



INTEGRATED
LAND-USE PLANNING
AND CANADA'S NEW
NATIONAL FOREST
STRATEGY



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Report coordinator

Rachel Plotkin

Report authors

Alan Appleby, Anne Bell, Kristin Bingeman,
Brian Churchill, Rachel Plotkin

Development of criteria

Alan Appleby, Anne Bell,
Kristin Bingeman, Rachel Plotkin,
Gaile Whelan Enns

Cathy Wilkinson, Tim Gray, Brad Cundiff, Jerry De Marco, Lorraine Rekmans, Don Sullivan, Bill Van Geest and Gaile Whelan Enns reviewed the document at various stages and provided insightful comments and suggestions. Anne Bell's editing talents were greatly appreciated.

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Cover photo

Inu Nation Environment Office

The Sierra Club of Canada
412-1 Nicholas Street
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1N 7B7
(613) 241-4611

www.sierraclub.ca

B: Manitoba: East Side Planning Initiative

Overview

The East Side Planning Initiative (ESPI) is the first large area planning exercise undertaken in Manitoba. The planning area is based on watershed boundaries, with the exception of the provincial border to the east. It covers 8,259,418 hectares, (approximately 12.7% of Manitoba) of land east and north of Lake Winnipeg to the Ontario border. The area is characterized by large expanses of intact boreal forest, largely untouched by industrial development even though there are only three formally protected areas. There is little mining activity, although potential exists and there is a history of gold mining in the region. There are two significant areas allocated to forestry interests within the planning region. The area is largely roadless, except for winter roads to communities.

The motivation for undertaking large scale land-use planning in Manitoba stems from one of the central recommendations of the Consultation on Sustainable Development Implementation Report, formally adopted by Manitoba Conservation on June 29, 2000: that the province initiate integrated, sustainable development planning on a large area basis. Accordingly, in August, 2000 the Minister of Conservation announced a pilot 'broad area planning' initiative on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

The ESPI Round Table was formed to "bring together local communities, First Nations, industry and environmental organizations to develop a vision for land and resource use in the area that respects both the value of the boreal forest and the needs of local communities."¹⁹ It was charged with submitting a recommended land-use plan to the Minister by June 2004 (following public discussions/consultations on the draft plan). The Minister was not bound to implement the plan but to forward it, along with his/her own recommendations, to Cabinet for consideration.

As the main body of the ESPI, the Round Table is comprised of representatives of affected First Nations, the Manitoba Métis Federation, a trappers association, an outfitters association, a conservation organization, the Mining Association, a forestry company, academics and northern affairs community councils. In addition, the Round table was to receive input and support from the following:

- a First Nations Council of representatives from the sixteen First Nation communities in the planning area
- a Stakeholder Advisory Committee comprised of social, environmental, community, recreational, tourism, and industry groups
- an Interdepartmental Working Group of Deputy and Assistant Deputy Ministers from relevant government departments
- the ESPI Secretariat of government staff, including an Executive Coordinator who assists with organization, logistics, and information management.
- three Regional Working Groups created in 2004 to critically examine issues from a regional perspective
- a Plan Coordination and Implementation Working Group, created in 2004
- an Aboriginal Protocol Working Group, created in 2004

Each of the working groups is comprised of Elders and representatives from each of the three main ESPI bodies (Round Table, Advisory Committee, First Nations Council). The Working Groups have been asked to make recommendations to the Round Table. Communication between the Working Groups and the Round Table has been problematic, however; the Round Table has not been receiving all information from the groups. Most information is forwarded to the Secretariat, where decisions regarding information distribution are made.

The Round Table met approximately bi-monthly from March 2002 to June 2004, and the First Nations Council and Stakeholder Advisory Committee met on a few occasions during this time. During fall and winter 2003, the Round Table provided community information sessions to 34 communities to present the objectives of the ESPI. In March 2004, the ESPI Chair and the Executive Coordinator requested additional time to prepare the recommended plan. The Minister of Conservation responded by directing the ESPI to make recommendations on certain issues, including the protection of the boreal forest, for the June 2004 deadline. As a result, the report being submitted to the Minister is a summary report only and does not fulfill the original mandate of the ESPI. The Manitoba Government has not indicated whether the Round Table will continue to function after June 2004 and ultimately fulfill its stated mandate to provide a recommended East Side of Lake Winnipeg land-use plan.

Assessment based on indicators: East Side of Lake Winnipeg Planning Initiative

Clear Goals and Terms of Reference	Y/N/S	Comments
Environmental, social, cultural and economic objectives are clearly stated.	Yes	The Terms of Reference are clear regarding the objectives (in this case “Fundamental Principles”) of the ESPI, but the functioning of the Round Table does not always reflect the Fundamental Principles, or acknowledge the action needed to fulfill these principles.
The maintenance of ecosystem function, structure, composition and biodiversity is a clearly stated objective and priority of the planning process, and is premised on:	Somewhat	One of the fundamental principles for the ESPI is “[m]aintaining the ecological integrity and biological functions of the boreal forest within the planning area.” What this means, how this is to occur, and what level of priority is accorded to this principle are not elaborated upon fully.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> representing the full spectrum of ecosystems, across their natural range of variation, in protected areas, 	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining viable populations of all native species in natural patterns of abundance and distribution (including commitments to wildlife corridors), and 	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustaining ecological and evolutionary processes within their natural ranges of variability. 	No	
All participants have agreed to the above objective.	Somewhat	Agreement is implicit in the acceptance of one’s role as a Round Table member, but formal acknowledgement of planning exercise objectives has not taken place.
The responsible government body has set clear policy targets that include a requirement to identify and designate protected areas through the planning process.	Somewhat	The Protected Areas Initiative (PAI) is public policy and uses several mechanisms for establishing protected areas in Manitoba. In March 2003 a policy summary for the ESPI indicated that the Protected Areas Initiative was on hold within the planning area. This is contrary, however, to the Terms of Reference for the ESPI which state that: 1) protected areas establishment will continue through the established methods; 2) that the First Nations MOU for protected areas establishment continues for the ESPI; and 3) the ESPI plan and recommendations will be coordinated with the Protected Areas Initiative. In spring 2004, the Minister directed the ESPI to place a priority on “[r]ecommendations for protection of the boreal environment,” raising further questions about coordination with existing policy.
The terms of reference contain no restrictions on areas to be protected and no pre-authorized agreements for timber volumes, roads or other resource allocations.	Yes/No	Planning and licensing activities for one segment of road to Bloodvein First Nations was allowed to continue concurrent with the ESPI. The rationale was that this project had been initiated prior to the ESPI. The road will dissect enduring features not yet protected or represented in this Natural Region.

Clear Goals and Terms of Reference	Y/N/S	Comments
There is agreement that no new major development permits (including for access roads), licenses or increases in tenure will be approved inside the planning area during the land-use planning initiative.	Yes	The Terms of Reference state that the province will not permit any new timber allocations pending completion of the plan, and that Manitoba Hydro will coordinate any communication with respect to future transmission lines with the Round Table. In practice, the Round Table halted community meetings undertaken by Manitoba Hydro until the completion of the ESPI.
There is agreement that the planning, development and management of road access will be addressed through the planning process.	Yes	The Terms of Reference state that the ESPI Round Table will provide advice and recommendations regarding a possible all-weather road network in the region.
If other regulatory reviews/processes that could impact the outcome of the planning initiative are occurring, these are coordinated with the land-use planning process.	No	The Terms of Reference require the ESPI process to respect and coordinate with several public policy processes such as the PAI and accompanying First Nations Memorandum of Understanding, Treaty Land Entitlement, and the Manitoba Water Strategy. However, coordination has not been effective. The ESPI is also required to recognize and where appropriate integrate local community plans. It is not clear how the ESPI Round Table is addressing this requirement.
The roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the planning process are clear at the outset.	Somewhat	On paper, the roles and responsibilities of the Round Table members, the First Nation Council, and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee are clear. However, decisions have not always been made according to the Terms of Reference. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee has not been used effectively and has not been provided with the necessary tools to be able to fulfill its stated role. There are new working groups as of early 2004 – which are also not receiving sufficient information or policy/technical support. Their role and relationship to the other bodies of the ESPI have not been made clear.
The concerns of Aboriginal Peoples regarding land stewardship, jurisdiction, treaty and Aboriginal rights are taken into account.	Somewhat	An MOU between the Manitoba Government and East Side First Nations was signed in April 2004. The MOU is an agreement to work together and is the first step towards establishing a long-term protocol, which will formalize Aboriginal communities' involvement in decisions affecting their communities and traditional territories.
SCOPE		
The boundaries of the planning area are based on natural and cultural landscape features.	Somewhat	Boundaries are based on watersheds, except for the Manitoba-Ontario border. They do not reflect Traditional territories.
The scale of the integrated-land-use planning process is large enough to encompass whole watersheds and provide habitat for far-ranging and migratory wildlife species and predator-prey relationships.	Yes	

Scope	Y/N/S	Comments
The process is designed to ensure that cumulative ecological impacts from industrial and recreational activities are taken into account.	No	The process has not reached a point where discussions about cumulative social, economic and ecological impacts from activities have occurred.
The time-line for the planning process is adequate and clearly articulated.	No/ Yes	The timeframe for the process has been clearly articulated; the Round Table has been directed to report to the Minister by June 2004. But the time-line is inadequate for the completion of the requirements as outlined in the Terms of Reference.
The process is adequately resourced (funding and personnel).	No	Resources for the Round Table have been insufficient, resulting in inadequate provision of and access to information and poor organization. There have been no resources for the participation of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee representatives. No resources have been secured to facilitate community input. or to undertake Traditional Use Studies, which should be the minimum in terms of Aboriginal involvement.
The process takes into account all activities potentially detrimental to forest ecosystems (i.e., mining, hydro, oil and gas, forestry).	Yes	
The process is designed to result in management guidelines for both protected areas and special management areas.	No	The Terms of reference are vague in this regard. The only reference to management guidelines is the requirement for the plan to ultimately include ecosystem, land use and resource management principles and/or codes of practice.

STAKEHOLDER AND ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION

All interested parties are at the table, including relevant local, provincial, territorial and federal government authorities, Aboriginal Peoples, local communities, conservation organizations, industry, labour, hunters, trappers and outfitters.	Somewhat	The ESPI Round Table is comprised of representatives from affected First Nations, the Manitoba Métis Federation, an outfitters association, a trappers association, a conservation organization, the Mining Association, a forestry company, academic institutions and northern community councils. Absent are labour representatives, fishers and non-timber forest product interests.
The planning process is led by an independent facilitator with experience in the area and knowledge of local conditions and/or is chaired by an independent chair.	No	The Chair is from one of the First Nation communities within the planning area.
There are community meetings and information available inside the planning area.	Yes	The ESPI conducted community information sessions with each community in the planning area to introduce the vision, goals and objectives of the ESPI and solicit input. A proposal for resources to support community input into the ESPI has been submitted, but funding has not yet been secured.
There are other public meetings outside the planning area, in major urban centers, regarding the planning process.	Yes	Open houses have been announced and are scheduled to take place in Thompson and Winnipeg prior to the submission of the Summary report to the Minister of Conservation. No information is available about open houses and public meetings for next phase of ESPI.

Stakeholder/Aboriginal Participation	Y/N/S	Comments
An up-to-date registry containing all minutes, presentations and technical information is available to the public.	Somewhat/No	There is a public registry file for the ESPI but it is not updated on a timely basis and gaps exist (e.g., materials and records of meetings). No consistent electronic information protocol has been put in place for posting and distribution to all interested parties. Access to information, especially for affected communities, needs improvement.
Participants are adequately funded, so they can participate to their full capacity on a timely basis.	Yes/No	Round Table and First Nation Council members are paid a small honorarium for their time as per the Government of Manitoba administrative guidelines. Stakeholder Advisory Committee members are expected to volunteer their time. Travel, mileage and related expenses for all participants are reimbursable. Working Group members do not receive an honorarium.
KNOWLEDGE BASE		
Adequate information is provided for the following areas:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ecoregions and degree of representation in protected areas (gap analysis) 	No	A commitment has been made to bring this information to ESPI Working Groups; however beyond a general presentation, Manitoba Conservation has not provided adequate information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> natural and/or historic range of variability of key ecological processes (fire, blowdown, insect outbreaks, successional patterns, predator-prey dynamics) 	Somewhat	Maps have been prepared depicting fire history. Studies related to ecological processes are not comprehensively referenced in the ESPI bibliography. ²⁰ There has been no specific discussion or use of information about key ecological processes in the planning area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive inventories and distribution maps of natural communities and easily surveyed species groups 	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs, including habitat range, of individual and focal species 	Somewhat	Mapping of caribou habitat and ranges is available, and a map of part of the planning area for moose and bear activity is available. Focal species for the region have not been identified by the Round Table.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> areas of high conservation value (old-growth forests, intact forests, wetlands, areas of cultural significance, critical wildlife habitat, including migratory corridors) 	No	Maps of wetlands, archeological activity, wild rice activity, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (draft) and traplines have been prepared and are available on the ESPI website. Mapping of intact forests, migratory species corridors and other critical wildlife habitat has not been prepared.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing forestry tenure applications 	Yes/No	Existing forestry tenure has been mapped. New tenure is not to be considered until the planning exercise is complete. Specifics of tenure, especially regarding both historic cut and annual allowable cut in relation to actual cut, have not been provided. No mapping of permit holders has been provided.

Knowledge Base	Y/N/S	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing mining claims and mining activity 	Yes	A map of mining activity for 2003 has been produced.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> locations of oil and gas deposits 	N/A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> boundaries for commercial timber 	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> values for remote tourism 	Somewhat	The ESPI bibliography references some studies that relate to tourism values; however, the information is neither complete, comprehensive for the geographic scope of the planning area, nor up to date. No maps of canoe routes, potential camp sites, or lodge-based experiences are available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing and proposed hydro corridors 	Somewhat	Information has been presented, but the map has not been provided or placed on ESPI website.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing and proposed roads 	Yes	Both all-weather and winter roads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> levels of carbon stored in the forest and predicted effects on carbon storage of different management models 	No	
With permission from Aboriginal communities, the traditional knowledge of Aboriginal Peoples is incorporated into the planning process.	Somewhat	The terms of reference state that Traditional Knowledge shall be incorporated into the ESPI process; however the mechanism for this is not defined. There is a draft map of traditional ecological knowledge posted on the ESPI website, but it contains limited information. Many communities have not yet undertaken and/or completed traditional use studies for their territories.
Aboriginal Peoples have received adequate support to develop information systems based on traditional knowledge and to map their traditional use and occupancy of the land and resources.	No	The need for Traditional land-use mapping and community plans prior to arriving at a broad area plan for future decision-making has been discussed. No government-to-government protocol that addresses the sharing of information, the protection of knowledge or the publication of Traditional Knowledge has been made public. Currently no support for these community studies has been put into place.
A thorough socio-economic analysis for the planning area has been conducted that examines and predicts the impacts of different management scenarios on levels of employment, traditional Aboriginal activities, recreational activities, tourism and recreation-based businesses, potential non-timber forest-based economies and the costs and benefits of ecological services.	No	A socio-economic analysis of Ecoregion 90 (which does not encompass the ESPI planning area) was conducted in the 1990s, ²¹ and at least one independent analysis of this socio-economic study has been undertaken. No recent socio-economic analysis for the region has been conducted. To date, the ESPI Round Table has not identified such analysis as a required resource.
All relevant information is provided to participants on a timely basis.	No	Members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and First Nations Council are not regularly provided with all materials placed in the public registry files. This is particularly problematic for remote and Aboriginal participants, for whom the nearest public registry is not easily accessible. The ESPI website only contains approved meeting minutes (with up to a seven-month time-lag) and maps; other materials pertinent to ongoing meetings are not available.

Knowledge Base	Y/N/S	Comments
Pertinent public policies and legislation regarding land-use, land tenure, land rights and land protection are brought to the attention of participants, and access to such policies and legislation is provided.	Somewhat	Certain public policies have been referred to throughout ESPI meetings and in the Terms of Reference documents. Presentations regarding some public policies have also been made to the Round Table. However, a comprehensive list of and access to all policies and legislation regarding land-use has not been provided. Nor has there been direction as to which public policies and regulatory mechanisms specifically must be applied to the ESPI.
APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION		
The plan and recommendations from the planning initiative are subject to a public review.	Not yet determined	Under the original Terms of Reference, the draft ESPI land-use plan was supposed to be subject to public “discussions/ consultations” prior to being submitted to the Minister of Conservation in June 2004. It is not clear whether the summary report that the ESPI has been directed to provide (as of March 2004) will in fact be subject to public review, prior to submission to the Minister.
Approval of the plan is contingent upon a collective endorsement by key parties and Aboriginal Peoples.	Not yet determined	This is still unclear and has not been discussed or disclosed.
The government is obligated to fulfill the plan, and these obligations are not weakened by discretionary wording.	No	The original mandate of the ESPI Round Table was to provide recommendations to the Minister of Conservation. There are no requirements for the government to act on the summary report submitted in June 2004.
All comments, including “minority reports” are made public.	Not yet determined	Consensus is the decision-making process of the ESPI Round Table. Meeting minutes are supposed to document decisions made by the Round Table as well as differing points of view if consensus is not reached on any relevant issue or conclusion. This has not consistently occurred. There is no requirement for the final ESP report to document minority reports.
There is a process in place to address situations where the plan contradicts existing rights, land-use, public policy.	No/Not yet determined	There are contradictory statements in this regard. The Terms of Reference state that “[t]he East Side Plan and Round Table recommendations will acknowledge, and be consistent and coordinated with, existing provincial government initiatives and commitments and other land-use planning activities;” however the ESPI land-use plan was also supposed to identify incompatibilities with existing policies or lack of policy.
There is a transparent process for making changes to the plan.	Not yet determined	This has not been discussed or disclosed. The ESPI land-use plan and recommendations were supposed to outline the process by which the land-use plan would be reviewed and amended.
An ongoing and well-supported multi-sectoral management committee is established to oversee the implementation of the plan, to deal with amendments and to set up plan review activities.	Not yet determined	
Adequate funding is in place for implementing the plan.	Not yet determined	There is no confirmation of funding for the next stage of the ESPI.

Discussion

The first experiment with large-scale land-use planning in Manitoba has been underway for over two and a half years, yet the fate of the ESPI is uncertain. The original June 2004 deadline has proven far too tight, and the original mandate to produce a recommended land-use plan has not been fulfilled. The report to be submitted to the Minister of Conservation is a summary report only that includes recommendations about how the ESPI should proceed. It is to be hoped that the provincial government will look upon the summary report as an opportunity to improve upon and complete the planning process, especially given its commitment to provincial land-use planning on a large scale. It is unclear what form (if any) the ESPI will take following the submission of the summary report to the Minister.

Success in meeting Ecosystem-Based Management Objectives

One of the Fundamental Principles of the ESPI is to maintain “the ecological integrity and biological functions of the boreal forest within the planning area.”²² Despite this principle, several relevant issues were not discussed to any significant extent at Round Table meetings. For example, the need to maintain ecosystem integrity at various scales, to create core protected areas, to sustain ecological processes such as wildfire, and to maintain wildlife corridors and connectivity between protected areas has so far been largely overlooked. Guidelines for industrial development, including where it is allowed to occur, have not been discussed. Instead, most of the information, presentations and discussions at Round Table meetings focused on development and land-use, a serious shortcoming in terms of ecosystem-based management objectives. The process did not reach a stage where a clear picture of all existing uses was assembled and could be assessed, and participants could proceed with planning for future activities.

Existing ecologically-oriented policies such as the Protected Areas Initiative (PAI), and elements of other policy statements such as Manitoba Conservation’s *Next Steps: Priorities for Sustaining Manitoba’s Forests*²³ were supposed to be considered as part of the ESPI process. The opportunity existed for both the government and the Round Table itself to utilize policies such as these as the foundation for the ESPI plans for the East Side. For instance, Manitoba’s PAI is based on the commitment to establish a network of representative protected areas throughout each Natural Region in Manitoba. The continued functioning of the consultations process under the PAI was also explicitly included in the ESPI terms of reference. Rather than accepting this commitment as a given, the Round Table questioned whether ongoing activities under the PAI might be in conflict with the ESPI’s mandate to make land-use recommendations for the planning area. Consequently, it did not take advantage of the opportunity to build upon this progressive protected areas policy.

The same is true with respect to relevant forestry policy, as found in *Next Steps: Priorities for Sustaining Manitoba’s Forests*,²⁴ which contains, for example, a goal to “[p]rotect forest ecosystems throughout the province,” and uses language that reinforces the imperative of establishing protected areas. Unfortunately, it has not been a driver for the ESPI process.

Stakeholder and Aboriginal participation

The ESPI Round Table consists of 18 members appointed by the Minister of Conservation. Round Table members are supposed to participate as individuals rather than as representatives of groups or organizations, but in practice their affiliations have shaped the dialogue and functioning of the Round Table. Support for ecological integrity has been subject to competing interests and priorities, though some members from Aboriginal communities, academic institutions and industry have certainly been supportive of ecological objectives. Only one Round Table seat is filled by a representative of an environmental organization.²⁵

In general, the voices of First Nation members carry significant weight at the ESPI Round Table; the ESPI has been explicit in its recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights and the Crown's duty to consult with Aboriginal Peoples when making decisions regarding resource allocations. Aboriginal leaders are members of the Round Table, and the First Nations Council was established in recognition of the unique role and relationship of First Nation peoples to the land, and in accordance with the fact that the majority of residents within the planning area are First Nations peoples. Individual representatives, however, do not fully represent the diversity of interests within communities. The voices of land users such as fishers, trappers, hunters, and non-timber forest product users may be under represented in the ESPI.

The ESPI terms of reference require Round Table decisions to be made by consensus. However, decision-making often has not proceeded by consensus. Frequently, when dissenting opinions have been expressed, decisions have been deferred. In some instances, when an issue was revisited, a decision was made without reference to the initial discussion; or it was made in the absence of those Round Table members who originally participated in the discussion. Inconsistent attendance has exacerbated the problem and hindered the dissemination of information.

Several major process-related decisions have been made by the Round Table Secretariat, the Executive Coordinator, the Chair or by Ministerial discretion, rather than collectively by the Round Table members. Agenda setting, schedule setting, and planning for the Round Table events have not sufficiently been in the hands of the table members. This situation has diminished the independence of the ESPI process.

Decisions related to process are essentially the only type of decisions that have been made as part of the ESPI; no decisions about land-use plans or protection have been made. The ESPI process up until this point has been about gathering information, the process itself, the roles and responsibilities of the Round Table, First Nation Council and Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the mechanisms for community involvement and the creation of working groups.

Political will

Political will is the reason why the ESPI was undertaken in the first place. The present government supported the Consultation On Sustainable Development Implementation Report when in opposition, and aims to follow through on its recommendation for broad area land-use planning. The government also demonstrated its will by asking Manitoba Hydro to suspend its planning activities in response to the assertion by the Round Table that Manitoba Hydro's activities regarding a proposed transmission project within the ESPI planning area were in conflict with the mandate of the ESPI.

Political support and will have been lacking, however, in other regards. Resources for research, meeting coordination, information services and participation of advisory group members have not been adequate. Consequently, it was virtually impossible to accomplish the ambitious set of tasks outlined in the terms of reference within the set timeline (March 2002 – June 2004).

The real test of political will lies in the government's upcoming decisions about the future of the ESPI. The submission of the summary report represents an opportunity for the government to re-orient the ESPI, address some of its structural issues, and firmly ground the process in ecosystem-based management and ecological integrity principles. It is uncertain, however, whether June 2004 signals the end of the ESPI since the government has not yet made any formal commitment regarding its continuation.

Other insights

Lack of certainty regarding the implications of land-use planning recommendations and decisions for Aboriginal and treaty rights has complicated discussions within the ESPI. In the past, commitments from industry to Aboriginal Peoples have not been fulfilled, government and industry have held inappropriate consultations with Aboriginal Peoples, and some protected areas decisions were made without adequate consultation and consent from Aboriginal communities. Consequently, some Aboriginal participants approach discussions about the allocation of land with understandable apprehension.²⁶

To address concerns, two of the Fundamental Principles of the ESPI are intended to indicate the good faith of the provincial government with regard to Aboriginal and treaty rights. They are “[r]especting and advancing the social, economic, cultural and traditional needs of First Nations, Metis and other communities located within the planning area” and “[r]ecognizing, affirming and being in compliance with treaty obligations and Aboriginal rights.”

To fulfill these Fundamental Principles, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed outlining an agreement to work towards a protocol for the relationship between First Nations and the government. Unfortunately, the development

of the protocol occurred in parallel to the ESPI process, offering insufficient certainty for Aboriginal Peoples. For this reason, the MOU has not been successful in alleviating the historic mistrust of First Nation communities towards government initiatives like the ESPI.

Despite the complicating factors of history and trust, Aboriginal Peoples have led some of the most constructive discussions about ecosystem protection within ESPI meetings. Presentations by representatives from Aboriginal communities provided an important stimulus for protected areas discussions. Four Aboriginal communities, whose lands are within the planning area, have signed an accord to work together towards a shared vision of protected areas within their traditional lands. As part of moving forward with this vision, they have nominated lands to be considered for World Heritage Site status. In so doing, these Aboriginal communities have clearly asserted their right to make decisions about what takes place in their traditional territories.

Unfortunately, rather than seizing the opportunity to discuss the details and benefits of the accord in fulfilling certain aspects of the ESPI mandate, the Round Table responded with confusion and concern about the implications of the Aboriginal communities' initiative for potential development recommendations.

Concerns about economic development opportunities that might be foregone as a result of protected areas establishment have also been a recurring theme at Round Table discussions. There is a common misperception that conservation and economic benefits are mutually exclusive and that protected areas preclude future economic opportunities and benefits. This either/or thinking ignores, on one hand, the 'boom and bust' nature of industrial resource extraction and, on the other, the economic potential of evolving industries such as ecotourism. It also fuels fears that protected areas may inhibit community access objectives for all-weather roads, an issue that is very contentious for some communities.²⁷

Many of the concerns and misconceptions surrounding protected areas discussions could be alleviated by better access to information, although irregular participation at Round Table meetings also hinders the dissemination of information. Many of the issues and concerns surrounding Aboriginal and treaty rights might also be alleviated if the protocol outlining how land-use planning is to proceed was in place rather than still in the developmental stage.

Endnotes

- ¹ See the case study of the Eastern Scotian Shelf Integrated Management initiative by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca/eng/programs/Current_Programs/Nature/Case-Studies/Essim-Case-Study-Complete_e.htm
- ² National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE). *Securing Canada's Natural Capital: A Vision for Nature Conservation in the 21st Century*. Ottawa, 2003. p.45.
- ³ Canadian Boreal Initiative, www.borealcanada.org
- ⁴ *Canada's Forests At A Crossroads: An Assessment in the Year 2000*, Global Forest Watch Canada.
- ⁵ Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada, Summary report, 1999.
- ⁶ "Canadian species at risk according to degree of forest dependence," Natural Resources Canada, <http://mmsd1.mms.nrcan.gc.ca/cfs/bio/species-e.html>
- ⁷ Boreal Songbird Initiative, www.borealbirds.org
- ⁸ NRTEE, pp. 45, 47.
- ⁹ References for this case study: John Cartwright, "Environmental Groups, Ontario's Lands for Life Process and the Forest Accord," *Environmental Politics*, 12:2, Summer 2003, pp.115–132; Tim Gray, "Lands for Life: The Good, the Bad, and the Future," *Wildland News*, Summer 1999, pp.1, 4-5, 12–15; National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, "Lands for Life Process, Ontario – NRTEE Conservation of Natural Heritage Case Studies," http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca/eng/programs/Current_Programs/Nature/Case-Studies/Lands-for-Life-Case-Study-Brief_e.htm
- ¹⁰ Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights requires that government ministries post notices on the Environmental Registry regarding environmental legislation and policies that they are drafting and provides an opportunity for public comment, <http://www.eco.on.ca/english/publicat/usrguide.pdf>
- ¹¹ World Wildlife Fund Canada, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and the Wildlands League chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society formed the Partnership for Public Lands. Its goals, supported by many other environmental organizations, were to raise awareness about Lands for Life and the need for more protected areas and to put forward a conservation perspective at the Round Table hearings.
- ¹² Environmental Commissioner of Ontario. *Changing Perspectives: Annual Report 1999–2000*, p.62.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Tim Gray, p.13.
- ¹⁵ Clear cutting remains the most popular harvesting method in Ontario, with more than 90% of forested areas cut each year being clearcut. (<http://www.wildlandsleague.org/forestpractice.html> accessed 22/03/04).
- ¹⁶ NRTEE case study.
- ¹⁷ See Cartwright, p.118.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ East Side Lake Winnipeg Broad Area Planning Initiative Phase Preliminary Discussions Final Report – Executive Summary http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eastsideplan/pdf/executive_summary.pdf
- ²⁰ <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eastsideplan/bibliography/index.html#ecology>
- ²¹ Peckett, M. K. 1999. *Ecoregion 90: a social and economic description*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Dept. of Natural Resources.
- ²² East Side Lake Winnipeg Round Table Terms of Reference <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eastsideplan/pdf/terms-of-ref.pdf>
- ²³ 'Next Steps: Priorities for Sustaining Manitoba's Forests' (March 2002) <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/forestry/reports/prioritiesdoc.pdf>
- ²⁴ Ibid.

- ²⁵ Other conservation organizations and groups are represented on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (members of this committee are expected to participate as an official representative of their group or organization).
- ²⁶ Prior to the ESPI, a First Nation Protected Areas Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed as part of the PAI. The MOU explicitly reaffirms and upholds Aboriginal and treaty rights within protected areas and outlines specific procedures for consultation and consent from affected First Nations.
- ²⁷ A land-use category under the provincial Parks Act does allow the designation of access areas within parks (These access areas are not considered protected).
- ²⁸ The need for a management framework that addresses both protected areas and Special Management Areas has been identified by the Senate Subcommittee on the Boreal Forest, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and by the conservationists, Aboriginal communities, industries and environmental organizations supporting the Boreal Framework, which calls for large-scale protected areas and 'world-leading ecosystem-based resource management practices and state of the art stewardship practices in the remaining landscape.' For more information, see: http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca/eng/programs/Current_Programs/Nature/Nature-SOD-Report/intropage_e.htm, Senate Subcommittee on the Boreal Forest. "Competing Realities: The Boreal Forest at Risk", (Sub-Committee on Boreal Forest of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, June 1999). <http://www.parl.gc.ca/36/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/bore-e/rep-e/rep09jun99-e.htm>. www.borealcanada.ca.
- ²⁹ The Boreal Standard was collaboratively developed by stakeholders from four chambers: Aboriginal, economic, social and industrial. Comparable certification systems for other industries have yet to be developed and endorsed by conservation and Aboriginal communities. To view the standard, visit: http://www.fsccanada.org/boreal/pdf_document/Boreal_3.doc
- ³⁰ Senate Subcommittee on the Boreal Forest. "Competing Realities: The Boreal Forest at Risk", (Sub-Committee on Boreal Forest of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, June 1999). <http://www.parl.gc.ca/36/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/bore-e/rep-e/rep09jun99-e.htm>
- ³¹ Securing Canada's Natural Capital: A Vision for Nature Conservation in the 21st Century.
- ³² National Forest Strategy action item 8.3.
- ³³ Personal communication, Len Moores, Director of Ecosystem Health, Forestry, for the Department of Natural Resources in Newfoundland and Labrador. 2004.
- ³⁴ Personal communication, Robert Gagnon, Service de l'aménagement forestier Direction des programmes forestiers. 2004.
- ³⁵ Personal communication, John Dojack, Acting Director, Forestry Branch, Manitoba. 2004.
- ³⁶ Personal communication, Hugh Hunt, Executive Director, Resource Stewardship Branch, Saskatchewan. 2004.
- ³⁷ Personal communication, Darren Tapp, RPF, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Strategic Forestry Initiatives. 2004.
- ³⁸ Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (Toronto: 1999), pp. 25–26.