

## **Communities dependent on the forest in Canada**

### Introduction

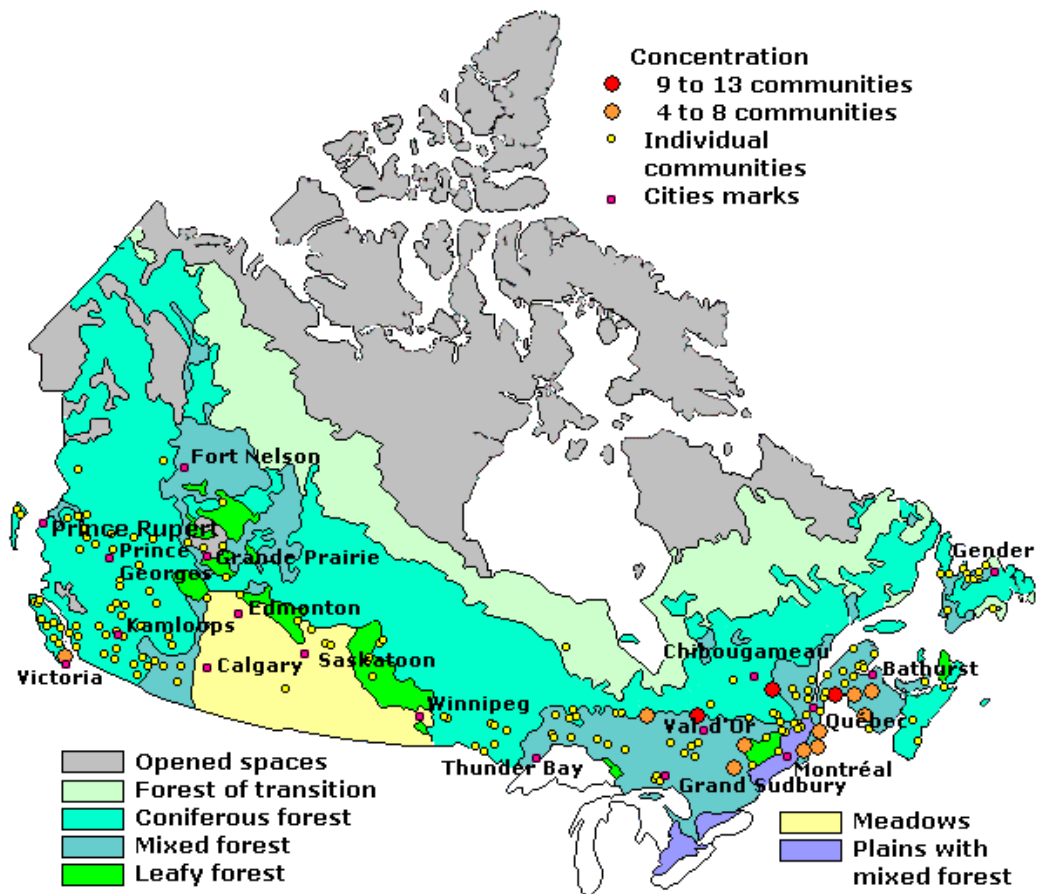
We say about the rural space that it establishes an middle of complex life and marked with disparities. The rural space is strongly modelled by external forces which intervene in the spatial dynamics generally. We hold two definitions of the rural space. At first, that of the Statistics Canada identifies as rural entity, a town of less than 1 000 people and whose density is lower than 400 in the 20 square kilometres. According to another more operational said definition, a rural village corresponds to a town of less than 2 500 inhabitants. Communities dependent on the forest are a type of rural communities in the same way as those agricultural. Besides, we also find mining communities and the others dependent on energy resources.

### Canadian model

For a country so little populated as Canada, the rural life answers a reality of geopolitical nature. It seems that an idle territory loses its identity and quickly, becomes an object of greed. The national identity implies inevitably a concrete territorial referent and the rural life allows to a large extent, to maintain the occupation of the territory. The rural life offers a mode of occupation of the space which allows the need or by necessity, a return in the forest. Moreover, the forested production is a part of important and often additional activities of the traditionally agricultural rural circles.

Communities dependent on the forest in Canada divide up according to conditions biophysics and geopolitics. We find a configuration of some strong concentrations following the northern limit of the mixed forest which goes from Ontario to Newfoundland. Another configuration of weaker concentrations follows the American frontier between Ontario and New Brunswick. In the Canadian west, communities seem more scattered. But We observe that on average, communities situated in the west part of the country are more populous by far than those situated in the east of the country. The strongest town registered in 1996 is situated to Prince Georges. It groups together more than 29 000 people. The cartography more low, presents the location of communities dependent on the forest in Canada in 1996.

## Map of communities dependent on the forest in Canada in 1996



Under the French regime, the conditions biophysics convenient to the agriculture have the first ones, determined the geographic location of communities dependent on the forest. Lands in borders of Appalachians and those situated in Laurentides in Quebec, notably, establish typical cases of lands with weak agricultural potential. For the rural communities situated in this zone, the forest often appeared as the means of second appeal to remain and often also, an additional activity to occupy the long winter months. Later, from the years " 1950 ", the accelerated construction of transportation infrastructures and the fast improvement of the means of extraction and transport strongly contributed to the development of the bordering communities of the coniferous forest.

Further to the war of Seven Years ( 1756-1763 ), it had a renewal for the industry of the wood of work in the east of the country. But we cannot again speak about a real impulse in this branch of industry before 1816. During preindustrial period (before 1880), the policy bound to the exploitation of the forested resource had to foresee the putting at

disposition the aforementioned " barons of the wood of work » of forested territories or an access easy to the resource. The strategic location of the places of transformation often favored the mouth of the navigable rivers. The emergence and the development of these communities, generally took place under the initiative of the manufacturers who implanted their units of transformation and assured the other economic functions in the community.

1920s at the end the second world war, the expansionist vision supported in the forest policy of time, benefited the development of the other communities situated more towards the centre of the country of which the community of Pine Falls in the North of Winnipeg. For the post-war period, the concept of management with steady return takes a major importance, to guarantee a stable and permanent supply of the wood transformation factories. The unexploited forest resources of the back countries present then an interest increased within the high authorities of the federal government. Strong sums were then surrounded in transport, electricity and community infrastructures and laws were adopted for the creation of integrated forested lots. Under the model of the interventionist State, several communities were born and the others were revitalized. The community of Terrace Bay situated in a little more than 200 kilometres east of Thunder Bay was one of the completely planned first ones. The community of Gold River on the Vancouver Island is another more recent case of community planned under the keynesian model.

### Conclusion

The development and the development of communities dependent on the forest in Canada historically rested on conditions biophysics and on the other conditions of geopolitical nature. The relative weight of the some with regard to the others varied according to the geographic location mainly in the accessible zone of the coniferous forest, and the model of dominant development of which that of the manufacturer initiator and/or of the interventionist State. The development in rural context contains stakes strongly bound to the environment and to the resources which the ground produces. The economic variety seems very important for the rural regions in search of autonomy and a deficiency on this plan often pull major impacts when the dominant economic activity undergone a drastic decrease. The rural regions often present a relatively restricted economic diversity and the forest industry becomes in this context, a vital additional activity.

## References

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## Source of the cartographic data

<http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/francais/maps/environment/forest/useforest/for96>  
<http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/francais/maps/environment/forest/forestcanada/wetlandsforests>