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Contested Issues and Governance in Forest Management for Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula

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Forest Politics: Contested Issues and Governance in Forest Management for Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula

PETER R. SINCLAIR and ROBERT W. KEAN

INTRODUCTION

POLITICS IS IN THE FORESTS in the sense that each group or individual with an interest in what takes place there engages in a strategy of control. Politics also enters the forest in the more common understanding that government or the state is an active participant and a regulator of forest activity. In this paper, we analyze power relations among actors in the forest management regime as it pertains to the Great Northern Peninsula of western Newfoundland in Canada's boreal forest region. Following an introduction to the theoretical framework and overview of the structural context, we present three related areas of contention: domestic versus commercial cutting, alternative uses for forest resources, and the interpretation and application of logging regulations. This leads to a consideration of the possibility of introducing a more successful political and administrative process in a situation where effective governance has been difficult to attain. To this end, we consider the advantages and disadvantages of co-management as a more decentralized approach.

This case study is important because it demonstrates the frustration and problems that an environmental management regime generates when local participation is weak or ignored. That is its practical significance. Theoretically, it illustrates the complexity of the relevant political processes and the necessity for theory to account for the local level in explaining those processes. In addition to secondary documents, this paper draws on 25 interviews with key informants who were likely to be knowledgeable about forest issues in the area. These included development ac-

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tivists (6), government officials (5), wood products company managers (2), small mill owners (2), contractors (5), and workers (5) engaged in forest-based industry on the Great Northern Peninsula. Every effort has been made to ensure anonymity for the respondents.[1]

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

By forest management regime we understand the institutional processes and practical actions through which decisions get made with respect to how forest resources are utilized. The management regime involves state actors and non-state participants in an emerging network of power relationships. States are complex institutional processes through which policies are created, decisions taken, and implementation attempted with respect to a territorial unit such as a society or sub-region. Governance refers to the total political process of making and implementing decisions. States are centrally implicated in most governance, but the term links state actors with other participants in whatever sphere is the focus of attention. This paper looks at the relative power of these participants in key issues of governance that are raised by the way the forest management regime functioned in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century.

Power, the capacity to produce effects, is at the core of this analysis. Social relationships are networks of interaction in which actors have power to the extent that they can control the patterns of relationships. Clearly, some people have more capacity than others to control what they do. This power is a component of all relationships. Thus "power ... is implicated in all social practice, as a logically necessary feature of activity" (Isaac 1987: 75). All action requires mobilization of the necessary resources and no actor is completely powerless to control what he does. Thus, the possibility of resisting is always present (Foucault 1978).

Foucault (1978) sees power as a relationship tied to strategy and tactics. Believing that what is important is strategy itself and that power is everywhere, it makes no sense to Foucault to discuss who *has* power; he sees power as having objectives, but no particular subjects who direct it. It remains obscure how power can have disembodied objectives, unless we simply infer that power in practice must have certain objectives, given how it works. Who has power is not irrelevant. Foucault's core ideas that power is part of all relationships, that no party ever holds total power, and thus that resistance is always possible or present guide this research but not to the exclusion of asking who (if anyone) is able to control what takes place and by which means.

Consistent with this practical, action-oriented perspective on power, the concept of network highlights connections among nodes, which can be social groups, with particular locations in space. Actors in the network will almost certainly be unequal in their powers and in their contributions to the network at any moment. Net-

works are thus characterized by a power structure, albeit one that is always in uncertain process. The network as such is a map of connections. The form that the connections take is open-ended, but subject to specification through the examination of power relationships. Moreover, network relations will change as a result of both external influences and the agency of their components.

This paper uses the language of actors and networks, but we do not adopt a full-fledged actor network theory [ANT]. This perspective is potentially useful because it requires integration of human and physical environmental components in a total action process. The environment here includes both human constructions and natural phenomena. Nodes of action are linked in a power network (Latour 1987, Law 1992, Herbert-Cheshire 2003). However, we did not design this work as an ANT study with a detailed collection of information on the various technologies of communication and production that are involved in the activities of managers, loggers, and wood processors. Nor did we focus closely on the physical environment and the biological dimensions of forest activity and mill work. Although analysis understood as networks of action takes on only the social aspects of ANT and treats environment only as context, it does thereby avoid the highly contentious notion that the non-human world exhibits agency (Murdoch 2001). If agency means anything more than performance or doing something, it should not be applied to non-human phenomena. If agency simply implies doing or having effects, it is valid but trivial.

THE SETTING

Most of the island of Newfoundland is forested (56 percent) while the rest is rock, water, and tiny areas of arable land. Apart from white birch, which is common in some areas, the commercial forest is composed of balsam fir and black spruce, which are softwoods (Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage n.d.). The short growing season on the Great Northern Peninsula makes for conifers with dense fibre content, ideal for high quality newsprint. Most accessible areas of the peninsula had been logged by the 1990s, but the east coast watersheds of the Main and Soufflets rivers remained as the last old-growth forests on the island.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INDUSTRY

The network of corporate and individual actors that constitutes the forest products industry in western Newfoundland is always in process at any moment. Thus when we refer to the social organization or the social structure we simplify radically for ease of presentation. This section sets out the main participants in the disputes we analyze later.


60°
55°
Makkovik
Labrador
Cartwright
CANADA
© MUN, Geography CL 2005-39
55°
Happy Valley-
Goose Bay
Port Hope Simpson
Atlantic
Ocean
Red Bay
Strait of Belle Isle
St. Anthony
Great Northern Peninsula
Port au Choix
50°
Baie Verte
Tilt Cove
Jackson's Arm
Hampden
Indian Bay
Corner Brook
Stephenville
Island of
Newfoundland
St. John's
Channel-
Port aux Basques
0
100
200
Kilometres
60°
55°

The establishment of newsprint mills in the centre and west of the island in the early decades of the twentieth century provided the main stimulus for commercial forestry. Based in Montreal, Kruger, a multinational paper company, has been the most powerful actor in the peninsula's forest economy since its 1984 takeover of Bowater's mill in the city of Corner Brook.[2] Also running a newsprint mill, but somewhat more distant from the peninsula, Abitibi-Consolidated is less important for wood extraction in this area. Although Kruger has long-term access (until 2037) to much of the Northern Peninsula's forests through leases from the state, the company does not directly control all Crown land. By the early 1990s, Kruger also reduced its apparent participation in logging by closing its logging camps and contracting with local producers to cut on its own land, while also purchasing from other lease-holders (Cadigan 2006, Hiller 1990, Norcliffe 2005, Sinclair et al. 2006).

Apart from Kruger and Abitibi, the key actors in a complicated network are the contractors (both for logging and transportation), unionized and non-union workers, sawmill operators, domestic or household cutters, and the provincial state as represented by the Forest Service. These relationships are a source of on-going tension, in part because all participants have some power resources to call on, even if the companies and the state can exert more effective power than others. The federal state also has a presence, most notably through employment insurance [EI] policies that influence employment relationships and support or frustrate the strategies of industry participants (Sinclair et al. 2006).

In addition to retaining some long-term leases, Kruger enjoys first right of purchase on any wood in the northern part of the peninsula, although Abitibi is an alternative buyer and this improves the prospects for the logging contractor. Abitibi gave up its leases in this area and has to pay more than Kruger is willing for any wood it obtains. When the paper companies decided to subcontract logging and transportation, this created opportunities for local entrepreneurs to become independent contractors, hiring their own labour and purchasing their own equipment. The contractors, despite being a small group with fluctuating numbers, are quite diverse. Four or five out of about twenty on the peninsula operate on a sufficiently large scale to be successful, but the majority have inadequate access to timber. The largest contractors include several who cut exclusively for Kruger, employing unionized workers, and several who also sell to other buyers. The latter can do this because they acquire their own permits on Crown land. The key to success is to have access to sufficient wood, either by cutting Kruger permits or by obtaining their own. Other differences include whether they have employees or subcontractors working for them.

Independent contractors might hire non-union workers and might focus as much on saw logs as pulpwood. One of the largest contractors on the peninsula employed about 25 men in 2001 and cut 7,000-8,000 metres per annum with roughly an equal split between construction-grade lumber and pulp wood. This contractor

also extracted a small amount of birch and specialty woods for an integrated mill and a flooring manufacturer. He was thus engaged in a dense network of marketing arrangements. In the 1990s, all the larger contractors turned to mechanical harvesting, which is much less labour intensive than the use of chain saws. Older workers were retained to work in areas unsuited to the harvester or where the timber is smaller and easier for them to cut. Some small contractors were squeezed out of business and obliged to work for the more successful, sometimes as subcontractors who retained ownership of their machines.

Sawmills became more important on the peninsula in the 1990s. They do not compete for wood with the newsprint mills and thus arrangements to exchange wood of different sizes, pushed by government policy, are compatible with the interests of both large sawmillers and paper companies. Roddickton emerged as the regional centre for lumber but lost both its integrated mills when one became bankrupt in 2002 and the second burned down in 2003.[3] In Hampden, on the southeast corner of the peninsula, an integrated mill tried to become firmly established by cooperating with Kruger. This sawmill purchased wood from a local area contractor and also cut logs with its own workers on Kruger's leases on the understanding that sawdust and chips would be sold back to Kruger. The manager felt that this type of arrangement allowed the area's sawmills to survive. Nevertheless, this integrated mill could not obtain sufficient wood to operate a second shift that would have allowed more complete utilization of its equipment and a greater chance of becoming profitable.[4]

Policy Environment

In Newfoundland and Labrador, state participation follows from continued Crown ownership of most land and the long-term leases whereby access to the forest was granted to pulp and paper companies in order to ensure their investment in mills. It also derives from the expanded role of government, as elsewhere, in regulating the amount that may be cut, and how those who have rights of access must treat the forest environment. Looked at from the perspective of the regional industry participants, the state (federal as well as provincial), its policies, and local enforcement practices are key components of the industry network.

The provincial government, through its control of natural resources, is responsible for public management of the forests. Key to how this takes place is the 1990 Forestry Act that commits the government to management practices based on the concepts of ecosystem and forest management for sustainable yield. Sustainable yield implies commitment to providing a "continuous supply of timber in a manner consistent with other resource management objectives, sound environmental practices and the principle of sustainable development" (Newfoundland and Labrador 2006: article 3.5). In addition to the economic value of timber, others such as protection of historic resources, culture and spiritual values, ecotourism, parks, recre-

ation, and aesthetics were all considered relevant. While many will applaud the appearance of such a range of values in the management regime, they also place the state squarely as the site of conflict (and ideally of resolution) between those who support some components more than others.

To administer policy, the provincial government has established forest management districts, 18 on the island and six in Labrador. For each district on the island, the Forest Resources Branch calculates an annual allowable cut [AAC], which is supposed to be consistent with long-term sustainable use of the forest. Approved logging plans must then be consistent with the AAC. In February 2002, the government reduced the allowable cut in easy access areas by 15 percent (compared with 1996) in what was called a base allocation, and pushed forestry operators to harvest timber in less accessible stands (the Partition AAC) where they could make up for most of the wood 'lost' in the base areas.[5]

The management process is also framed by the Environmental Assessment Act, which requires that companies hoping to log in any forest management district must register a five-year operating plan with the Department of Environment at least 180 days prior to starting operations. These plans must include detailed descriptions of public consultations conducted by the proponent during the course of plan development. Additionally, proponents must submit annual operating plans that identify the exact location and timing of forestry activity, which cannot begin until it receives government approval support.

The federal government influences forestry through its control of trade (most newsprint is exported) and through federal-provincial agreements such as the 1998 *Canada Forest Accord*, which outlines Canada's commitment to sustainable forests (National Forest Strategy Coalition 2006). The Accord intends to "maintain and enhance the long-term health of our forest ecosystems, for the benefit of all living things both nationally and globally, while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for the benefit of present and future generations." Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to report indicators of ecological, social, and economic values, which must be included in each district management plan. The Canadian Forest Service provides technical and educational support through its regional centres and the operation of its model forests, including one in western Newfoundland that operates with the province as a partner.

In practice, the regulation of forest activity creates much tension and dispute as groups with different interests compete for access. Earlier research by Omohundro and Roy (1997) indicated that the general population feared that the forests were being destroyed like the fish of the sea, whereas professional foresters and loggers were more optimistic that recent (mid-1990s) policy changes would provide adequate protection of this key resource. The public and operators of tourist businesses especially opposed clear-cutting, a practice generally defended by foresters. Almost a decade later, we now examine the sources of contention at a time when restructuring within forestry has advanced even further.

Sources of Contention

Domestic Cutting

Domestic cutting refers to the practice of numerous Newfoundlanders who cut wood for personal use, mostly fuel. This used to be unhindered on Crown land, but now requires a provincial government licence for up to 35 cubic metres in specific areas at a fee of $21. In practice it is quite easy to evade local enforcement officers, making this one area of activity where effective resistance to unpopular rules is within the power of local people. Indeed, neither formal rules nor informal practices have resolved the conflicts over access to wood.

The amount of evasion of the fee or of the cutting limit is unknown, but there is ample evidence of tension between commercial and domestic users of the forest. As one public official put it, this issue creates "lots of pressure." Many residents believe they should have free access to the forests as they did before the enclosure of the commons into Crown land and many, probably a majority of households, rely on local wood for at least part of their energy needs.[6] Certainly, this was the case in 1988, when a survey of 254 peninsula households found that 63.9 percent of married men cut wood for household use. Moreover, a network of informal exchange included more households as 17.6 percent of male respondents reported cutting wood for other households (Felt et al. 1995). In these cases, no monetary payment was expected.

Generally, domestic cutters prefer birch for firewood, which can give rise to tension. One commercial producer noted that he has "a lot of trouble" with domestic cutters, who take "all the best hardwoods after the pulpwood has been removed." This person did not object to them taking the twisted trees and felt that informal discussions in his area had improved the situation. Another informant, who also argued that government should help educate people about the problem and how to resolve it, made a similar point. Commercial producers generally appreciated that taking wood for fuel was legitimate. One suggested he would haul 1,000 metres of suitable wood to the roadside in return for an agreement that domestic cutters would not take any trees destined for saw logs. However, another contractor was despondent about the situation because he estimated domestic cutters took 25 percent of all wood.

Despite interest expressed at the local level, there has been no study of the value of domestic wood to the community. This might be helpful in legitimizing cutting practices rather than having them perceived as a burden for 'real' economic activity. Informal economic activities are not easily measured and their importance is often underestimated. In this part of Newfoundland, people also take part in them because they reflect cultural values of being tied to the environment and of self-sufficiency (Omohundro 1994, Felt et al. 1995). The inability of the management regime to function effectively in the face of the real power of local people to avoid unpopular controls points to the necessity for change in the management process.

Interpretation and Application of Logging Regulations

Logging itself causes conflict as the interests of particular loggers clash with each other and with the government, which is often judged to act inappropriately. For example, a manager was asked what he thought of government policy: "Well, well, well! Government came out with a five-year plan, but a plan is only as good as its enforcement." He argued that not enough resources were put into checking on the cutting, and there was always over-cutting. "It is no good evaluating after the season and saying that the next year has to be reduced because of over-cutting. The reduced quota will just encourage more over-cutting." He remarked that cutters are like fishers he knew from his youth. They will take the last tree or fish until stopped. Clearly, this manager believed that evasion of quota restrictions was a major issue. His opinion was corroborated by a contractor who claimed that over-cutting took place all over the peninsula on both company and Crown land: "It's like those companies can do just what they bloody well like! Like there's no control over them." On the other hand, another respondent claimed that there was no excess cutting in his area, although this might be happening elsewhere.

Mechanical harvesters were introduced during the last decade, and have proved controversial because they reduce employment. However, workers could not defy the company-initiated switch to more mechanized production. Some accepted company arguments that harvesters were essential to economical cutting. A logging contractor commented, "I guess the work has changed too. You know, at one time probably the average fellow would probably cut four cord of wood a day, but now you need eight cord a day. The companies are looking for more production." At the same time, this contractor was committed to keeping the loggers who had been with him for years using chain saws. This interview points to the indirect power of the mill companies to control how logging takes place by putting pressure on their contractors to raise productivity and reduce the cost of wood. Combined with government regulations on how wood has to be used, a contractor who wanted to succeed had to introduce mechanized logging.

Indirectly, harvesters are critical to forest regulations in so far as they may affect environmental protection. While some perceive that harvesters cause more environmental damage than previous methods, a contractor claimed it was much easier to sort wood, as required by government regulation, into saw and pulp logs by using the computerized harvester. Several respondents implied that state regulations and local representatives were out of touch with local conditions and needs. One interviewee complained:

> One of the greatest problems that we got, we got young guys that's coming right out of school. They do a technician course in forestry and when they get out into the field they won't listen to someone like myself ... they know it all, and the fellows that have been there a lifetime don't know anything.

Specific examples indicate tension spots. Thus, a contractor might build a temporary road to access trees, but this road would have to be raised to a higher level and built to a more expensive standard than seemed reasonable, given that it would only be used for one logging season. Second, the requirement to cut old timber before newer growth often led to younger trees being destroyed in order to get access to the older ones. A third controversial issue is the problem of butt junking — butt ends of trees that are left behind after cutting. Some claimed that the law is ambiguous and unreasonable enforcement discouraged loggers from utilizing wood to its fullest potential. "It discourages people from doing that, yes, like it is not a working together relationship. It's working against the relationship with Forestry and the logger." Here the rules that structure interaction in the network lack legitimacy at the local level.

Government action was sometimes given credit for improvement. Another logger was asked his opinion of government regulation in the woods: "Well they cut down on a lot of stuff, really a lot of stuff. From what I've seen from the last few years from what I've seen first when I went there ... I agree with it 100 percent." A contractor who thought that changes were coming too fast still found "not much that is outrageous" in rules and regulations. "Most is common sense."

Competing Visions for the Forest

So far, we have discussed competing uses for cut wood. Even more fundamental are disputes over whether trees should be cut at all in certain places. Radical conservationists may oppose any cutting because they believe that the physical environment and wildlife need to be protected from further human action. Outfitters and other tourist promoters may also oppose cutting because they see logging as damaging to their own economic activities. Loggers and mill operators may be sympathetic to environmental concerns and wish to limit serious impacts, but they are driven by the need to secure a wood supply. These competing interest groups appeal to the state for support in the form of appropriate legislation and enforcement.

For some years, the most visible sign of dispute over competing uses of the forest was the long battle over Kruger's plan to log in the Main River watershed, dating back to 1984. Logging was opposed in the watershed because it contained one of the last areas of pristine boreal forest on the island and was home to the endangered pine marten, while the river was renowned for its salmon and its challenges to kayakers. This story has been recounted in detail elsewhere (Sinclair and Janes-Hodder 2006). Suffice to state here that environmentalists (initially a coalition of small Newfoundland groups but later joined by the Sierra Club) and some local residents who felt that logging this area was against long-term development interests attempted to thwart the plan by pointing to the environmental impacts that could be expected. Kruger compromised by proposing a selective harvesting plan in conjunction with supporting the designation of Main River as a Canadian national heritage river. By 2002, the company received approval to begin logging. Although the

initial five-year plan called for logging only 2.5 percent of the trees in the area, the opponents were bitterly disappointed as they felt any development was dangerous and that future five-year plans would likely extend the cutting. A long political process brought no party exactly what it wanted, but left some feeling bitter and powerless. Nevertheless, intervention by environmentalists was partially effective and shows that they must be taken into account as network actors in future development planning.

From Distrust to Co-Management?

The forest management regime on the Northern Peninsula does not generate governance that is acceptable to many local people. A key issue at the regional level is that many people distrust government and believe that it is too close to the paper companies. One informant stated bluntly: "paper companies have not been at the discussion table until recently. Senior government officials discourage local people from raising matters to do with the paper companies." Another person who worked for the provincial government was anxious about his interview because he felt that he could not say anything without approval from higher authority. This points to delicate issues. A contractor was asked if Kruger had the same problems as himself: "Corner Brook Pulp and Paper don't have the same problem whatsoever because they are too big. They dictate to government what they are going to do and what they are not going to do."

There is much frustration with government. In one example, an operator of a tourist business was not angry with Kruger for its plans to obtain wood for its mill but with government for what he perceived as its lack of will to place effective controls on the logging process. (This begs the question of whether, in practice, the state could wield sufficient power, given its commitment to private enterprise for resource development.) Another person active in local development issues was frustrated by lack of planning, claiming that government needs to work with loggers, sawmillers, and paper companies. For example, this person noted that "domestic and commercial producers are in conflict. They are not discussing the problem." Interviewees never suggested that government officials and politicians have interests of their own that they follow as they make their careers. There appears to be a rather romantic and optimistic perception that the state is, or could be, socially neutral.

Within the limits of the existing political system, the question arises as to whether decision-making and administration might be structured differently in order to reduce local dissatisfaction, while meeting provincial and national goals for environmental protection. In the literature, decentralization has been advocated in various ways, including the idea of community-based management in which the state transfers powers of regulation to the community, however defined.[7] This might be a strategy that would test and perhaps counter, to some degree, the widely held belief that the state and paper companies exercise too much power.

Existing attempts at moderate decentralization of formal powers appear to be inadequate. Canada's Model Forest Program was developed by Natural Resources Canada to unite traditional adversaries around new programs, policies, and approaches directed at sustainable forest management. Such programs, including the example in western Newfoundland, are not community-managed forests, or even co-management arrangements, because the model forests have no right to enforce their plans; rather they depend on government and industry for implementation. Moreover, there is no consistency with respect to which groups are represented in the model forest boards or in the way decisions are made. The model forest is essentially a strategy of consultation.[8]

Community forestry implies effective local control, or at least management of local forests for local benefit.[9] Roy (1989) records an early effort at community forestry at Portland Hill on the Great Northern Peninsula. An area of forest land (550 ha) was divided into domestic cutting blocks for allocation to area residents, who were encouraged to cut the over-mature trees. Public participation was apparently enthusiastic, and the project demonstrated the potential of this strategy for local planning of forest use. In other words, there is some evidence that the domestic cutting problem can be harmonized with other uses of the forest. Beckley (1998) and Luckert (1999), looking at Canada as a whole, provide a more skeptical assessment of the actual level of democratic practice in community forestry, its limited scale, and the likelihood that it can sustain more labour-intensive commercial operations. Moreover, the interests of local community residents do not necessarily correspond with those of society at large. At a global level, Pagdee et al. (2006) recently reviewed 69 cases of community forestry and concluded that three factors most effectively distinguished among successful and unsuccessful cases: "property rights regimes, institutional arrangements, and community incentives and interests" (Pagdee et al. 2006: 51).

Whether community-based forestry directed to large-scale commercial production could be effective is another matter. Writing about British Columbia, Patricia Marchak (1990) was highly doubtful some years ago. She claimed that towns based on resource extraction and a variable market for their product are economically weak and inherently unstable, regardless of whether or not their populations exert control over management of the local forest resource. She expressed doubt regarding the efficacy of proposals to invest communities with local harvesting rights and control over production facilities.

Another related possibility for a more decentralized approach is co-management. At present, the planning process requires that companies consult with the public before proposing a logging plan for any management district. Although there may be an opportunity to present diverse opinions (depending on the timing and publicity of meetings), consultation is not the same as decision-making. Co-management, however, divides formal decision-making rights between the state and other interested parties. It is consistent with the goal of community forestry to involve local

people in decisions for the benefit of the local area, but co-management can also operate, in principle, on a larger regional scale.

One of our most dissatisfied interviewees appeared to call for co-management by insisting that all interested parties should "come to the same table":

> Well they are important, very important issues, because I'll tell you, I think that, what's got to happen is mill operators, mill owners, the saw mill, the paper mills, everybody together, got to the same table, say what's acceptable and what's not, make sure the money, government must make sure that the money is there at the end of the day or when pay day comes that the money is going to be there to pay the people for their work that they performed. But we all got to come to the same table and let's make it clear what's acceptable and what's not.

Co-management means sharing decision-making by local participants and regional or higher levels of government. The advantages can be significant. This process is more democratic, and by involving people who are active in and affected by the decisions taken, there should be more commitment to accept the outcomes. Administration and enforcement should then be under less pressure. However, there are also awkward problems. The process adds debate to administration and thus may slow it down. Who should be represented at the table is seldom uncontested. Some interested parties are well organized and can clearly represent themselves (e.g., the paper companies and labour unions), but others lack organization and have no obvious representatives (e.g., domestic cutters and contractors). Thus, there is a danger that groups without effective voices might still be excluded from decision-making processes. Despite these real problems, co-management is worth pursuing because it offers a chance that the decisions produced and the rule enforcement process will be seen as more legitimate and will be more effective than at present.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we explored the actor network of the forest products industry in a relatively isolated part of the island of Newfoundland by examining three areas of dispute involving groups with different viewpoints and varied capacities to articulate their positions effectively. The widespread distrust and contestation around access to the forest resources of the Great Northern Peninsula (and many other areas) suggest that a reorganization of the forest management regime is required. Our respondents who felt powerless, misunderstood, or ignored probably reflect widely held sentiments. This is not to say that most local people are powerless; indeed our theoretical position is that no person in a relationship is totally powerless. This paper points out that it is often possible for local people and companies to break rules that

attempt to regulate their activities. They might be caught from time to time, but surveillance is seriously limited. The resources allocated to these problems limit the power of the state, exercised through its officials. Kruger and Abitibi-Consolidated are often believed to control what happens, but they are also limited by union contracts, by environmental opposition, and sometimes by regulations.

No actor in the existing network enjoys total power and the centralized management regime does not function smoothly. The value of a co-management approach in such situations is that it recognizes the need for rules backed by the power of the state, while at the same time accepting that local actors have knowledge, interests, and powers that ought to be accommodated. It involves a re-alignment of power in the network as local actors gain more control over rules and their implementation. Co-management would thus attempt to reconstruct the management regime in a more democratic way. Can everyone win? Probably not, but this approach could lead to a more socially acceptable outcome.

Notes

[1]This research was conducted in 2001-2002 as part of Coasts Under Stress, an interdisciplinary research study directed by Rosemary Ommer and funded by NSERC and SSHRCC as a special multi-collaborative research initiative. The interviews used here include some conducted by Barbara Neis, Martha MacDonald, and Honna Janes-Hodder, colleagues in the project. This type of research permits us to identify and comment on issues by drawing on the experience of participants well located in the forest industry network, but generalizations about large groups such as domestic cutters must be treated as tentative.

[2]For the sake of brevity, we will refer to the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Company by the name of Kruger, which is a private company owning 100 percent of the equity.

[3]CBC, "Sawmill closed on eve of reopening," Web-posted, 6 June 2003, accessed at http://stjohns.cbc.ca.

[4]For more detailed review of the network structure, see Sinclair et al. (2006).

[5]<www.gov.nf.ca/releases/2002/forest/0225n01.htm>.

[6]The Newfoundland government had recognized a common-property reserve of coastal forests within three miles of the high tide water mark by 1898. Outport residents could cut without restriction for fishery purposes on this "three-mile limit." However, beginning with the granting of timber rights to Sir Wilfred Grenfell in Canada Bay in 1903, and then to Harry Crowe in the vicinity of Hampden, White Bay South, in 1923, the government was willing to allow private property rights on the reserve for industrial development if there was evidence of local popular support. Successive Newfoundland governments suggested that fishers' right to cut without regulation on the reserve was a major problem in forest management, and the provincial government converted it to Crown land in the 1970s (Cadigan 2006).

[7]For a discussion of Canadian approaches, see Beckley (1998), Beckley and Reimer (1999), and Krogman and Beckley (2002). Sometimes decentralization policies exist but are

deficient in practice, as Perez and Groom (2000) argue with reference to public participation in planning forest use in two regions of Spain.

[8]Sinclair and Smith (1999) provide a more extensive critique of the limits of participation.

[9]For a generally positive overview, see Duinker et al. (1994).

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