March 21st, 2017

STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

RE: Additional FPAC recommendations regarding transitioning to a low carbon economy

Dear Standing Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective and recommendations as well as answer questions on your study on the effects of transitioning to a low carbon economy. During the March 2nd sessions, the committee chair asked if the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) could provide concrete recommendations relating to our three main themes: Forest management, manufacturing facilities and the use of wood and bio-based products. Please find below, for your consideration, key recommendations to help Canada transition to a low carbon economy.

**Forest Management**

- Reduce the burning of harvest residue in the forest and increase recovery for the commercial use of these residues to produce products and/or energy.

- Increased salvage harvesting by prioritizing harvest of trees that are dead, dying, or damaged by fire, wind, insects that has the double advantage of reducing harvest pressure on healthy forests and of using the carbon in these trees before it decays and gets emitted to the atmosphere.

- Supporting innovation in ecosystem-based sustainable forest management such as the recent commitment by all FPAC members to harvest within the natural range of variation, offer the potential of substantial mitigation gains. Practices that maintain diversity and resilience in forest ecosystems contribute to the permanence of forest carbon stocks and can increase sequestration of the carbon on a case-by-case basis.

- Restoring the productive forestland base where some forest areas are currently understocked due to past natural disturbance, or industrial activities from other sectors. Re-stocking these areas and other potential improvements to site preparation would contribute to increased carbon sinks in the forest.

- Enhancing growth in existing forests and helping trees re-established faster after harvest. Tree improvement and assisted migration programs are critical to achieving this goal, including cross-border with the United States and existing innovation centers like Genome Canada.

- Improving forest inventories in order to measure progress in achieving forest sequestration and to target appropriate forest management activities. It is critical to enhance forest inventories locally, provincially and nationally using innovative technology (e.g. drones, enhanced satellite imagery).
• Regulatory overhaul/analysis to ensure federal and provincial regulations are reflective of mitigation and adaptation practices. Future species mixes should be selected not only based on historical composition but also with an eye to rapidly changing climatic conditions. Forest Management Planning guidelines need to be consistent with provincial/federal climate change goals.

Manufacturing facilities

• De-risking the commercialization of new, clean technology by continuing to support/fund programs that de-risk the commercialization of new, clean technologies such as the Investments in Forest Industry Transformation (iFIT) program.
• Support pre-competitive R&D by continuing to fund FPInnovations to provide them with long-term, stable funding to ensure its scientific research can continue to advance the transformation of the forest sector.
• Facilitate academic engagement to build on the research outcomes of the university-led research initiative in support of forest sector and in particular to identify transformation strategies that enhance competitiveness while reducing GHG emissions.
• Improve the rail system, allowing for increased modal shifts and optimization of existing logistics as well as providing funding to modernize facilities infrastructure to be prepared to receive rail cars.
• Approving higher capacity trucks to lower net GHG emissions per tonne of product moved. For example, in British Columbia, a 9-axle B-train logging configuration and 10-axle chip van would reduce GHG emissions by as much as 8% and 18% respectively.
• Continue and increase promotion of the use of bio-fuels or lower carbon emitting fossil fuels for the transportation sector. There has been progress with bio-diesel and natural gas vehicles but more than can be accomplished.

Use of wood and bio-based products

• Foster a robust bioeconomy that translates into extracting more value from every tree in the form of innovative bio-fuels, bio-chemicals and bio-materials. While the bioeconomy represents an exciting opportunity to boost jobs and future economic growth in Canada, it remains in relative infancy, and is largely industry led.
• Update building codes and standards that will facilitate a greater use of wood and bio-based building materials, which have a smaller carbon footprint than competing building materials.
• Adopt the Carbon First principle to infrastructure spending and procurement policies requiring early consideration of carbon footprints of the options. Give preference to the least carbon intensive option, while respecting sustainability requirements and design considerations.
- Promoting the use of Canadian forest products abroad is a key strategy to mitigate climate change. It's not just that good work should be recognized—because competing products often come from countries with high rates of deforestation and weak regulatory regimes, promoting Canadian products in the global marketplace can help keep forests healthy abroad. Government should increase trade promotion, funding and outreach for Canadian forest products, and also promote the fact that forest products from Canada are a preferred environmentally-friendly source.

FPAC would like to thank the committee again for the opportunity to participate in your study. If you have further questions or would like additional detail, please contact us.

Regards,

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