all the provinces in which community forests have been implemented, we see examples of small- and large-scale tenures accorded to Aboriginal communities. In Chapter 4, Palmer, Smith, and Shahi describe recent tenure reforms in Ontario that include clear orientations towards enhanced Aboriginal and local involvement – in some cases, through new municipal-Aboriginal cooperation. Comanagement arrangements with Aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan are also profiled in Chapter 5. It is clear that community forestry, in the sense defined in this book, has strong appeal for Aboriginal communities because of the focus on rights, benefits, and participation. However, chapter authors agree that in practice, these arrangements are falling short of these three principles because of an absence of shared jurisdictional authority, a key step towards the implementation of Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Part 2: Bridging Theory and Practice through Case Studies

This section responds to the second objective of this book: to address the gap in empirical work through the presentation of new case studies. The chapters in Part 2 describe eleven community forestry initiatives in the provinces of British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. These initiatives are, for the most part, small-scale and encompass a variety of organizational structures within unique cultural and environmental contexts. Some, such as Burns Lake Community Forest in

British Columbia (Chapter 7), are well-established organizations that have achieved a certain level of financial stability and success through integration into the traditional forest economy. Others, such as the cooperatives in Quebec described by Édith Leclerc and Guy Chiasson (Chapter 9), represent short-lived attempts to provide employment opportunities in geographically peripheral regions. Still others, such as the Common Ground initiative in Kenora, Ontario, presented by James Robson and his coauthors (Chapter 8), are emerging attempts to build cross-cultural collaboration in an urban forest setting. Collectively, these cases point to the diversity of social values driving community forestry implementation.

Governance is a pervasive theme within this book, which provides new evidence concerning the long-standing debate about the level of inclusivity and participation manifested by community forests (Reed and McIlveen 2006; Bradshaw 2007; Pagdee, Kim, and Daugherty 2007). Previous research has highlighted the tension between expert-driven governance approaches and more participatory models. McIlveen and Bradshaw (2005–6) argue that it may be unrealistic to expect community forests to out-perform private forest companies in public participation, given the former's small size and lack of institutional support. The case studies in this section reinforce the notion that community forestry cannot be equated with the drive towards broad-based community engagement. In Chapter 11, Sara Teitelbaum compares participatory governance practices in four community forests in three provinces (Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia), revealing very different scenarios. Two of these organizations demonstrate very strong practices, including community surveys, open houses, public advisory groups, and so on, while the other two rely simply on community representation through a formal board of directors. This chapter brings an additional dimension to the issue of participatory governance by highlighting a potential connection between citizen engagement and the presence of a more diversified vision of forest use. Teitelbaum posits that non-timber activities create a natural bridge towards community engagement.

This resonates with the findings of Robson and colleagues in Chapter 8, who describe a local forest governance initiative in an urban, post-extractive setting where the priority is placed on ensuring cross-cultural communication and collaboration.

Another set of governance issues converges around the topic of rights and levels of decision-making influence. While it is well established that community forests, both in Canada and internationally, are

characterized by what Lisa Ambus (Chapter 6) calls a situation of “constrained devolution,” the case studies provide important lessons concerning the different ways in which this is manifested and the types of strategies that community forests adopt in order to mitigate its effects. For example, in Chapter 10, Lauren Rethoret, Murray Rutherford, and Evelyn Pinkerton describe two community forests in British Columbia, Harrop-Procter and Creston, that are pursuing source water protection as a priority management objective. Drawing on a combination of interviews, government documents, forestry plans, and board meeting minutes, the authors describe positive results in achieving objectives around water protection. However, they also describe a tug-of-war between top-down regulation and local approaches:

Harrop-Procter was refused the right to manage its watersheds without cutting timber. Creston’s right to manage wildfire risk in one of its watersheds was limited by legislation that prescribes standards for restocking designed primarily to sustain timber harvests, leaving little room to implement alternative ecological objectives. Both of these limitations on local discretion arise from the provincial government’s focus on maintaining the overall level of timber harvest and economic return from BC’s forestry land base, a long-time driver of forest policy in the province.

This chapter is unique in that it represents one of very few Canadian case studies that specifically target environmental outcomes.

The chapters in this section also point to a fragility related to the broad economic context within which community forests are embedded. The case studies reveal that community forests are deeply inscribed into regional patterns of economic development – an environment characterized by globalization, neoliberal policies, and market instability. Within this context, scale becomes an important factor. In Chapter 7, Kirsten McIlveen and Michelle Rhodes present a fascinating study of the Burns Lake Community Forest and its response to the mountain pine beetle outbreak, a landscape-level threat in northern British Columbia. Drawing on research from two different periods, the authors provide an illustration of how, despite strong experience and organizational capacity (community support, leadership, and expertise), the Burns Lake Community Forest is limited both by the scale of its operations and land base and by the market conditions that prevail in the region, which restrict opportunities for diversification. A similar dynamic exists among community forests in rural Quebec, described by

Édith Leclerc and Guy Chiasson in Chapter 9. Theirs is an original contribution in that it presents some of the first descriptions of local governance initiatives that did not persist. Of the four case studies analyzed, two (Coopérative forestière de Beaucanton and Coopérative de solidarité de Duhamel) ran into difficulties early on because of a number of intersecting factors, including a lack of qualified labour, technical expertise, and financial capital. This chapter highlights the precarious nature of community forest organizations and the pivotal issue of community capacity, especially for those organizations that operate in geographically remote locations without the benefit of tenure.

One final topic, rarely explored in the community forest literature, deserves attention: the role that community forests play in building connections, identity, and a sense of place. In Chapter 8, James Robson and his coauthors describe Common Ground, an emerging collaborative governance initiative in Kenora, Ontario. The case study describes a post-industrial forest in an urban setting that has become a *de facto* recreation and spiritual commons for both First Nation and non-First Nation residents. This research reveals strong connections between local people and these forests and explores the history of First Nations' use of, and then exclusion from, these lands. The implementation of local governance therefore requires careful attention to local values, a shared understanding of place, and jointly established rules that respect different cultural traditions and resource use patterns. Chapter 8 is an important complement to the other case studies in this book, reminding us that governance means much more than ensuring democratic representation and effective administration; rather, it can be a platform for collaboration and can help to "construct shared experiences and meanings that transcend social and cultural differences."

Part 3: Casting Forward

This section of the book addresses the third objective: to create a space for new reflections about community forestry, including its symbolic and practical significance and its future role in Canada. Can community forestry expand beyond its current role? How do we navigate the tension between utopian ideals and pragmatic realities? Is community forestry really a viable option for Canada? If so, what is required for strengthened forms of community forestry?

The first two chapters in Part 3 focus on the need for deep institutional reform, which requires a fundamental shift in how governments

understand and engage with community forestry. In Chapter 13, Peter Duinker and Kris MacLellan take us on a journey into the future, positing different scenarios for Canada's forests in the year 2050. Within the context of the Forest Futures Project, a two-year participatory research endeavour, the authors find "a strong leaning across Canada for a future characterized by more community-controlled forests." On this basis, they construct an argument in favour of a formalized strategy of adaptive policy development on the part of governments. Drawing on the example of Nova Scotia, the authors describe their vision for a robust community forestry policy based on the principle of institutional experimentation and evaluation. This approach is premised on a strong and stable enabling policy framework, a reliance on distributed leadership tapping into the creative energy of local people, the application of diverse governance models (a range of sizes, organizational structures, and objectives), and "a boldness to abandon prevailing conventions and step smartly, with eyes wide open, into novel territory."

In Chapter 12, Erik Leslie, a practitioner with the Harrop-Procter Community Forest in British Columbia, builds his argument around the need for community forests to acquire more comprehensive sets of rights. Tracing the development of community forestry policy in British Columbia, Leslie observes only "small de facto steps" in the direction of enhanced operational management independence rather than a transfer of higher-level management rights. In his view, providing communities with more strategic decision-making regarding resources would not only facilitate innovative practices but also help ensure citizen engagement. "When community members feel like they actually have meaningful rights and ultimate control, a subtle but profound societal shift occurs and new approaches can emerge." Leslie illustrates this argument through a skilful interweaving of common property theory and a narrative account, drawing on the experiences of the Harrop-Procter Community Forest and negotiations around the determination of the annual allowable cut.

In the final chapter of this book, Ryan Bullock and Maureen Reed propose a vast reorganization of the relationship between communities and forests. Confronting the "myth of self-reliance," a cultural fiction based on "self-reliant northerners and isolated communities eking out an existence in rugged Canadian landscapes, surrounded by pristine environs and natural resources containing immeasurable wealth," the authors advance their own conceptualization of resource communities drawing on a concept that they call the "company-community

system.” This system is characterized by a core-periphery dependence that yields insufficient diversification, social support, and community infrastructure. The authors propose a shift from the company-community system to a “community-forest system,” which is based on endogenous and decentralized development. The authors’ vision foresees greater integration among the many localized community forestry movements emerging in Canada and the creation of a functional community forestry network to coordinate actions across different scales.

Conclusion

This book brings together many of the leading researchers of community forestry in the Canadian context. Drawing on a common theoretical framework based on four principles – participatory governance, rights, local benefits, and ecological stewardship – the authors seek to bridge theory and practice in order to build a more empirically based portrait of community forestry across all Canadian provinces. The picture that emerges is one of a governance approach that has found broad consensus among civil society groups because of its ability to provide a tangible counterpoint to the corporate-industrial model. However, the attempt to fully realize this approach has been a struggle. The translation of ideas into practice has proven challenging, in large part because of the structure of the existing forest sector and a lack of clear political support from governments. These barriers place an unfair burden on community forests, since they are expected to be both economically competitive, albeit with a much smaller land base, and innovative, as prescribed by their mandate. The case studies in this book provide fresh evidence for how this balancing act is going. Some community forest initiatives, particularly those that target social or ecological innovation, have fared well, creating new opportunities for collaboration, intercultural communication, and strengthened environmental stewardship. For others, the convergence of structural barriers and low levels of community capacity has led to failure. The key to the future of community forestry on public land lies in deep institutional reform, which would provide communities not only with greater influence over forest management but also with the necessary support to ensure ongoing progress.