



**NEWS RELEASE – Annual Meeting of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers**

To be issued: 15:30 (MDT), June 5, 2024

Location: Cranbrook, British Columbia

**CANADIAN COUNCIL OF FOREST MINISTERS ADVANCE WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION AND FOREST STEWARDSHIP**

**Cranbrook, British Columbia, June 5, 2024** – Federal, Provincial and Territorial forest ministers met in person by gathering in Cranbrook, British Columbia, to discuss shared priorities, common challenges, and emerging opportunities in Canada’s forest sector. Ministers were hosted by the current Chair of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, the Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Forests, Government of British Columbia.

Ministers received a progress report on continued work to define forest degradation, including engagement with key partners and Indigenous organizations, to develop a robust, science-based and transparent reporting framework. Ministers also agreed to a strategic program of work to maximize Canada’s effectiveness in informing and influencing the development of forest degradation definition and indicators by international authoritative bodies, impacting Canada’s market access and environmental reputation<sup>1</sup>.

As the 2024 wildland fire season starts, Ministers were provided an early outlook for the fire season to support their preparation and response activities as well as collaboration and coordination of resources to help protect people, property and critical infrastructure.

Finally, Ministers endorsed the ***Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy***. The Strategy is a priority action in the *CCFM Wildland Fire Management Working Group Action Plan 2021-2026*, and outlines several actions to enhance whole-of-society collaboration and coordination; increase knowledge and understanding; expand investments in prevention and mitigation; and strengthen First Nations, Métis and Inuit partnerships. Implementation of the Strategy will be ongoing and, in doing so, CCFM will help ensure a resilient Canada where all parts of society are prepared, empowered, and engaged in preventing and mitigating the negative effects of wildland fires.

“Over the past two days, my colleagues and I have gathered to discuss the issues we are all facing with respect to wildfire. By working together towards our common goals, we can face the challenges of climate change and create more resilient forests for all Canadians. I look forward to the direct impacts a national approach can have in helping protect people and communities throughout Canada.”

The Honourable Bruce Ralston  
Ministry of Forests

---

<sup>1</sup> Québec intends to ensure that its exclusive jurisdiction over forest management on its territory is respected. Consequently, Québec is accountable to its population in its exclusive areas of jurisdiction and does not participate in pan-Canadian initiatives that have the effect of limiting its autonomy in forestry matters within its territory. Québec is not bound by the targets, objectives and commitments of the Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy nor by those arising from the forest degradation strategic program.



As the meeting's last order of business, Minister Ralston turned the CCFM Chair over to Newfoundland and Labrador, who assumed the Chair role for 2024-25 and will host the Council's 2025 gathering.

"While all provinces and territories have varied forest management regimes our discussions this week have highlighted our shared interests and common ground. Thank you to our counterparts in British Columbia and outgoing CCFM chair, Minister Bruce Ralston for their stellar work and leadership. Newfoundland and Labrador is honoured to take the CCFM helm and continue guiding the agenda on the growth and diversification of Canada's forest sector."

The Honourable Elvis Loveless  
Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture

The Ministers' meeting was preceded by the separate Forum on Forests on June 4, 2024, which was attended by representatives of the Assembly of First Nations and leaders of regional Indigenous organizations, experts and industry partners. Attendees discussed a range of advancements and opportunities, including building successful partnerships between Indigenous people, industry, and governments; how the industry is remaining relevant to young people exploring careers in the forest industry; wildfire prevention and mitigation; and international market access issues.

On June 4, Ministers also met separately with representatives of the Assembly of First Nations to discuss shared priorities and a path forward for continued engagement.

#### **About the CCFM**

The CCFM was established in 1985 to provide a platform for federal, provincial and territorial governments to work together on common concerns relating the forests. The CCFM provides leadership on national and international issues and sets direction for the stewardship and sustainable management of forests across Canada ([www.ccfm.org](http://www.ccfm.org)).

For more information, media please contact:

Nigel McInnis  
Senior Public Affairs Officer  
Government Communications and Public Engagement  
Ministry of Forests  
(250) 896-4320  
[Nigel.McInnis@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Nigel.McInnis@gov.bc.ca)

Linda Skinner  
Media Relations Manager  
Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture  
709-632-8167  
[lindaskinner@gov.nl.ca](mailto:lindaskinner@gov.nl.ca)