

## A Canadian Variation

While debate raged around the Northern Spotted Owl in the US Pacific Northwest, just over the border in British Columbia, Canada, equally polarized debates were occurring between loggers and conservationists. The debate centred on the west coast of Vancouver Island, in an area known as Clayoquot Sound ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clayoquot\\_Sound](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clayoquot_Sound)). It culminated in a major episode of civil disobedience in the summer of 1993, when protesters blogged the main forestry road that was being used to extract timber from the forests around the Sound. An account of the protests is provided at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clayoquot\\_protests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clayoquot_protests). You can get a good idea about the feelings held by both the protestors and the people trying to defend their livelihoods from the following video [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H\\_J-3rOof0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H_J-3rOof0) that was taken on the first day of the protest. You should also review the slide presentation about Clayoquot Sound, which will give you a feel for the forests in the area and how they have been disturbed by past and present logging activities.

Concerns over the protest led the Government of British Columbia to establish the Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel

([http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/clayoquot\\_sound/archive/reports/panel.html](http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/clayoquot_sound/archive/reports/panel.html)) in October 1993. The Panel consisted of scientists and Aboriginal representatives. Its mandate was to develop world class standards for sustainable forest management by combining the best available scientific knowledge with traditional knowledge. It produced five reports and in 1995, produced its final set of 170 recommendations. The panel worked on the basis of 9 general principles and 18 guiding principles, which are detailed in the first report. You should become familiar with these, especially the general principles. These have guided forestry in the Sound ever since, and many of the recommendations have been adopted elsewhere.

The concerns expressed by so many people in part led to the introduction of a major new way of practising forestry in British Columbia. The Forest Practices Code of BC Act, enacted in July 1994, had the following preamble:

### **Preamble**

WHEREAS British Columbians desire sustainable use of the forests they hold in trust for future generations;

AND WHEREAS sustainable use includes

- (a) managing forests to meet present needs without compromising the needs of future generations,
- (b) providing stewardship of forests based on an ethic of respect for the land,

- (c) balancing economic, productive, spiritual, ecological and recreational values of forests to meet the economic, social and cultural needs of peoples and communities, including First Nations,
- (d) conserving biological diversity, soil, water, fish, wildlife, scenic diversity and other forest resources, and
- (e) restoring damaged ecologies;

Note some of the phrases used here, particularly (a), which reflects the definition of sustainable development and (b), which echoes the land ethic described in theme 1.

The Act was accompanied by a series of guidebooks (see resources) defining the Forest Practices Code that prescribed exactly how forestry was to be practised. As in many such situations, the pendulum was considered to have swung too far, and on January 31, 2004, the Forest Practices Code of BC Act was replaced by the Forest and Range Practices Act. This later Act moved away from a prescribed approach to forestry, allowing forest managers to manage forests in a way that ensured timber supply while maintaining a number of identified values. However, the default for much of this management remained the techniques specified in the guidebooks.

The Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel made reference to something called ecosystem-based management. This is not the same as the ecosystem management described in Theme 1. It is a form of management that appears to be unique to the coast of British Columbia, and reached its apex in the Central Coast planning process. It has as its principle goal the maintenance of the ecological integrity (see the definition of ecological integrity given in the resources) of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems simultaneously with the achievement of high levels of human well-being ([http://www.wikiprogress.org/index.php/Human\\_Well-Being](http://www.wikiprogress.org/index.php/Human_Well-Being)). This latter goal distinguishes ecosystem-based management from ecosystem management. The Central and North Coast areas of British Columbia have similar forests to Clayoquot Sound: they are all in the temperate rainforest belt that extends from California to Alaska. You can get an impression from of these forests by looking at the slide presentation on the Central and North Coast.

The planning process that was done on the Central Coast of British Columbia (now known as the Great Bear Rainforest) was complex and expensive. However, it developed the principles of ecosystem-based management, and if you wish to understand these, you should read the account provided at the following website: <http://www.citbc.org/ebm.html>.