

*Below is a translation of the letter sent by André Tremblay, QFIC, to The Honourable Laurent Lessard, Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks, on October 28, 2015.*

October 28, 2015

The Honourable Laurent Lessard  
Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks  
5700 4th Avenue W., A-301  
Quebec City, Quebec G1H 6R1

**Re: Maintaining available volumes for harvesting**

Dear Sir,

Over the past decade, the annual allowable cut has dropped by 23% in Quebec (28% for the spruce/pine/fir/larch species group). These reductions stem mainly from certain terms in the *Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Government of Quebec and the Crees of Quebec*, as well as conservation measures based on government decisions (protected areas, northern limit for forest allocation, ecosystem-based forest management, etc.).

The volume reductions have contributed to mill closures, causing substantial job losses. The future of remaining mills has also become less certain because of the reduced wood supply. The viability of many communities and thousands of jobs depend directly on the forestry industry; therefore, necessary measures to reverse this trend need to be implemented without delay.

Our industry is well aware that the Quebec government has to deal with various issues that might, depending on its decisions, further affect the volumes available for harvest; these include the woodland caribou recovery plan, the achievement of government targets for protected areas, the signature of agreements with First Nations, etc. Furthermore, some forest certification standards suggest new requirements. Among other things, FSC proposes to protect intact forest landscapes and, once again, this could further reduce the volumes available for harvest. With regard to this particular aspect, by establishing a northern limit to volume allocation in 2001, the Quebec government has already eliminated from harvest about 42% of the continuous boreal forest and 85% of intact forest landscapes. The forest products industry considers that this achievement should be recognized in order to satisfy this FSC requirement, thereby removing the uncertainty surrounding the anticipated impacts.

More generally, QFIC board members have reviewed the situation resulting from the fact that some standard requirements may clearly be more restrictive than Quebec legislation, and they have asked me to share the results of their discussions with you. On the one hand, they consider that only the government can issue laws and regulations governing the management of public forests. On the other hand, if companies have to choose between maintaining FSC certification and maintaining their wood supply, they will prefer to keep their wood supply. A mill can operate viably without FSC certification, but not without wood supply.

Consequently, we ask you, as the Minister responsible for forest management, to ensure that the Quebec government's decisions and actions are aligned with the industry's unanimous position.

Yours very truly,

André Tremblay  
President and CEO

c.c.: Philippe Couillard, Premier of Quebec  
Carlos J. Leitao, Minister of Finance  
Jacques Daoust, Minister of the Economy, Innovation and Exports  
QFIC board members  
Richard Lehoux, FQM