

**Neoliberal conservation: Legitimacy and exclusion in the Canadian
Boreal Forest Agreement**

by

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Abstract

Through the lens of poststructural political ecology this thesis critically interrogates the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA), which was struck in 2010 between nine environmental non-governmental organizations, the Forest Products Association of Canada, and the 21 member companies. Drawing on of the work of Foucault, this thesis performs a discourse analysis, and explores why signatories excluded First Nations and government from the negotiations, how these decisions were normalized, and considers the effects that these developments have had on solidarity and democratic processes within Canadian boreal forest politics. This thesis argues that CBFA signatories operated under the rationale of sustainable development and neoliberal conservation, which facilitated their use of crisis narratives in order to prioritize their joint interests in the boreal forest. However, these efforts have largely been resisted by several opponents of the CBFA, who have called for signatories to respect First Nations right to *free, prior and informed consent*.

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List of Acronyms

- AFN – Assembly of First Nations
- ANS – Algonquin National Secretariat
- BFCF – Boreal Forest Conservation Framework
- BLC – Boreal Leadership Council
- CBFA – Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement
- CBI – Canadian Boreal Initiative
- CEPU – Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union
- COSWEIC – Committee of the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
- CPAWS – Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- CSTC – Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
- DSF – David Suzuki Foundation
- ENGO – Environmental Non-governmental Organization
- FMU – Forest Management Unit
- FNEMC – First Nations Energy and Mining Council
- FPAC – Forest Products Association of Canada
- FPIC – Free, Prior and Informed Consent
- FSC – Forest Stewardship Council
- GBRA – Great Bear Rainforest Agreement
- GCC – Grand Council of Crees
- GNFN – Grassy Narrows First Nation
- MKO – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.
- NAFA – National Aboriginal Forestry Association
- NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement
- NAN – Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- NEOMA – Northeastern Ontario Municipal Association
- NGCO – Non-governmental Conservation Organization
- NGO – Non-governmental Organization
- PMO – Prime Minister’s Office
- SFM – Sustainable Forest Management
- SFI – Sustainable Forestry Initiative
- UNDRIP – United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- VMC – Vancouver Media Co-op
- WWF – World Wildlife Fund

Chapter 1: Introduction

We have learned a painful lesson from our relationship with Canadians and their governments that they will always put their interests ahead of ours. This is the main reason why we have to protect our Right to Negotiate for Ourselves as Distinct Self-Determining Peoples. We are humans, not "ghosts." We live on our traditional lands and territories, as our ancestors did for thousands and thousands of years. Our Life is not for sale. Our Life is too precious to allow OTHERS to bargain and trade about... Their version of a "free trade" agreement on boreal lands is not binding on my people. I do not recognize their agreement, and my people will never agree to their negotiated terms as long as LIFE flows in the veins of the Cree Peoples. – Ovide Mercredi,¹ Councillor to the Misipawistik Cree Nation in Manitoba and the former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations

On May 18, 2010, the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC), which represents 21 forestry companies, alongside nine environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs)² announced the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) to the world, and declared the CBFA “an historic agreement signifying a new era of joint leadership in the boreal forest” (CBFA, 2010). For the signatories of the CBFA, like the David Suzuki Foundation (2010), the agreement represents an “historic level of trust and cooperation between environmental advocates and their former adversaries.” And with the signatories announcement, *The Globe and Mail's* Martin Mittelstaedt (2010) stated: “Canada's long-running war in the woods, which has spanned decades and involved bitter skirmishes in just about every area of the country, may be over for good.” Dubbed a “purely a bilateral negotiation,”³ the CBFA actively excluded the participation of all other stakeholders from

¹ Excerpt from an e-mail by Ovide Mercredi, October 30, 2010. Posted online at Native News North: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NatNews-north/messages/18776?threaded=1&m=e&var=1&tidx=1>

² See Appendix A for a complete list of signatories. The “ENGOs” include: David Suzuki Foundation, ForestEthics, Canopy, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, The Nature Conservancy, Canadian Boreal Initiative, Pew Charitable Trusts, Ivey Foundation, and Greenpeace (withdrew in December 2012).

³ Andrew Bevan (Executive Director, CBFA Secretariat), interview, January 22, 2013.

the negotiations, including all levels of government, and First Nations leaders and communities who live in the boreal forest.

While the agreement has been arranged around six key goals (and dozens of milestones), the highlight of the agreement lies within the compromise: ENGOs agreed to end their boycott campaigns against FPAC companies in exchange for logging deferrals in nearly 30 million hectares of FPAC tenures. As Richard Brooks, Greenpeace's forest campaign coordinator, stated: "This is our best chance to save woodland caribou, permanently protect vast areas of the boreal forest, and put in place sustainable forestry practices" (Greenpeace, 2010). The goals of the CBFA are centered around two key aspects: saving the threatened woodland caribou, whose population is in constant decline due to land disturbances caused by forestry (among other land-based developments); and, saving the forest industry, which has been in decline since the beginning of the 2000s. Between 2001 and 2011, direct employment in the forest industry dropped from 343 800 jobs to 233 900 jobs, a decrease of nearly 32% (Natural Resources Canada, 2012).

Reactions to the CBFA surfaced quickly, with Fred Wilson, Assistant to the President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEPU), posting on his blog:

For Greenpeace and the other major environmental organizations that negotiated this agreement, it is a mark of their maturity and accomplishment. They will change the direction and tactics of a defining campaign begun over 20 years ago. For many in government, industry and unions who said that you cannot negotiate with or satisfy ENGOs, this proves them very wrong.⁴

⁴ Posted May 18, 2010, the same day the CBFA was released. Available online at: <http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/fwilson/2010/05/boreal-forest-agreement-something-enviros-and-workers-celebrate>

While the signatories' news travelled quickly around the globe, their announcement also made its way into First Nation communities, all of which were excluded from the agreement that has alleged to end the "war in the woods." The response from non-signatories was a mix of excitement, trepidation, confusion, and surprise. For many First Nations leaders and organizations, alternative medias and grassroots environmental groups, the response was disappointment and outrage. Damien Lee, a member of the Anishinabek Nation, posted an article online called *The ultimate back-stab: ENGOS undermine Indigenous Peoples' nationhoods with Boreal Agreement*, which stated:

The CBFA neutralizes ENGO critique of the Canadian forest industry, sidelines Indigenous Nations in the process, and evidently trivializes any credence paid by the signatory ENGOS towards supporting the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.⁵

Lee's post was one of many responses that emerged from within grassroots networks and First Nation organizations that condemned the actions of the signatory ENGOS. While some individuals and groups have come to accept the CBFA with less than open arms, others remain adamantly opposed to the actions of the signatories and the continued existence of the CBFA. For many that oppose the agreement, their concerns lie in the content and goals, but for most, their opposition has been to the way in which the agreement emerged, seemingly out of thin air, and without any prior consultation of First Nations who reside in the boreal forest.

The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement marks an important shift in boreal forest conservation efforts, which has seen the interests of mainstream ENGOS and FPAC unite during an especially tumultuous time in Canadian environmental politics that CBFA

⁵ Posted May 23, 2010. Available online at: <http://ecosocialismcanada.blogspot.ca/2010/05/ultimate-back-stab-engos-undermine.html>

signatories have described as “the perfect storm,”⁶ which will be discussed following a description of this research project and a brief literature review.

Research problem and questions

Canada is home to 307 million hectares of boreal forest, which spans east to west, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, and up into the Yukon, and accounts for 30% of the world’s total boreal forests (Natural Resources Canada, 2012). The boreal forests of Canada are also home to over 2.5 million people, including 600 First Nations communities (Ibid).

Research for this thesis commenced shortly after the United Nations launched their International Year of Forests in 2011, where in light of mounting concern over carbon emissions, forests have come to be seen as a global asset for combating climate change. In considering the elements that have led to the creation of the CBFA, this thesis has been designed to critically interrogate the content and discourses of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, and argues that sustainable development and neoliberal conservation discourses have come to dominate efforts to define and manage the Canadian boreal forest. By employing a Foucauldian discourse analysis, this research analyzes various texts released by CBFA signatories and non-signatories between 2010 and 2013, and has been guided by three overarching questions. First, why did ENGOs and FPAC exclude First Nations from negotiations? Second, how was this exclusion normalized? And third, to what effect? Secondary questions include: How has the CBFA constructed meanings of nature and the boreal forest? What discourses of neoliberalism

⁶ Alan Young (Executive Director, Canadian Boreal Initiative) interview, December 20, 2012; Richard Brooks, Forest Campaigner of Greenpeace at the CBFA panel, September 19, 2011.

are at work in the CBFA, and what implications do these discourses have for democracy in Canadian environmental politics?

The CBFA marks an important shift in environmental politics as ENGOs align their interests with large-scale industrial forest companies, end their boycott campaigns, and begin to speak the same language as industry. In the process, First Nations have been excluded from the negotiations, and are currently being selectively approached by CBFA members based on their proximity to caribou herds in FPAC tenures. This research has adopted a political ecology approach, and has been largely influenced by studies in political economy which, drawing from Arsel and Büscher (2012), seek to “illuminate the winners and losers born out of neoliberalism’s ongoing attempt to create fictitious win-win solutions out of real ecological limits and their uneven and unequal social impacts around the globe” (67). In drawing on Braun and Wainwright (2001), this thesis also seeks to illustrate how “colonial power operates through discursive practices, including the 'forest discourses' that shape political struggles over the 'fate' of the forest” (60). In doing so, this thesis strives to contribute to a growing body of literature in Canadian forest politics that has been committed to unravelling the hegemonic discourses and complex relations of power between environmental groups, industry, government, Indigenous peoples, and the broader civil society.

Forest conflicts across Canada: a review

Over the last 30 years, there has been a concerted effort among mainstream environmental groups to influence provincial legislation on the future of Canada’s forests. These efforts have spanned the country, and have often involved strategic relationships with local Indigenous communities, many of which have been (and continue

to be) in struggles with provincial (and federal) governments and forestry companies for control of their traditional territories. As well, several ENGOs have created strong alliances across their constituencies, which has served to bolster their legitimacy amongst industry and government. During this time, there have been landmark sites of contestation that have featured environmental groups on the front lines of environmental conflict, whose campaigns, in turn, have shaped the meaning of nature and forests in Canada. What is reminiscent within these environmental movements, Judy Rebick has argued, is the apparent “NGO-ification” of local issues by professional activists, from Indigenous land struggles to grassroots climate change efforts.⁷ Environmental groups and even high-profile Canadian personalities and eco-icons have reiterated specific conceptualizations of wilderness and nature that have contributed to a broader nation-making project in Canada, where, in discussing Grey Owl, Erikson (2011) explains: “Wilderness production through conservation discourse was a part of the ever-expanding reach of economic relationships of capitalism...[where] wilderness can no longer be seen as merely a natural part of the nation, but as a way of naturalizing and legitimizing the nation” (33-4).

This overview considers four key conflicts in Canadian forests that emerged during the 1980s and 1990s that have given shape to current ENGO conservation strategies, as well as their relationships with Indigenous communities in Canada, which include: Clayoquot Sound, Temagami, northern Ontario (via the *Lands for Life* process), and the Great Bear Rainforest. As Thorpe (2012) explains, there are important parallels between the 1980s-1990s struggles in Clayoquot Sound, British Columbia, and

⁷ Public event, *Social justice is climate justice: a conversation with Judy Rebick*, October 12, 2011.

Temagami, Ontario. Called B.C.'s "war in the woods," Braun (2002) has revealed how key actors employed the "binary logic of pristine nature/destructive humanity" during the conflicts in Clayoquot Sound, which "authorized certain actors to speak for nature's defense or its management (environmentalists, transnational capital, and the state) and risked marginalizing others (local communities, forest workers, First Nations)" (2).

Thorpe (2012) found that environmentalists in both conflicts emphasized the urgency of preserving the "last intact forests" (in Clayoquot Sound), and the "world's largest known stand of old-growth white and red pine" (in Temagami) (16). Furthermore, in both cases, Braun and Thorpe sought to "challenge the naturalness of the B.C. and Temagami forests, revealing the colonial processes that made these entities logical and possible" (Thorpe: Ibid). Thorpe has also found that:

Environmental efforts... not only sounded the alarm bell about unsustainable logging practices, but also helped to mask contemporary Aboriginal claims to land, thus making the forest appear unproblematically a part of the Canadian wilderness. (Ibid: 16-7)

In Ontario during the late 1990s, the provincial conservative government under Mike Harris pioneered the *Lands for Life* public consultation process, which, according to Ballamingie (2009a), was designed to collect "public input into the development of regional land-use strategies for an area comprising 45 percent of the province" (84).

During the *Lands for Life* process, three conservation groups formed a coalition known as the Partnership for Public Lands, which included the World Wildlife Fund, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and the Wildlands League (a division of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society). As Ballamingie (2009a) explained, after three rounds of public consultations, and widespread rejection by the public of the initial set of recommendations put forward by the province, the final negotiations were held behind

closed doors. These negotiations involved representatives from large forestry companies, like Domtar and Tembec, the ENGO-led Partnership for Public Lands, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. No First Nations representatives were invited to these final meetings (Ibid). As a result, Ballamingie (2011) found:

In spite of invoking powerful moral, legal, cultural and ecological discourses, First Nation peoples were unable to transform in any substantive way the outcome achieved. This is due in direct measure to government-industry collusion, and to the power juggernaut formed as a result. In the case of *Lands for Life*, collusion included conservative environmental organizations.

Around the same time the *Lands for Life* process was unfolding in Ontario, momentum was building around British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest for increased conservation within the coastal rainforests, which culminated with the establishment of the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement (GBRA) in 2009.⁸

The Great Bear Rainforest was one of the first sites in Canada around which environmental groups activated market-based campaigns. As Dempsey and M'Gonigle (2003) explain:

Through extensive campaigning in Europe and other markets of Great Bear Rainforest forest products, a coalition of organizations (including ForestEthics, Greenpeace Canada, Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club of British Columbia) increased their bargaining power exponentially, as consumers and retailers such as Home Depot began to boycott forest products produced with timber taken from this area. (112)

As Tzeporah Berman (2011), who worked for Greenpeace at the time, explained, members from Greenpeace started meeting with representatives of forestry giant MacMillan Bloedel in secret during the 1990s after Karen Mahon from Greenpeace, and Linda Coady from MacMillan Bloedel had an initial meeting over coffee, "mom to mom,

⁸ There was a joint effort between ForestEthics, Greenpeace, and the Sierra Club of BC to form the "Rainforest Solutions Project" which is a project of Tides Canada. See: http://www.savethegreatbear.org/about/about_the_groups

person to person,... [where they] saw each other as people for the first time” (145).

According to Berman, this was a “breakthrough for forest politics in Canada” (Ibid).

Similar to the *Lands for Life* process, Dempsey (2011) found that critics of the GBRA have described the process as “back-room dealmaking between only a select group of (well-funded) environmentalists and the forest industry” (212). Furthermore, Dempsey explained:

Exclusions persisted throughout the negotiations: the ‘expert’ knowledge at the table remained resolutely in the realm of Western Science and the technical nature of the negotiations privileged groups with the resources and expertise to make sense of it all. (218)

As such, Dempsey found, “by enrolling the credibility of conservation science in their campaign, environmental groups achieved increased legitimacy and influence” (Ibid: 216). To that effect, campaigns surrounding the conservation of the boreal forest have also employed an extensive use of science in their arguments, where, according to Baldwin (2002): “The boreal forest is a product of colonial and nationalist discourses, a discrete ecological space, which assumes ontological status through a colonial gaze specific to the practice of scientific forestry” (188).

Over the last ten years, there has been a paramount effort amongst high profile environmentalists and ENGOs to distinguish the boreal forest as an ecological treasure and a national symbol. As Baldwin (2009) notes, during 2003 and 2004, “the release of the film *Canada’s Amazon: A Boreal Forest Journey*, and the book *Rendezvous with the Wild*—produced in conjunction with a publicity campaign called the *Boreal Rendezvous*,... sought to elevate the political profile of the boreal forest” (428). These efforts, Baldwin has argued:

Corresponded with the formation in 2003 of a consensus-building initiative, called the Canadian Boreal Initiative, that drew together an eclectic mix of conservation organizations, First Nations peoples, and resource firms to forge a political consensus that would further the aims of boreal forest conservation. (Ibid: 432)

The Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI), as this thesis will demonstrate, has played an integral role in imagining the boreal forest through strategic partnerships with forestry companies which have been largely facilitated by what Baldwin (2009) calls a “cross-border financial investment in boreal forest conservation in Canada by the American philanthropic foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts and commensurate investments by Canadian foundations, including the Richard Ivey Foundation” (432). *Canada’s Amazon* and the *Boreal Rendezvous*, which featured a canoe trip by Canadian celebrities like Justin Trudeau and David Suzuki, were “important in ‘branding’ the boreal forest as an environmental space at a moment when hitherto no such effort had been attempted” (Ibid).

Last, Baldwin found these two texts to be “instrumental in framing Canadian public discourse about boreal forest conservation in both cultural terms [where] the campaign drew on national imagining closely associated with white middle- and upper-class Canadians, and in economic terms insofar as it tacitly endorsed a variation of ‘green neoliberalism’” (432). While previous environmental initiatives sought to erase the presence of Indigenous peoples from the Canadian wilderness, Baldwin (2009) found that the environmentalists involved in the two campaigns worked to disaffiliate themselves from this colonial history through the inscription and inverted racial historicism of Indigenous peoples in the Canadian landscape, which was accompanied by an increase in economic partnerships between ENGOs and Indigenous communities.

The perfect storm

Several recent events have contributed to what CBFA signatories have described as “the perfect storm” in which an agreement like the CBFA could emerge. First, since the release of the texts that Baldwin analyzed, the Canadian Boreal Initiative created the Boreal Leadership Council (BLC), which is comprised of mainstream ENGOs, forestry companies, financial institutions and select Indigenous organizations and communities. The BLC generated the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework (BFCF), which outlines a set of principles and two key goals for the future of the boreal forest, one of which is to see 50% of the boreal forest turned into a network of protected areas. Based on this recommendation, the Ontario provincial government passed the Far North Act—“aimed at protecting a minimum of 50% of the territory north of the 51st parallel” (Ballamingie, 2011). According to Smith et al. (2010), the Far North Act emerged without the participation of Indigenous peoples, and has been vehemently opposed by the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which represents 49 First Nations communities in the boreal forest of northwestern Ontario (see also Ballamingie, 2011). With little consultation of First Nations by the Ontario government, the Far North Act, alongside Quebec’s Plan Nord,⁹ have created a favourable political climate for ENGOs and the forest industry to influence provincial legislation.

Second, there has been growing awareness surrounding the plight of woodland caribou across the country, whose populations have been in rapid decline as a result of industrial activity within the boreal forest that has fragmented their migratory routes, and

⁹ In 2010, Plan Nord took effect in Quebec, which will involve a “complete overhaul of its forest regime” over the next 25 years, with major changes to the tenure system taking effect on April 1, 2013. See: plannord.gouv.qc.ca/english/ and <http://www.plannord.gouv.qc.ca/english/documents/fiche-boreal-forest.pdf>

exposed the populations to higher rates of predation (Environment Canada, 2012). In May 2002, the Committee of the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) upgraded the Species at Risk status of the woodland caribou to “threatened” (Ibid). With this announcement, ENGOs and FPAC alike were aware of the impending federal legislation, and, as Alan Young, Executive Director of the Canadian Boreal Initiative explained, were motivated to collaborate – which was especially true for FPAC, who “desperately needed to get ahead of the caribou legislation because that could just drive [them] right into the ground.”¹⁰

Third, it is no secret that the current Harper government has been targeting the legitimacy of ENGOs who are active in campaigns that are critical of industrial development, especially of groups involved in anti-tar sands and anti-pipeline campaigns. In January 2012, *The Globe and Mail’s* Nathan VanderKlippe and Shawn McCarthy (2012) reported that Andrew Frank of ForestEthics was fired “after he accused the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) of resorting to intimidation tactics against the [Northern Gateway Pipeline] project’s critics.” VanderKlippe and McCarthy continue:

The dismissal of Andrew Frank, spokesman for anti-oil-sands group ForestEthics, comes amid an increasingly tense atmosphere among environmental groups – especially those registered as charities, whose public advocacy is supposed to be limited – that have come under fire by the federal government for harbouring “radicals” intent on “hijacking” the review process for Gateway. The departure of Mr. Frank reflects the fear that has been created among environmental groups nervous about federal scrutiny of their practices. (Ibid)

The PMO has even gone so far as to meet with representatives from the national charity, Tides Canada, which also funds the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, about its

¹⁰ Interview, December 20, 2012.

involvement in funding groups who oppose the Northern Gateway Pipeline. According to VanderKlippe and McCarthy:

At the meeting, the two sides discussed what was allowable advocacy conduct for a charity, which can legally spend no more than 10 per cent of its budget on non-partisan political activities. A PMO official articulated the Harper government's view of Canada's national interest – which includes supporting Gateway – and pointed to ForestEthics as an example of a group acting against the government of Canada and the people of Canada. (Ibid)

With the federal government profiling some individuals and ENGOs (like Greenpeace) as “multi-issue extremist groups and Aboriginal extremists with... the capability to carry out attacks against critical infrastructure in Canada,”¹¹ there lies significant impetus within current ENGO campaigns to align at least some of their interests with industry.

Last, the forest industry has not escaped the global economic recession of the 2000s, and was hit particularly hard by the decline in the United States housing market between 2005 and 2009 (Natural Resources Canada, 2012). The United States is by far the largest consumer of Canadian forest products, and since the crisis, the Canadian forest industry has been working to expand into overseas markets, especially in China (Ibid). The forest industry has made a significant effort to rebrand Canadian practices as sustainable—largely facilitated by an increase in certification of Canadian forests by international voluntary standards programs, like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). With 40% of the world's total certified forests currently being managed by FPAC companies in Canadian forests, FPAC, amidst a precarious global economy, has been working to generate more value-added products through eco-labelling and certifications

¹¹ According to documents compiled by CSIS and the RCMP, which were obtained through an Access to Information request by the CBC. As reported by Shawn McCarthy (February 16, 2012), *The Globe and Mail*. See: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/security-services-deem-environmental-animal-rights-groups-extremist-threats/article2340162/>

like the FSC. And with the signing of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, the Forest Products Association of Canada now has the support and commendation of the largest environmental groups in Canada (not to mention, one of the largest charitable foundations in the United States).

Thesis structure

This thesis has been organized into seven chapters. Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework for this thesis, which is based on advances in poststructural political ecology that explore the nature of power, knowledge and discourse in environmental conflict and struggles. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach to this research, which has taken substantial direction from the work of feminist geographers, many of whom have based their approach to research within poststructuralist thought. This chapter also highlights the research methods employed in this thesis, as well as a discussion on the research process and materials reviewed.

Chapter 4 explores the rationale that ENGOs and FPAC used to justify the exclusion of all other participants from the bilateral negotiations, which was reinforced within the goals of the agreement itself, and largely informed by an overarching push towards sustainable development and neoliberal conservationism within the boreal forest.

Chapter 5 considers how the CBFA was normalized in public debate from the moment it was released. This chapter demonstrates how signatories employed sustainable development discourse in order to emphasize the crises of ecology and economy across the boreal forest landscape. In doing so, signatories and supporters have projected ENGOs and FPAC to be the “best” equipped to provide solutions for the crises in the boreal forest. And while considerable attempts were made by signatories to normalize

debate, this chapter also demonstrates how the CBFA has been resisted by Indigenous and non-Indigenous opponents.

Chapter 6 considers the effects of the exclusionary tactics and normalizing discourses, and provides a greater discussion of the conversations that have emerged between signatories and non-signatories, further exposing the neoliberal discourses that have permeated the CBFA. This chapter explores the tensions that have surfaced amongst First Nations leaders and between ENGOs and First Nations, which have raised important questions about the future of solidarity amongst these groups. This chapter also explores what the CBFA means for democratic processes within environmental decision-making, and ends with a discussion on how Indigenous leaders and allies have challenged the CBFA by asserting their right to free, prior and informed consent under the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in order to radicalize democratic debate in not only boreal forest politics, but also Canadian environmental politics more broadly.

Chapter 7 concludes by emphasizing that although there has been much dissent surrounding the CBFA, and despite Greenpeace's dramatic withdrawal from the CBFA at the end of 2012, the agreement is still in effect, and there is much to be learned by this ENGO-industry partnership. In exploring the limitations of this research, this chapter provides some direction for areas of future inquiry, and concludes with a reflection on the importance of placing Indigenous rights at the center of environmental politics in Canada.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Approach: Poststructural Political Ecology

This thesis engages in the broad theoretical approach of poststructural political ecology, with substantial influence from political economic theories that emerged from neoliberal shifts in contemporary capitalism. This chapter outlines political ecology past and present, and identifies key aspects of political ecology theory that will be incorporated throughout this thesis. First, it engages with the important directions political ecology has taken in the last 20 years to interpret environmental conflict through a poststructural lens, drawing specifically on the work of Michel Foucault in his analysis of knowledge, power and discourse. Second, it explores how studies in political ecology have generated considerable discussion around the ways in which social nature, conservationism and sustainable development are constantly being negotiated and influenced through capitalist and neoliberal forces. Finally, it uncovers various ‘politics of scale’ through which legitimacy in environmental politics operates, and stresses the need for greater democratization of environmental decision-making in Canada.

Political ecology: forty years in the making

To begin, while I regularly employ the term ‘theory’ to describe political ecology, Peet and Watts (1996) argue that even “from its inception, political ecology was never a coherent theoretical position for the very good reason that the meaning of ecology and political economy, and indeed politics, were often in question” (9). Fifteen years later, Robbins (2011) reiterated this sentiment, describing political ecology as a “specific kind of approach, ... a community of practice [which] characterizes a *certain kind of text* – albeit an extremely valuable one” (5). As Ballamingie (2006) explains: “political ecology may be more accurately viewed as a *mode of theorizing* or *site of engagement* rather than

a definitive narrative or explanatory framework” (35). Notwithstanding, there have been many definitions of political ecology over the past forty years, as the field continues to transform and branch out into ever more critical lenses of research and analysis. For instance, Watts (2000) has defined political ecology as the study of “complex relations between nature and society through a careful analysis of... access and control over resources and their implications for environmental health and sustainable livelihoods” (257). This field, in many ways, has emerged as an interdisciplinary approach to problematizing environmental issues and politics as they relate to over-arching systems of power, political economic relations and social constructions of nature.

There have been many (hundreds, at the very least) scholarly contributions to the field, and new authors continue to develop innovative concepts and approaches to critically interrogate understandings of, relationships with, and the impacts and effects of production and consumption of, in a word, *nature* (for more overviews on political ecology, see: Watts, 2000; Watts and Peet, 1996, 2004; Neumann, 2005; Bryant, 2001; Robbins, 2004, 2011; Bryant and Bailey, 1997; Rocheleau et al., 1996; Rocheleau 2008; Paulson and Gezon, 2005, among others). Political ecology emerged in the 1970s from the works of critical scholars who wanted to both distance themselves from, and critically interrogate, theories that sought to explain environmental degradation through neo-Malthusian and ‘tragedy of the commons’-infused interpretations of poverty and environmental mismanagement as a product of over-population and chronic individualism. Research in the fields of “ecosystems/cybernetics, ecological anthropology/cultural ecology and natural hazards/disaster research” contributed in

various ways to the blending of research on political economic forces and ecological conditions within environmental politics and conflict (Watts, 2000: 261).

Considering the political economic roots of political ecology in the 1970s, the field was influenced (and continues to be to this day) by Marxist, neo-Marxist and development theory research, which focused on the role of capitalism, the structural and systemic conditions for exploitation (usually of land and labour in rural environments), and the class inequalities that existed between workers and their employers, as well as the relations of “subordination” that linked Third World producers with First World¹² importers and consumers (Bryant, 2001: 152-3).

During the 1980s, there was growing concern that political ecology was focusing disproportionately on issues related to land management in the Third World, while simultaneously overlooking questions of gender and race, and the highly politicized nature of the environmental problems in question (Peet and Watts, 2004). Despite these criticisms, Rocheleau (2008) highlights the importance of Blaikie and Brookfield’s book, (1987) *Land Degradation and Society*, in providing foundational ‘hallmarks’ in empirical and scalar research in the field of political ecology. Many scholars have gone on to expand on this earlier work, generating “transdisciplinary and paradigm shifting research” linking “critical social domains of ‘development’” within Latin America, which has explored the role of, and controversies within, Indigenous traditional knowledge

¹² In drawing from Banerjee (2003), I employ the terms ‘Third World and First World’ “in the spirit of what Spivak calls ‘strategic essentialism’... with the understanding of the essentialist and binary natures of these categories” (144). While I use the terms Third and First World strategically, I am mindful of how these terms can serve to reinforce difference and inequality, and, at the same time, overshadow disparity within both First and Third World countries. For instance, Canada is considered a First World country, but First Nations reserves in Canada have been described as Third World conditions as a result of the abject poverty within these communities.

(ITK) (Ibid, 720). Escobar emerged as a leader in political ecology studies in Latin America, and has generated considerable work in the field on development, social movements, poststructuralism, and more recently, difference and alternatives (see Escobar, 1996, 2006). Works by Rocheleau et al. (1996), Plumwood (1993), MacKenzie, (1998), Rangan (2004), and Harcourt and Escobar (2005) paved the way for gendered analysis of environmental problems; however, like their forbearers, these works have focused extensively on environmental degradation and exploitation in the rural Third World.

Despite an initial impulse within political ecology to focus on the visibly more impoverished Third World, Neumann (2005) and McCarthy (2005) insist that the divide between Third and First World studies in political ecology is an illusory and mostly geographical difference, and one that has been broken down substantially in the last 20 years. Even in Blaikie and Brookfield's (1987) *Land Degradation and Society*, references were made to the crisis of conservation in the North, undoubtedly an issue that retains contemporary significance (Neumann, 2005: 115). Poverty, environmental degradation, neoliberal austerity, and the privatization of, and gendered and racialized access to, resources, is undoubtedly apparent in the First World, and is an important entry point for an analysis of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, there has been a surge in political ecology research, especially with regards to forests, being conducted in Canada (as well as in countries in Africa, Latin and South America, South East Asia, etc.), further demonstrating the role of political ecology in closing the gap between Third and First World studies. As Wainwright (2005) points out, this shift in political ecology research, from Third World to First World, promises three

important advances in the field: the study of the industrial environments that are mostly responsible for current global environmental change; the complication of previous narratives that emerged from studies in the Third World on “marginality, land management, and the place of nature,” and last; the opening of questions surrounding notions of space and spatiality (1033).

Marxist and neo-Marxist political ecology has provided extensive coverage on the inequality generated by capitalist systems of consumption and production, but for a time lacked substance when it came to unpacking the conditions of knowledge production. While Marxist and Gramscian scholars continue to advance in this field of inquiry (see Ekers et al., 2009), other scholars have directed their focus to filling the gap in political ecological research that is lacking in discursive analysis. This former absence in political ecology literature is continuously being taken in new directions by a wave of scholars that have adopted a poststructural lens in their inquiries into environmental problems from around the world.

Poststructural political ecology, power, and the effect(s) of truth

According to Agrawal (1996), there are two main characteristics that tend to distinguish poststructuralist works: whereas research in “Marxist studies, cultural analysis, dependency theory and political economy attempt most often to examine empirically the developmental processes that affect people... poststructuralists... devote far greater attention to rhetorical and discursive strategies (the interplay of ideas, images, myths, and language...) that are critical to creating the concepts of development... [while also] critically examining the processes of knowledge production” (465). Poststructuralism, argue Braun and Wainwright (2001), offers a “different way of thinking about nature

and... understanding environmental politics [while] alerting us to the instability of the categories and identities that undergird our politics and practices” (60).

According to Harvey (1990), while those positing a discourse of modernity were accused of forcing the world into “totalizing meta-narratives (as found in the work of Marx),” Foucault pressed for the “plurality of ‘power-discourse’ formations” (45). Poststructural political ecology emerged in the 1990s through studies in development by authors like Escobar (1996, 1999) and Rocheleau et al. (1996), by incorporating works of Foucault, who sought to understand the world not just through the analysis of material conditions, but also the conditions of knowledge production, as well as the nature of knowledge itself.¹³ For Foucault (1980), in order to understand the micro-political circumstances of a situation, one must carefully examine the relations of *power* that “permeate, characterize and constitute the social body... [which] cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse” (93). Power, claims Foucault (1984), is not merely repressive:

What makes it accepted is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse... [which] should be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body. (61)

In his interpretation of discursive formations, Foucault (1972) insists that discourse has “its own rules of appearance, but also its own conditions of appropriation and operation... that consequently, from the moment of its existence... poses the question of

¹³ While Michel Foucault has informed poststructuralist political ecology, much work in the deconstruction of language can be accredited to Jacques Derrida (1976, 1982) – see also Braun and Wainwright (2001). However, for the purposes of limiting the theoretical scope of this research project, I will address poststructural political ecology through the influences of Foucault.

power; an asset that is, by nature, the object of struggle, a political struggle” (120). While Foucault employed several definitions of ‘discourse,’ Waitt (2010: 218, emphasis in the original) has identified three overlapping explanations that will be exercised in the use of the term discourse within this thesis:

1. All meaningful statements or **texts** that have effects on the world;
2. A group of statements that appear to have a common theme that provides them with a unified effect;
3. The rules and structures that underpin and govern the unified, coherent, and forceful statements that are reproduced.

As Foucault (1972) explains: “to analyze discourse is to hide and reveal contradictions; it is to show the play that they set up within it; it is to manifest how it can express them, embody them, or give them a temporary appearance” (151). Similarly, as Waitt (2010) asserts, these discursive structures, “for both individuals and collectives... establish limits to, or operate as constraints on, the possible ways of being and becoming in the world by establishing normative meanings, attitude, and practices – the effects of ‘truth’” (233). And finally, as White (1988) explains, through discourse, power can be seen as a “slowly spreading net of normalization that invades our language, our institutions, and even (and especially) our consciousness of ourselves as subjects” (190).

Truth, it appears, is essential to how we come to understand and make sense of what we say, think, hear and learn, while “power never ceases its interrogation of, its inquisition of, its registration of truth: it institutionalizes, professionalizes and rewards its pursuit” (Foucault, 1980: 93). Truth, in turn, is an effect of discourse, and one that is “formed through, and enforces social order by, seeming intuitive or taken for granted” (Robbins, 2004: 65). Furthermore, Foucault (1984) argues, each society has its own “regime of truth” with “types of discourses that it accepts and makes function as true”

and, importantly, recognizes the “status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (73).

The results of Foucault’s poststructuralist work on power, knowledge, discourse, truth, and Self have resonated deeply with many poststructural political ecology scholars, who have taken Foucault’s interpretation of discourse and knowledge production and applied it to the “politics of meaning and the construction of knowledge” in both the course of their research on environmental conflict and in their interpretative conceptualizations of nature (Peet and Watts, 2004: 6). As Castree (2001) puts forward, there is no “nondiscursive” way of approaching the topic of nature, when “different individuals and groups use different discourses to make sense of the same nature/s” where they can “create their own truths” about these nature/s (12). Poststructural political ecology, Baldwin (2006) argues “places great import on the discursive constitution of the natures deployed in ordering the world” while also recognizing that “environmental politics can be understood less as political struggles over the protection and control over environmental space than as struggles over the discursive strategies by which spaces themselves are environmentalized by whom and for what semiotic and material end” (55-58).

The field of poststructural political ecology has often sought to incorporate discourse analysis by “extending Foucauldian theories and methods into analysis of sustainable development, environmentalism, and conservation science and practice” (Rocheleau, 2008). Considering the case of the CBFA, these threads of poststructural political ecology have important ramifications in my study, as discussed in the next section.

Social nature, conservationism, and neoliberal environments

A prominent feature of political ecology research involves the ongoing analysis of 'nature' – in its use, acceptance, and varying forms – and how the 'making' of nature has been integral to the perseverance of conservationism around the world. Conservation has been maintained, and in the case of the CBFA, potentially enhanced through industry-NGO alliances, because at a fundamental level it does not contradict the goal of capital – the commodification of nature.

I must start this discussion off with a brief introduction to social nature, which sees the social and the natural as woven in such a way that “separation, in either thought or practice [is] impossible” (Castree, 2001: 3). For Castree, social nature assumes two main things: that “nature has never been simply ‘natural’ – whether it’s wilderness, resources, ‘natural hazards,’ or even the human body,” and; that by talking of nature ‘in itself’ as “nonsocial and nonchanging can lead to a... perpetuation of power and inequality in the wider world” (Ibid: 5). Important to this discussion is how capitalism has influenced the ways in which different societies interpret, relate to, interact with, and come to understand the concept of, nature. As Braun (2002) indicates, if nature is socially produced, then “it is imperative to identify *the specific historical forms* that nature's production takes, and to locate the specific *generative processes* that shape how this occurs” (12). In summarizing debates within social nature, Baldwin, Cameron and Kobayashi (2011) state, “ideas of nature are deeply fraught with maintaining all manners of oppressive social relations... [in which] nature is a social construct used to maintain hegemonic social relations across a number of epistemological sites, from colonialism to capitalism to racism” (7). Accordingly, there are many “domains in which knowledge of

nature is produced,” including mass media, the state, industries, NGOs, etc. (Castree, 2005: xvii), all of which function through discourse.

Escobar (1996) has argued that the “relationship between nature and capital has been articulated historically by different discursive regimes, including... sustainable development and biodiversity conservation... [whereby] nature is reinvented as environment so that capital, not nature and culture, may be sustained” (46). Escobar has identified this phenomena through two key processes: the first is through the modern view of capital, which sees nature coded as a resource to exploit; and the second is through the postmodern ‘resignification of nature,’ where sustainable development becomes essential to overcoming the second contradiction of capital (Baldwin, 2006: 53). This second contradiction of capital, as discussed by James O’Connor (1988, 1998), who drew heavily from the work of Karl Polanyi (1944), recognizes how capitalism fails to account for the fictitious commodification of land (nature) and labour, which can never be fully produced or controlled by the mechanisms of capital.¹⁴

Escobar (1996) identifies sustainable development¹⁵ discourse as the most forceful articulation of society’s (in both the Third and First World) relation to nature as it was popularized with the release of the Brundtland Commission’s report, *Our Common Future* (1987). As Arsel and Büscher (2012) have explained, this report, which did little to address the “underlying cause of the escalating tension between capitalism and a nature,” did do a good job of creating “the hegemonic discourse of ‘sustainable

¹⁴ See also Noel Castree (2008), Neoliberalising nature: the logic of deregulation and reregulation, *Environment and Planning A*, (40): 131-152, for a succinct overview of this body of research.

¹⁵ According to the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future* (1987: 37): “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” See: http://conspect.nl/pdf/Our_Common_Future-Brundtland_Report_1987.pdf

development,' whose main accomplishment has been to paper over the growing cracks of the capitalist growth engine" (63). Escobar (1996) problematizes the further commodification of nature through sustainable development discourse by expanding on how this reconciliation of "economic growth and the preservation of the environment" requires few adjustments in the market, and is the result of "complex discursive operations involving capital, representations of nature, management, and science" (49).

According to Banerjee (2003):

As with development, the meanings, practices, and policies of sustainable development continue to be informed by colonial thought, resulting in disempowerment of a majority of the world's populations... [where] discourses of sustainable development are also based on a unitary system of knowledge and, despite its claims of accepting plurality, there is a danger of marginalizing or co-opting traditional knowledges to the detriment of communities who depend on the land for their survival. (144)

This is significant for the analysis of the CBFA, which advocates for 'sustainable forest management' (SFM), a technique that is based on the contradictory principles of sustainable development discourse.

Conservation of forests in the Canadian context is an altogether problematic concept as it is rooted within colonial, racialized and gendered measures to define the forest as a place that is pristine and wild, without human interference or existence (see Braun, 2002; Baldwin, 2006; Gregory, 1994; Cronon, 1996). As Escobar (1996) has argued, the management of nature, through sustainable development, "requires its capitalization, its treatment as commodity" as informed by Western, male-dominated science of what is best for the planet (49). Nature, in this sense, is continuously remade as a commodity, through both conservationism and capitalism, which places 'value' on trees and the spaces in which they inhabit (Braun, 2002). Much of this capitalization is

achieved through “protected area” networks, which have become an important function of conservation management globally (Zimmerer, 2006).

This concept of the ‘global’ has also emerged within sustainable development discourse, which sees the relocation of local environmental issues within the context of broader, planetary processes – hence the problematic nature of the phrase “think globally, act locally,” which minimizes the inequalities that exist between people and their relative responsibility towards managing environmental degradation (Escobar, 1996: 51). More recently, forests (and in particular, Canadian forests) have been characterized as a global asset, as they represent not just the last tracks of (so-called) ‘wilderness,’ but also play an important role in managing global climate systems. Home to extensive wetlands and peat bogs, the boreal forest acts as a rich carbon sink, and has been marketed as an incredible responsibility for *Canada* to preserve, and not one to be ignored in the terms of the CBFA.

As Erikson (2011) discusses in his chapter on the Indigenous-imposter “Grey Owl” within the edited text *Rethinking the Great White North*, “wilderness production through conservation discourse was a part of the ever-expanding reach of economic relationships of capitalism,” where citizens of Canada were “encouraged to practice their identification with the nation by consuming an abstract wilderness” (32-3). Furthermore, Erikson explains, wilderness has served an important function for “the white English Canadian by naturalizing colonialism and this ever-expanding reach of capital through the production of the forest as a commodity” (Ibid). According to Baldwin (2009), “wilderness enjoys the dubious distinction of being one of colonialism's most enduring symbols in Canada, an empty space, devoid of humans, which... is quite literally founded

on the erasure of aboriginality (see also Lozanski, 2007). As such, claims Bocking (2011), “conservation became a chief tool of colonialism, justifying control over Aboriginal hunting, and where possible, the incorporation of Aboriginal people into agrarian economy” (44). The construction of the Canadian boreal forest, through the discourse of sustainable development (as read through sustainable forest management), provides an important keystone for analyzing how hegemonic discourses within, and communicated through, the CBFA maintain specific conceptualizations of nature and the boreal forest, while at the same time limiting the space and legitimacy of others.

Finally, in discussing social nature and conservation discourse, it is important to highlight the ways in which conservation discourse has been infused by the broader political economic shifts in neoliberalism. In Fletcher’s (2010) piece on neoliberal environmentalism, neoliberalism can be seen as a framework that creates the conditions for conservationists to “provide incentives sufficient to motivate individuals to choose to behave in conservation-friendly ways... where environmental problems cease to be discussed in moral terms and are now addressed as issues that require cost-benefit-analyses” (176; see also Oels, 2005). As Brockington and Duffy (2010) discuss:

Neoliberal conservation is but the latest stage in a long and healthy relationship between capitalism and conservation... Rich elites have been promoting conservation of particular species for their pleasure and enjoyment long before capitalism even began; capitalist elites adopted these same privileges. Capitalist interests strongly advocated the first national parks in North America, and the first conservation NGOs. (470; see also Rangarajan 2001)

Within the “disciplining power of hegemonic conservation,” argue Brockington and Duffy (2010), “the idea that capitalism can and should help conservation save the world now occupies the mainstream of the conservation movement... there is still resistance but it is marginal and in the corridors of ‘conservation power’” (470-71; see also MacDonald

2010; Corson, 2010). Specific indicator species can be used in declaring ecological crisis, as was demonstrated in Prudham's (2005) political ecology of the Douglas-Fir forests along the US west coast. These can become symbols that perpetuate the concept of wilderness while also attempting to reconcile the ecological and capitalist contradictions of "capitalist wood-commodity production and scientific, sustained-yield forestry" (178). The use of a touchstone species like the Northern Spotted Owl was essential to the environmentalists campaign for "putting in place a new model of forest regulations," which forced "broader debates about the politics of nature" (Ibid: 20).

Several authors have worked to incorporate neoliberal studies into political ecology (see Heynen et al., 2007; Bakker, 2010; Prudham and McCarthy, 2004). In this thesis, the term neoliberalism will be used to describe an ongoing and uneven process which "proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey 2005: 2). Keeping this in mind, Larner (2003) reminds us to acknowledge the "different variants of neoliberalism,... the hybrid nature of contemporary policies and programmes, [and] ... the multiple and contradictory aspects of neoliberal spaces, techniques, and subjects" (509; as cited in Castree, 2007: 17). Furthermore, this thesis adopts Bakker's (2010) approach to opening up the meaning of nature in neoliberal studies, while also generating a typology of neoliberal functions. Too often, Bakker (2010) argues, political ecologists define 'nature' as a resource, and conduct their analyses under this assumption (717). She finds this problematic because it takes a humanist view, while subsequently failing to "confront the political subjectivity of socio-natures" (see also Braun, 2008).

Consequently, this thesis interrogates the way(s) in which nature has been framed within the context of the CBFA, while heeding Bakker's advice to expand one's "understanding of what 'counts' as nature," which requires we "trace [the] genealogies of neoliberalism, as both a multi-scalar disciplinary regime and a project of accumulation, wherein the disciplining of socio-natural actors is articulated with trans-local processes, yet refracted through local conditions" (Ibid: 728). This research seeks to uncover the ways in which neoliberalism has permeated conservation agendas, where MacDonald (2010) has found:

With the retrenchment of state agencies, and the increasing gatekeeping role played by non-governmental conservation organizations (NGCOs), partnerships are increasingly viewed as the primary mechanism through which a negotiated form of biodiversity conservation (between various private and public actors) might be forged. Indeed, NGCOs are increasingly representing themselves as locales in which the historical opposites of private interest and environmental well-being—of profit incentive and environmental good—might be reconciled... And it is this "reconciliation" that conservation organizations now represent as the "leading edge" of conservation practice. But these exaggerated claims to be on the leading edge mask the degree to which their practice is structured not only by the alignment of sustainable development and ecological modernization, but in the way this alignment was both born of and gave shape to a new institutional context of conservation in the late 1980s and through the 1990s. (522)

Specifically, this thesis is interested in how sustainable development has become what MacDonald (2010) calls a "legitimizing instrument" that has facilitated broader shifts towards neoliberal conservationism, which seeks to align the (formerly incompatible) interests of biodiversity conservation with economic growth through emergent NGO-corporate partnerships (518).

The second point worth offering here on neoliberal conservation involves identifying key threads of neoliberal discourse—Bakker's 'typology'—that have permeated the CBFA. Neoliberalism, as mentioned above, is an uneven process, and in many ways is a haphazard discipline in both theory and application. As Bakker (2010)

suggests, research on neoliberal natures is comprised of “disparate, unconnected case studies” where “collectively, geographers are unable to account for variegation; specifically, they are unable to generate convincing explanations of the neoliberalization of nature as a historically and geographically differentiated, yet global (or at least translocal) phenomenon” (721). Considering this problem within the discipline, Bakker proposes we locate the neoliberal strategy in relation to the “target... and the type of socio-nature” (Ibid: 725). In the case of the CBFA, I will be situating the agreement within the typology of “deregulation, re-regulation” as it relates importantly to the ‘doctrine of sustainable development’ (Bakker, 2010). De/re-regulation, according to (Heynen et al., 2007), often involves the “restructuring of state regulatory apparatuses in ways that tend to enhance private and corporate authority over economic, environmental, and social action” (6). This is especially the case with the rise in neoliberal conservation, argue Brockington and Duffy, (2010), where “conservation is extensively promulgated by NGOs... in new hybrid governance arrangements of ‘privatised sovereignty’ that appear to be direct products of neoliberal thinking” (479). As such, “conservation strategies can hinge on the deregulation and reregulation of nature-based industries and environmental services” (Ibid). I acknowledge that this is may not be the only neoliberal process at work within the context of the CBFA, but it will be the one that I address within this limited space.

Legitimacy and democracy in (counter-) hegemonic narratives

The final aspect of political ecology I wish to draw from builds on the first two theoretical aspects in this chapter: the ways in which sustainable development and neoliberal conservation discourses project power and truth in ways that marginalize

“other” voices and exclude the participation of individuals and groups from environmental decision-making. As Wainwright (2005) has argued, “political ecology should cultivate an awareness of the multiple, contested natures and spaces of colonized spaces” (1034). Furthermore, in drawing from Baldwin et al. (2011), this thesis considers how “ideas of nature are deeply fraught with maintaining all manners of oppressive social relations,” where racism and naturalism have emerged out of “specific national historical contexts and discourses” (7). As such, the social productions of nature through forest discourses have deeply gendered (Thorpe, 2012) and racialized (Baldwin, 2009; Baldwin et al., 2011) roots that predate Confederation. Important to this thread of political ecology is what Peet and Watts (2004) call the “politics of scale—the body, community, state, intra-state struggles—to new forms of global governance” (4). Key to this discussion are the ways in which legitimacy and democracy are continuously being confronted and reconfigured under the pressures of these hegemonic discourses *within* and *throughout* the varying ‘politics of scale.’

In Ballamingie’s (2006) analysis of the Ontario *Lands for Life* public consultation process (to determine the use or protection of Ontario’s central Crown lands – much of them covered in boreal forest), there lie critical and startling similarities to the process being witnessed in the CBFA. The *Lands for Life* process showed how “select voices were privileged, while others were silenced; how certain knowledges were deemed legitimate, while others were dismissed and/or subjugated” (Ibid: 2). Legitimacy is a crucial concept surrounding the discourse of the CBFA, as environmental groups manoeuvre strategically and cautiously into and out of alliances with other boreal forest stakeholders in order to maintain their interests in this contested space. In both Braun’s

(2002) and Ballamingie's (2006) research on forests in British Columbia and Ontario, respectively, environmental groups operated under 'binary logics' of the forest landscape (pristine vs. industrial) in order to defend nature to the extent that it served to disregard and even *erase* (especially in the case of visual representations) First Nation's presence from the discursive and material landscape, further delegitimizing First Nation's claims to alternative conceptualizations of the forests in question. As well, these two pieces explored the ways in which First Nations were "effectively displaced" by industry, government, and even ENGOs (Ballamingie, 2006: 53), while ENGO and First Nations continued to forge precarious alliances that did not reflect *unity* so much as they did *affinity* (Ibid: 51). In more recent years, however, environmental and social movements have been working strategically to legitimize their positions in environmental politics often in an effort to "impose some sort of control over transnational corporations" (Peet and Watts, 2004: 5). According to MacDonald (2010), this technique of employing "cross-sector legitimacy" to appeal to industry has been an increasing function of non-governmental conservation organizations to secure partnerships amidst shifts in neoliberal policy setting (521).

Legitimacy is an important aspect of 'struggle' within environmental politics as it operates on multiple scales (in the case of the CBFA, it is a national agreement with regional expectations) and acts to inform who is eligible, and conversely, who is not, to participate in negotiations and consultations, and establish guidelines for regulations. As Brockington and Duffy (2010) offer, "there is also the prevailing promiscuity of the main actors involved" in neoliberal conservationism (478). Moreover, they argue, "in the face of hostile administrations, public or economic concerns, conservation NGOs, politicians

and large corporations have been repeatedly able to forge environments where they could do good business together” (Ibid). Those invoking counter-hegemonic discourses, therefore, “call into question the legitimacy and naturalness of the ruling order and replace these with a vision and a program of their own” (Adkin, 2009a: 13). And while recognizing the ways in which legitimacy operates through the effects of power and truth in hegemonic discourses, Braun and Wainwright (2001) remind us that “struggles over nature, land and meaning are simultaneously struggles over identity and rights.”

Recent studies in Canadian environmental politics¹⁶ have demonstrated how environmental negotiations and regulations are severely lacking in democratic processes. As Adkin (2009a) insists, “one common thread among struggles for social justice and ecological reform is the call for the democratization of political institutions and processes of decision-making in light of the ways in which these privilege elite interests” (1). This body of research calls into question the ways in which environmental decision-making, which is ultimately determined by the state (and now largely defined by the limiting nature of sustainable development discourse), is heavily influenced by industry and neoliberal, market-oriented goals (Overton, 2009). Adkin also highlights how “network governance,” as seen in Ballamingie’s *Lands for Life* study, “may exclude urban and other interests from having a say in consultation processes by constructing such interests as ‘outsiders’ or non-stakeholders” (Ibid: 303).

Therefore, the participation of citizens in environmental conflicts “wedges open discursive space for a reconceptualization of citizenship as participatory, expansive, solidaristic, and ecological” where deliberative democracy can serve to open up debate

¹⁶ For several examples, see volume by Laurie Adkin, Ed. (2009) *Environmental Conflict and Democracy in Canada*.

amongst Canadians about the conflicting nature of environmental politics, as well as the multiple spatial scales in which these conflicts operate (Adkin 2009a,b: 4, 311). The fact that nine major national and international ENGOs and funders, and all 21 members of FPAC were able to reach consensus on the future of the entire Canadian boreal forest demands we interrogate, as Adkin (2009a) would call it, the *hegemonic nature of consensus*, and insist on “meaningful participation in societal decision-making” (Ibid: 2).

This thesis will interrogate the CBFA through the lens of poststructural political ecology, which employs Foucault’s concepts of power, discourse, and the effect of truth. This approach will complement a discursive analysis of the way(s) nature has been socially constructed in the CBFA through the hegemonic discourses of sustainable development and neoliberal conservation, which have had determining effects on the legitimacy of boreal forest stakeholders and the democratic processes of environmental decision-making.

Chapter 3: Methodological Approach

Poststructuralist thinking has contributed to political ecology and feminism in important and often similar ways, and feminism, too, has advanced issues of gender within the field of political ecology (Rocheleau et al., 1996; Rocheleau, 2008). In many ways, my methodological approach informed my conceptual framework, and at times, their mutually constitutive and iterative nature made deciphering the two chapters a complicated process. I recognize, therefore, that the act of separating theory from methodology, especially in the cases of political ecology and feminist geography, which are highly interpretative, interdisciplinary, and ever-changing ‘fields,’¹⁷ is provisional at best. After all, as Kobayashi (2001) reminds us: “theory and practice can be very closely related, can inform one another, and, indeed, must do so in the interests of both good scholarship and social justice” (63).

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, studies in political ecology, which, according to Peet and Watts (2004), tend to be “grounded in struggles over resources and livelihoods,” have provided important theoretical insights into the conditions for which the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) could manifest (xiv). Furthermore, poststructural influences within political ecology, claims Robbins (2004), have led researchers to consider how “specific ideas about nature and society limit and direct what is taken to be true and possible” (66). Not only does poststructural political ecology lead to questions about *social nature*, Robbins also argues that poststructural and postcolonial research “mandates an ethical evaluation even of what researchers say and do” (Ibid).

¹⁷ I quote ‘fields’ in this manner because both political ecology and feminist geography have been discussed as areas of study that are highly variable, especially if we begin to explore these fields outside of English-speaking literature. What “counts” as political ecology or feminist geography is therefore debatable and beyond the scope of this thesis.

The methodological approach to this research project, therefore, has been influenced considerably by the work of feminist geographers, who have been, according to Moss and Falconer Al-Hindi (2008), “at the forefront in defining critical inquiry in geography, in examining multiple dimensions of research processes, and in questioning what constitutes research itself” (3). As this chapter discusses, feminist geography has provided important guidance for addressing the methodological limitations and ethical considerations that surfaced during the formulation of both research priorities and questions, and carried throughout the research process. This chapter serves as a space for unsettling questions around research practices in an attempt to highlight the challenges of conducting research within a colonial landscape, and how feminist geography provides important tools for reconciling (if only partially, and not unproblematically) some of these challenges.

Section 3.1 explores valuable aspects of methodologies in feminist geography, including the role of situated knowledges, the need for researcher positionality and reflexivity, and the politics of a critical, political feminist research agenda, which have largely informed the goals and methods of this research project. Section 3.2 lays out the research methods employed in this thesis, which includes Foucauldian discourse analysis and in depth interviews. Last, Section 3.3 summarizes the research process as well as the materials reviewed.

Section 3.1: Approaching research through feminist geography

The field of feminist geography, as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, is a vast and always transforming ‘body’ of literature—one that can hardly be captured within the

various “anti-” anthologies¹⁸ available, let alone this thesis (to name a few, see McDowell and Sharp, 1997; Nelson and Seager, 2005; Moss and Falconer Al-Hindi, 2008). For the most part, offers Harding (1986), feminists “share a profound scepticism regarding universal (or universalizing) claims about the existence, nature and powers of reason, progress, science, language and the ‘subject/self’” (395). Developments in poststructural, postmodern, and postcolonial theorizing advanced studies on the concept of the “unitary subject... and argued instead for alternative notions of identity, power, and knowledge... [where the] subject, rather than being a fixed entity [was] retheorized as relational, contingent... always fluid, in the process of becoming” (McDowell and Sharp, 1997: 6-7). And while traditionally, highlight McDowell and Sharp (1997), there has been a focus on *women* within feminist studies, “feminist scholars have come to recognize that there are multiple ways of ‘doing gender’” (2). As Moore (1988) suggests, gender can be considered “as a symbolic construction or as a social relationship” (Ibid). I draw from literature located broadly within the spheres of feminist theory and feminist geography, though the line of what ‘counts’ as research in these areas is constantly contested and debated (see Ahmed, 2000; Moss and Falconer Al-Hindi, 2008). Important to distinguishing feminist works, Ahmed (2000) points out, is the role feminist academics play in *effecting* and *intervening in* debates, including the debates surrounding what constitutes feminist theory and the ongoing process of ‘theorizing’ (99). This thesis does not focus specifically on issues surrounding gender and the CBFA; however, feminist geography, according to Pratt (2004), can “accommodate... difference because it is now

¹⁸ Moss and Falconer Al Hindi (2008) call their compilation of feminist texts both an anthology and an anti-anthology as they attempt to draw questions from previous texts and have feminist authors revisit and critique their own work.

about the geographical production of difference, not just gender difference, but a range of other marginalizing differences as well” (128).

Important to this thesis are what Nelson and Seager (2005) describe as the more recent, and ‘cutting edge’ shifts in the “politics of knowledge production and epistemology in feminist theory [which] have inspired careful explorations of methodologies by feminist geographers...[into] questions of positionality, power, and embodied knowledge production [which] permeate discussions of methodology within various fields of geographic thought” (6). More specifically, Moss (2005) identifies epistemology, fieldwork, and the choice of research methods as key areas in which feminist theory and geographic knowledge have come together under feminist geography, which I will consider and integrate as I develop this approach to analyzing the CBFA.

The advances within feminist geography to critically interrogate the relationship between the researcher and the researched has guided how I have chosen to conduct research on the CBFA, which includes my selection of research methods. The following sub-sections elaborate on developments within feminist geography that have emphasized methodological considerations of the role of situated knowledges, researcher positionality and reflexivity, and the importance of what Moss and Falconer Al Hindi (2008) call the “arc” of feminist geography: “an active political commitment, a praxis, ... the combination of feminist theory and feminist practice” (4).

Situated knowledges, researcher positionality and reflexivity

In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, Haraway (1991) proposed a shift in feminist research that argued “for situated and embodied knowledges and against the various forms of the unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims” (191). Her critique was waged

primarily towards the “scientific orthodoxy of objectivity that assumes a disembodied, disengaged and placeless gaze of knowledge” while at the same time she has cautioned us “not to romanticize the standpoints of the marginalized and the repressed” (McDowell and Sharp, 1997: 16). Authors that take up situated knowledges in their approach to research, therefore, acknowledge that those involved in the research process provide only “partial perspectives...[and offer] situated accounts” (Ibid). As Rose (1997) elaborates, situated knowledge is “all knowledge that is produced in specific circumstances and... those circumstances shape it in some way” (305). The point of situating knowledges, Rose continues, “is to forge critical, situated understandings by thinking through difference and similarity” (313).

Difference is often portrayed as the constantly-negotiated space between the researcher and the researched, which Fine (1994) characterizes as the act of *working the hyphen*, suggesting “researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations” (72). Fine derives her work from the messages of hooks (1989), Scott (1988), and Spivak (1988) who have asked “researchers to stop trying to *know* the Other or *give voice* to the Other, and listen, instead, to the plural voices of those Othered, as constructors and agents of knowledge” (75). Fine emphasizes that in “becoming self-conscious of work at the hyphen, researchers can see a history of qualitative research that has been deeply colonial, surveying, and exotic” (Ibid). As a non-Indigenous researcher exploring the colonial narratives implicit within the CBFA, I have grown aware of the impact of unethical research practices within Indigenous communities, and the responsibility that is required by the researcher to, as Desbien (2004) discusses in her research with

Indigenous people in the north, “watch our step... and observe the ground of our fieldwork more carefully” (415).

In regards to ‘mapping difference’ Rose (1997) has emphasized we consider “how difference is constituted...[and the importance of] tracing its destabilizing emergence during the research process itself” (313). This requires feminist researchers to critically and reflexively consider their *positionality* within the context and landscape of the research project. Drawing on Butler (1990) and Gibson-Graham (1994), Rose further explains:

We are made through our research as much as we make our own knowledge, and... this process is complex, uncertain and incomplete. Complex, because our position is a very particular mediation of class and gender and race and sexuality and so on; uncertain, because our performances of them always carry the risk of misperforming an assigned identity; and incomplete because it is only in their repetition that identities are sustained. (315)

Being fully reflexive, therefore, is not possible, but, as Kobayashi (2001) insists, a researcher must “examine her own motives, and the effects of her actions, as both researcher and activist” (55).

Following Rose (1997), and keeping in mind that I can never ‘know fully both self and context,’ I have approached this research under the assumption that I am a privileged young, White, lower-middle class female with a penchant for environmental and social justice who is conducting research through an institution of higher education. But, beyond this self-statement, Kobayashi (2005) maintains, “positionality is... more than simply the space that one occupies: it implies a recognition that such occupation is active, engaged, and contested...[where] the power to situate represents a form of privileging” (36-37). There are multiple levels of privileging at work within my reflexivity, where I am both privileged as a researcher who can interpret the results of the

research in particular ways, and privileged in my capacity to assign a specific, and indeed partial, positionality to who I think I am in this research process. Unbeknownst to me will remain how my research participants position me, this thesis (and its results), within their own understandings of the CBFA (and their lives in general). Uncertainty persists at every turn of the research project, which Rose (1997) states can be understood as “negotiations that are part of a research process... [that] are not fully knowable [like] the effects of an interview, a publication, a presentation [which] are impossible to predict. This impossibility does not absolve researchers from the obligation to work in an ethical manner” (317).

“Doing feminist research means taking a political stand... research as activism”¹⁹

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, feminist geography has played an important role in what Moss (2005) describes as “politicizing the research process, effecting social change through participatory and emancipatory research, being an activist scholar, allying with specific theories, and dealing with allegations of hegemony” (47). Above all, argues Moss, feminism addresses issues of power (Ibid: 42). In recent years within the field of political ecology, researchers have become more *involved* and *engaged* in their research projects, a trend Rocheleau (2008) calls “indicative of a politics of affinity as described by feminist and poststructural theorists... [that has seen a turn towards] engagement with activism, situated knowledges and social movements; and a return to ecology, science, and the embrace of complexity” (721-22). Furthermore, methodological considerations within feminist geography continue to be “shaped by (and

¹⁹ Audrey Kobayashi (2001). Negotiating the personal and the political in critical qualitative research. In M. Limb and C. Dwyer (Eds.). *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers: Issues and Debates* (pp.59). London: Oxford University Press.

[are] responding to) contemporary globalization processes and neoliberal discourses” (Nelson and Seager, 2005: 5).

Kobayashi (2001) puts forward a call for feminist scholars to engage in critical and committed scholarship, that sees “qualitative methods, a critical perspective, and activism for social change [as] mutually interdependent aspects” of the research process, with researchers making “no claims to neutrality and non-intervention” (56-7). This type of critical scholarship addresses in many ways what Fine (1994) suggests: “It is not just important *what* we speak about, but *how* and *why* we speak” (70) (*italic emphasis added*). Referring to much of this work as “feminist political geography” Kofman (2005) echoes Moss and Falconer Al-Hindi in purporting feminist geography to be at the “forefront of radical political geography that questions the relationship between people, places, and power at different scales” (528).

Developing a critique of the CBFA has, from the beginning, represented a political project in which I seek to destabilize the hegemonic character of sustainable development and neoliberal discourses that pervade conservationism and industrial forestry within boreal forest politics in Canada. For feminist researchers, Kobayashi (2001) claims, our research is “meant to engage and change the world, not simply to describe it with depth and sensitivity” (59). While mildly altruistic, Kobayashi’s suggestion provides important fodder for methodological considerations on how and why I have chosen to do research (any research at all, really, and in this case research on the boreal forest) and to what end. As Moss (2005) reminds me, researchers using feminist methodology need to: “have a willingness to ‘shift’ while remaining ‘rooted,’ to engage with new ideas while sorting through what is still useful from previous debate, to be

topical while nourishing your own interests, and to be critical of the context of the research process, the research knowledge, and the 'products' produced" (52).

Feminist geography has provided important tools for broaching questions surrounding the content of the CBFA and the discourses that have emerged from signatories and non-signatories alike. Furthermore, the insights from feminist geography around researcher positionality and reflexivity have provided clarity (while reinforcing complexity) on how research can be approached more reciprocally and responsibly, especially when engaging in research that is "in the field." Last, feminist geography, as a methodological approach to this research project, has also informed *who* would be included in the research. As a decidedly political project, this thesis has also shed considerable light on the conversations that emerged between signatories and non-signatories, as well as the tensions that have formed (or have become further entrenched) within and across these groups.

Section 3.2: Research methods

For this thesis, I have drawn entirely upon qualitative research methods, and have adopted a Foucauldian discourse analysis in order to analyze various 'texts' surrounding the CBFA. In chapter 2, I introduced key aspects of Foucault's work that have contributed to poststructural political ecology, including the role of discourse.²⁰ This section illustrates in greater detail what it means to "do" a Foucauldian discourse analysis, and the tools I have used to assist in this process. Interviews, as this section discusses, were another important research method employed throughout this thesis, the data from which has greatly informed the content and direction of Chapters 4 through 6.

²⁰ Drawing on Waitt (2010), I define the parameters of how I have approached the term 'discourse.' See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Foucauldian discourse analysis

Many feminist scholars have employed discourse analyses as a part of their research projects, which, according to Scott (1988), implies a “critical feminist position [that] must always involve *two moves*. The first is the systematic criticism of the operations of categorical difference, the exposure of the kinds of exclusions and inclusions—the hierarchies—it constructs, and a refusal of their ultimate ‘truth’” (422). The point of a discourse analysis in feminist research, claims Scott, is to “find ways to analyze specific ‘texts’—not only books and documents but also utterances of any kind and in any medium including cultural practices—in terms of specific historical and contextual meanings” (Ibid: 415). Beyond analyzing texts, Foucault (1991) was interested in analyzing discourse as a “set of rules” that govern a society’s understanding(s) of truth (59). Furthermore, feminists who engage in discourse analysis are, according to Moss (2005), primarily concerned with “finding places in the data that question the stability of a particular reading of power and resistance [that] might point toward instances of the momentary-ness of the information gathered in an effort to decolonize the snapshot of an underscrutinized space of analysis” (51).

While Foucault did not generate a template on how to conduct a discourse analysis for fear of being too “formulaic,” Rose (2001) has found value in providing strategies to guide a research process (Waitt, 2010: 219). Reprinted in Waitt (2010: 220), Rose (2001) created a “checklist” for conducting a discourse analysis that has been instrumental in the course of this thesis, and which I have listed below:

Strategies for Doing Discourse Analysis

1. Choice of source materials or texts.
2. Suspend pre-existing categories: become reflexive.
3. Familiarization: absorbing yourself in and thinking critically about the social context of your texts.
4. Coding: once for organization and again for interpretation.
5. Power, knowledge, and persuasion: investigate your texts for effects of 'truth'.
6. Rupture and resilience: take notice of inconsistencies within your texts.
7. Silence: silence as a discourse and discourses that silence.

As Waitt (2010) points out at the end of his review of the above steps, advocating a specific strategy to doing a discourse analysis can be seen as prescriptive. However, he argues, it is up to the researcher to approach this checklist critically, which requires the researcher remain “alert to different strategies of conviction deployed by authors to help persuade audiences that a particular form of knowledge is intrinsically better than others, ... [as well as the] instability, ambiguity and inconsistency” present within normalizing discourses (238-9). Conducting a discourse analysis in the field of political ecology, claims Robbins (2004), “seeks to dethrone ‘hegemonic’ discourses—those stories that hold a lock on the imaginations of the public, decision makers, planners, and scientists, so that other possibilities and realities are made possible [or not!]” (66). In the case of the CBFA, the use of mass media to distribute narratives to reinforce a specific ‘imagination’ of the boreal forest, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, is an important site of analysis. For feminist geographers like Scott (1988), therefore, such an analysis requires we ask questions like: “in what specific contexts, among which specific communities of people, and by what textual and social processes has meaning been acquired?” (415) Furthermore, Scott argues, it is important to also consider the following: “How do meanings change? How have some meanings emerged as normative and others have been eclipsed or disappeared? What do these processes reveal about how power is constituted

and operates?” (Ibid: 415). These questions have certainly influenced the research process, and come under examination in the chapters that follow.

Interviews

The interviews conducted for this thesis have provided rich narratives that have contributed substantially to this analysis of the CBFA, and have been elemental in exposing, as Dunn (2010) explains, “how meanings differ among people” (102). “Interviews,” Dunn (2010) continues, “can also be used to counter the claims of those who presume to have discovered THE public opinion” (102). It is also important, argues Moss (2005) to recognize the “momentary-ness of the information gathered,” and, when drawing on interviews, “set into context, even if only partially, these snapshots, for without doing so, they become unanchored narratives that have little use in sorting out the mechanisms of truth claims” (51-52, see also Dyck, 2002). This research method employed a combination of targeted and snowball sampling in order to generate a list of potential interviewees, who were contacted by e-mail and phone, and included members of the signatory ENGOs (and specifically the individuals involved in the CBFA) and the CBFA Secretariat, First Nations leaders and organizations, academics, and journalists. Participants were also selected based on their earlier engagement with the CBFA, many of whom had been previously interviewed or had posted personal statements/articles on the internet. Over a dozen people were contacted during 2012, and seven interviews were conducted over the course of this research (see Appendix H for a list of interviewees).

The in-depth interviews were conducted in person, or over the phone or video Skype, with each interview ranging from 35 minutes up to 120 minutes in length.

Interviewees were presented with an informed consent form that provided details on the

project and interview procedure, and most interviewees received the questions prior to meeting. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions in order to provide flow in the conversation, with open-ended questions that provided interviewees with an opportunity to express their interests and concerns with the CBFA (see Appendix B , C, and D for the interview research instruments). Aside from seeing the questions beforehand, interviewees were also given the option to opt out of the interview at any time, up until one month after the interview. All interviews were digitally recorded, and interviewees were given a copy of the interview transcript (unless they requested otherwise), and were asked to review their transcript and provide any corrections or changes. Returning transcripts is not required by the Carleton Research Ethics Board (REB), but considering the sensitive nature of the issue (and the fact that some were speaking as employees), and in keeping with feminist research principles, I felt that all interviewees should have the option to review our conversation and vet their responses. This process also represented a form of reciprocity and accountability, and ensured greater accuracy. However, returning transcripts generated what Ballamingie and Johnson (2011) call “researcher vulnerability,” where interviewees, upon reviewing the transcripts, may have decided to withdraw important insights, or their interviews entirely. Although I would like to think that I have been “preparing for surprise”²¹ throughout this research process, the loss of key interviews would have impacted the depth of detail on the tensions that have surfaced within the CBFA. Additionally, if I had secured interviews with everyone that I had contacted, returning full transcripts would have been an onerous task to perform, and will be important to consider for future research projects.

²¹ Maureen Reed and Evelyn Peters, 2004, Using an ecological metaphor to build adaptive and resilient research practices, *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 3(1), 18-40.

Section 3.3: Research process and materials reviewed

In feminist research, Desbien (2004) has emphasized that the research process is as important as the research results (414). Section 3.3 describes the research process, and details the various texts gathered for analysis, which have been separated into subsections that are based on the type of texts. Since there has been no published academic literature on the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, this research also serves as an entry point into theorizing the discourses, the relationships, and the tensions across them, while also recognizing that there are many different ways of approaching research on this topic. There have been, however, various publications on many other aspects of Canadian (boreal) forest politics that have assisted in framing this research (as was discussed in the introduction of this thesis). As such, in discussing the boreal forest, it is important to highlight how gender, class, race, capital, and colonialism intersect in this space in critical and overlapping ways. Though this thesis sheds light on many of these concepts, it is beyond the scope of this paper to explain in greater depth how each of these individual processes have manifested within the context of the CBFA. With that, this research project has been designed to unravel select complexities and contradictions found within the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, and, as such, has been limited in scope in order to provide detailed accounts of specific moments and discursive structures over the last three years that the agreement has been in effect.

Limiting the research scope has also been facilitated by giving substantial voice to the research participants. As the next three chapters demonstrate, much can be said in seven interviews, which have evidently provided a rich narrative throughout this thesis. The research process as a whole also proved an arduous task, as the CBFA remains an

ongoing project, and has changed in many ways since the agreement was launched. It is difficult, I have learned, to study the spokes of a wheel while it is still rolling. Indeed, as this thesis goes to print, another one of the ENGO signatories, Canopy, has dropped out of the agreement.

CBFA literature, ENGO press releases and conservation reports

This research began with a thorough reading of the full and abridged versions of the CBFA (2010), the internal CBFA press releases, as well as the “fact sheets” drawn up on specific provinces with details on the presumed impacts of the agreement.²² The content of the CBFA has determined much of the scope of this discourse analysis, as I was able to draw key themes from these documents that subsequently assisted in both searches on ENGO websites and the formulation of interview questions. Soon after reviewing the CBFA, I attended an event during September 2011 at the Canadian Museum of Nature, which featured a panel of three CBFA signatories. I took extensive notes during this public forum, and the organizers have since posted videos online from this panel—another source that has been useful for generating quotes.

ENGO press releases on the CBFA were also collected from the signatories’ websites, like the David Suzuki Foundation, Greenpeace, and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, although some of the preliminary press releases were a standard letter put out by all members of the CBFA. Each ENGO signatory, however, had their own ‘boreal forest’ section on their websites that provided important information for both conducting the discourse analysis and contacting potential interviewees. While on these

²² These fact sheets are available for British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec, and can be found at:
<http://canadianborealforestagreement.com/index.php/en/media/?tabs=2#archive-media-kits>

sites, I also searched for previous publications by the signatories on matters relating to the CBFA and boreal forest issues in general. This was an important step in the research process, and provided substantial background information on the goals and agendas of the ENGO signatories.²³

Online news articles and print magazine

These sources consisted primarily of Canadian mass media outlets, as many newspapers and magazines have published online and print articles on the CBFA over the past three years. These proved to be important sources for highlighting the types of messages being distributed to Canadian households on the CBFA, and proved integral for drawing themes for analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. In addition, I have also collected a selection of First Nations and alternative media press releases on the CBFA that have come to make up the “counter-narrative” response to the CBFA. These press releases and news articles (both mainstream and alternative) generated important visuals (including maps, photographs, and drawings) that depict the boreal forest in very different ways, and thus provide excellent fodder for analysis.

Videos

Another layer of ‘texts’ available on the CBFA included several videos that were posted on organizations’ websites or on YouTube (or sometimes both) by ENGOs, First Nations organizations and CBFA signatories. These were reviewed (and select quotes transcribed)

²³ I have made a deliberate choice not to engage in industry reports and publications for two reasons. The first reason is that the amount of time it would take to conduct a comprehensive review of all materials released by FPAC members in regards to boreal forest sustainability efforts would be a mammoth task in the short time frame of a Master’s thesis. The second reason relates to my desire, as a feminist, activist researcher, to gain insight into the tensions felt and pressures faced by signatory ENGOs within their relationships with non-signatory allegiances, an area worthy of detailed focus.

through ongoing Internet and YouTube searches, and these videos have provided important material that I was unable to obtain directly through interviews.

Additional tools: Google Alert and Evernote

During the beginning stages of my research project, a colleague introduced me to a feature in Google called Google Alerts. This tool allows you to set search words, along with other parameters, so that at the end of every day/week/month (whatever frequency you prefer), Google sends you an e-mail with a collection of news items, press releases, blog postings, etc. that have been posted on the Internet based on the search terms you have entered. This tool greatly assisted my ability to keep up-to-date on developments within the CBFA as they appeared on the Internet.

Another tool I took advantage of during the researching, reading and writing phases of this project was a software program called Evernote, which allows you to take notes and 'tag' them with different keywords that assist you in how you categorize your notes. Evernote allowed me to easily store hundreds of 'notes' from the various academic and other texts I have read over the years, and isolate topics, concepts, and discursive themes I wished to draw upon in my analysis.

Chapter 4: The exclusion of First Nations from the negotiation table

I think that it's fair to say that that was probably one of the biggest, hardest lessons for people [involved in the CBFA] to learn and, for us, both ourselves and the David Suzuki Foundation took the brunt of that because we had the most organizational commitment around the First Nations...and therefore should have known better and were held more accountable by our First Nations partners who said, "What the fuck are you thinking?" And I said, "Ya, I know, it got away on us." - Alan Young, Canadian Boreal Initiative (interview, December 20, 2012)

Entering into this agreement wasn't a decision that anyone made lightly, or without regard to the potential risks involved in abandoning old but reliable approaches. - Larry Innes, Canadian Boreal Initiative (e-mail response to John Hummel, 2010)²⁴

This thesis has largely been guided by the question: why did ENGOs and FPAC exclude First Nations from negotiations, how was this exclusion normalized, and to what effect? Chapter 4, therefore, has been designed to interrogate the "why" of this puzzle, and uncover the rationale for which ENGOs and FPAC have legitimized the exclusion of all other stakeholders from the two years of negotiations, which has had particular implications on the First Nations communities that live in the boreal forest. In order to first understand why it is that ENGOs and FPAC deemed the exclusion of First Nations (and governments) to be a necessary strategy, this chapter demonstrates how ENGOs and FPAC were operating within a broader drive towards neoliberal conservation that was facilitated greatly by the employment of sustainable development rhetoric, as evidenced in the negotiations that led up the agreement, and throughout the agreement itself. Section 4.1 first explores the nature of the ENGO-industry alliance, which has provided the foundation for collaborative efforts over the last 20 years. Next, this section draws extensively from signatory testimonials in order to uncover, if only partially, their

²⁴ See L. Powell's blog at <http://www.pathslesstravelled.com/2010/05/more-on-boreal-forest-agreement.html>

rationale for entering into exclusively bilateral negotiations. Section 4.2 of this chapter provides a review of the main goals of the agreement itself, which has become the blueprint for the signatories' combined interests in boreal forest conservation and management, and the basis for which ENGOs and FPAC have justified their particular imagining of the Canadian boreal forest.

Section 4.1: Bilateral alliances and negotiations in the boreal forest: a risk worth taking?

“Remember, this is a truce, not a surrender.”²⁵

As was discussed in Chapter 1, ENGOs and forestry companies have been forging alliances over the last two decades in order to influence government legislation in issues surrounding land and conservation management, resource development and species recovery. This section begins by exploring the relationships between specific environmental groups, private foundations, and forestry companies, and highlights the ways in which these new relationships have become instrumental in pushing forward a neoliberal conservation agenda within boreal forest politics. As well, this section provides insights into the exclusionary negotiation process in order to illustrate the signatories' rationale for, and approach to, formulating and carrying out the goals of the CBFA.

According to Brockington and Duffy (2010), neoliberal conservation has generated “new hybrid governance arrangements of ‘privatized sovereignty,’ [where] conservation strategies can hinge on the deregulation and reregulation of nature-based industries and environmental services” (479). A key insight into neoliberal conservation

²⁵ Larry Innes, Canadian Boreal Initiative, in an e-mail to John Hummel, and posted online at: <http://www.pathslesstravelled.com/2010/05/more-on-boreal-forest-agreement.html>

has been the role of private interests in establishing solutions to the problems that their industrial activities have created with the assistance of ENGO conservationist agendas (see Brockington and Duffy, 2010; Corson, 2010; MacDonald, 2010; Arsel and Büscher, 2012, among others). These neoliberal developments in environmental management, this thesis argues, are also being witnessed across Canada's forestry sector, with the CBFA being generated under a new, *hybrid* arrangement. According to Andrew Bevan, Executive Director for the CBFA Secretariat:

Both industry and ENGOs [are going] together to government to ask for certain things, not just specific to our negotiations but other things as well. For example, with the federal government joint position that was arrived at on the National Recovery Strategy [for caribou], the same sort of thing is happening provincially with regards to the Lower Athabasca regional plan in Alberta, or the long-term management direction in Ontario... Both industry and ENGOs going together to government to advocate for certain positions has a very rich feeling to it, with unusual suspects coming together to call for shared or joint positions. (interview, January 22, 2013)

What is interesting in the case of the CBFA is that the "ENGOs" are actually a mix of conservation and environmental non-profits, a charitable trust and a private foundation. While being presented to the public as a part of the ENGOs, the US-based Pew Charitable Trusts, though a non-profit, was created through a set trusts established between 1948 and 1979 by Sun Oil Company founder Joseph Pew (now Sunoco, one of the largest gasoline distribution companies in North America).²⁶ And according to Stainsby and Jay (2009), the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI) "is funded by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts [and is] a project of Ducks Unlimited Canada, which [has] received money directly from oil companies and other industrial operators" (17). According to land-use planner Petr Cizek, "CBI doesn't exist as an organization— it's not

²⁶ For more information on their structure, see: http://www.pewtrusts.org/about_us.aspx

registered as anything, it's not a non-profit, it's not a charitable organization— it's not a legal entity” (Ibid). And finally, the CBFA's ENGO caucus also includes the Ivey Foundation, which is a family-directed, privately funded charitable foundation. Together the nine (now seven, with the withdrawal of Greenpeace and Canopy)²⁷ “ENGOS” have played an implicative role in repositioning the conservation goals of ENGOS in Canada to align with and appeal to the forest industry and provincial and federal governments.

How it is that a private family foundation and a US-based charitable trust have come to guide the future of Canadian boreal forest management is indicative of the deeply troubling veracity of neoliberal conservation, where, as MacDonald (2010) explains:

Biodiversity conservation has never really driven environmental agendas. Rather, it has been an instrument in much larger political projects such as nationalism, colonialism and capitalism. This means that conservation policy and practice, whether developed within governmental or non-governmental organizations, is structured in relation to broader and longer term political goals. (516)

As these highly influential ENGOS, funders, and “non-legal” entities continue to forge exclusive relationships with the largest forestry companies in Canada, the ENGOS threaten the stability of their already tenuous relationships with First Nations leaders and communities, some of which are in direct conflict with FPAC companies. In the case of the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement (GBRA) negotiations, Dempsey (2011) found:

Representatives from the industry-led collective "Coast Forest Conservation Initiative" and environment groups that gathered under the "Rainforest Solutions Project" came together to discuss the potential of a 'negotiated' solution. While these negotiations were not 'secret,' they were 'private,' with exclusions that starkly demonstrate Braun's (2002) point about ongoing colonial relations in British Columbia, as no coastal First Nations were invited to participate in the

²⁷ Greenpeace withdrew in December 2012, and, as this thesis went to defense, Canopy withdrew from the CBFA. See: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/environmental-group-canopy-joins-greenpeace-in-backing-out-from-pact-with-loggers/article11305701/>

initial meetings. Following much outrage over these exclusions, the negotiation circle expanded to include most coastal First Nations, the Province and local communities. (217)

While the GBRA has been in effect for only a few years now, it has provided much impetus for the perpetuation of the exclusionary activities that are continuing to transpire between ENGOs and forestry companies, especially considering that many of the same environmental groups, funders and corporations were responsible for formulating both the GBRA and the CBFA. In fact, Bevan offers, in devising the CBFA, “[signatories] certainly drew lessons from what had transpired in the Great Bear Rainforest from the late 90’s on” (e-mail communication, February 18, 2013). What this research project on the CBFA suggests is that the shift from ENGO-First Nations alliances to ENGO-industry alliances (though not new, as we learned with the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement) works to reposition the ENGO’s conservation agendas away from First Nations struggles and in line with industry objectives, which are actually more complementary to their market-based goals than First Nations aspirations, which *may or may not* be capitalistic and/or in favour of protected area networks. And while the GBRA meetings did not remain private for long, these same actors learned to keep the two-years of CBFA negotiations entirely secret, which helped to impede First Nations issues from entering the CBFA’s bilateral agenda (and disrupting the ecology/economy goals of the CBFA).

According to Alan Young, Executive Director for the Canadian Boreal Initiative, the relationship between the Canadian forest industry and environmental groups has also been facilitated greatly by projects like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which involved the “engagement [of the] Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)” (interview, December 20, 2012).

Moreover, Young explains:

The FSC work was being done around protected areas and certification and that allowed that CEO level engagement and an understanding that there was both the respect for some level of sustainable business, and, at the NGO side, a tangible commitment to deferrals, protection, and other elements of sustainability. So that was an important foundation for this. We included Suncor at the time as... the only energy company that had made substantial investments in renewable energy and had made a number of technological advances and things like that, so that was, again, based on a visionary CEO and a desire to broaden out beyond that because of the footprint of the energy sector as well. And so, those relationships were built on, and when it came along to the CBFA, similarly, it was Greenpeace and Canopy and ForestEthics' work through the FSC that established both their credibility and comfort with the fact that not all forest activism had to be about boycotts. In fact, this whole process, the idea was to distinguish leaders from laggards and very deliberately target laggards and contrast them to the significant commitments that had been made through those who are willing to [be a part of] FSC. (Ibid)

For FPAC companies, being in a partnership with ENGOs has become an important component of reinventing their image. As Bevan explains:

[The CBFA] certainly... does reposition industry, and that was their aim, and that was very much for market purposes. So the aim for these companies that are involved in the CBFA is both to consolidate markets that they currently have, but to grow international markets based on how they are operating. And the agreement allows them to prove that they are willing to operate in a sustainable way, over and above what they were already doing through forest management standards like Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), [or] Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). So there's a very specific benefit to companies over the longer term in having successful outcomes under the agreement because it proves that they don't just talk green, they operate green as well... That's the key. Because, there is value in the companies just being a part of the agreement, there needs to be additional value from what the agreement produces [as] successes on the ground. (interview, January 22, 2013)

While ENGOs like CPAWS, WWF (Canada), Greenpeace, Canopy, and ForestEthics developed relationships and partnerships with forestry companies through the work of the FSC, the Canadian Boreal Initiative, explains Young:

Came up as a result of a kind of triage in effect. Looking at the data... the Siberian taiga, the Brazilian Amazon and the Canadian boreal were [identified as] the three major areas of intact forest left on the planet,... and so the question was from a global perspective, where was it most likely that you could intervene in a

way that would allow for long-term conservation of that intact forest. And for a variety of reasons Canada was the obvious choice: political stability, modern governance, and the Brazilian Amazon... also had a lot of attention being paid to it, so the lenses focused on [the boreal forest]. (Ibid)

After deciding to focus their lens on Canada's boreal forest, the CBI designed the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework (BFCF), which became the "manifesto... for the broader conservation of 50% [of the boreal forest], and the context for respect for Aboriginal rights and title, sustainable development, [and] leading edge extractive practices" (Ibid). The boreal forest was seen as a logical place for environmental groups to envision long-term efforts for what Young describes as "large, interconnected protected areas" (Ibid). Based on this new alliance between environmental groups and forestry companies, CBFA signatories were able to justify their decision to work in bilateral negotiations during the design of the CBFA in order to generate an agreement that would address their combined, and seemingly mutual, interests.

Though not a part of the CBFA negotiations, the current Executive Director of the CBFA Secretariat, Andrew Bevan,²⁸ described his understanding of the negotiation process: "When the agreement was negotiated, there were no other players in the room, it was purely a bilateral negotiation, so government was not at the table, First Nations were not at the table, other stakeholders were not at the table, like communities or other industrial sectors" (interview, January 22, 2013). The CBFA has been designed primarily for government, Bevan explained, where:

The secondary audience over and above government is some of those other folks, like First Nations, other sectors, like communities, forestry communities, and, though we operate in a ward where there was ongoing bilateral negotiations, there's a certain point as negotiations began to take shape and the parameters of the agreement also take shape, obviously it's important to engage in a substantive

²⁸ Bevan was not hired on as the Executive Director of the CBFA Secretariat until September 2011.

fashion with First Nations, other governments, provincial, municipal, and other sectors, where required, to make sure that whatever joint recommendations that are arrived at through the CBFA negotiations also take into account the interests of other parties. (Ibid)

As a key facilitator to the agreement, Tzeporah Berman²⁹ (2011) explains that years of market-based campaigns by groups like Greenpeace and ForestEthics since the early 2000s, which targeted both the actions of FPAC companies operating within the boreal forest, as well as the companies that purchased boreal products, contributed to the closed-door conversations between ENGOs and FPAC in 2008 where:

Over the next two years about a dozen senior people from both sides met monthly. All of us had to admit that collectively we had more knowledge than anyone in the country but completely differing experiences, values and foci. And collectively, none of us were outside the issues—we all lived, worked and breathed them. Because none of us was willing to compromise our values, we realized that if we worked together we might find a truly new solution. And I think we did. In 2010 the BBC hailed the resulting CBFA as the largest forest protection deal in history with the potential to save an area the size of New Zealand. But only history can judge that. (170)

Berman (2011) further explained her experience with the CBFA negotiation process, where:

The CBFA took 24 months of often gruelling meetings, and while we certainly didn't redefine what a forestry company will be in the twenty-first century, the industry agreed to enact new forest practices across the country and defer logging in over 30 million hectares of caribou habitat while joint scientific studies were conducted and new permanent protected areas were delineated. Some environmentalists and First Nations were furious because it's a deal with the logging industry, but it's one that could protect millions of hectares of caribou habitat... slated to be logged. (170)

There are several troubling messages within Berman's reflections on the CBFA. First, it appears the signatories believed that these two parties (ENGOs and forestry companies) brought enough, in fact "**more** knowledge than anyone in the country" to the table. The

²⁹ Formerly of Greenpeace and ForestEthics, and co-founder of PowerUp Canada.

signatories' collective knowledge presumed the interests of First Nations, and any further consideration of these interests did not occur until after the two "gruelling" years of negotiations were over. Second, Berman offered a disparaging and simplified version of the opposition's concerns. First Nations have long been establishing 'deals' with forestry companies, and her oversight on their real concerns demonstrates her disinclination to acknowledge the colonial implications of the signatories' exclusionary tactics. And last, Berman offers consolation – the means have justified the ends. By engaging in a crisis narrative, Berman claimed that this deal "could protect millions of hectares of caribou habitat." Not will, *could*. Evoking the crisis of the caribou has worked to rationalize the ENGOs' choice to strike a deal with the forest industry while keeping First Nations in the dark. Under this logic of crisis, First Nations involvement in the negotiations was exchanged (or sacrificed) for the potential to protect caribou habitat.

According to Alan Young of the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI)—which, as an organization, was a key collaborator in the CBFA—their organization has worked over the years to establish relationships with First Nations by directly funding First Nations groups and organizations. As Young explains:

These are the people on the ground, these are the governments... Not all First Nations have the capacity to engage in this stuff, or have the willingness or interest, but many, like the Kaska, Innu, Dehcho and others are quite willing to engage and quite capable of asserting governance in a way that is complementary to our interests and consistent with their obligations as a government. And so, if they want to have that partnership, let's work in direct partnership. So we've always worked in that model,... it's just who we are. But it's important to note that [this model] didn't happen before. So where we were concerned and continually flagging throughout the [negotiation] process [was] that this bilateral stuff came with a risk. (interview, December 20, 2012)

The relationships that CBI has established with First Nations in British Columbia has played an instrumental role in effecting the discourse of the CBFA, especially, as is

discussed in Chapter 6, surrounding questions of First Nations solidarity. Despite CBI's ongoing relationships with First Nations, collaborating with First Nations across the entire boreal forest in the context of the CBFA would have been a challenge, justified Young, because:

There are 600 First Nations,... and the Assembly of First Nations does not have a structure which lends itself to negotiation, and the context for us was, this is a truce between two parts of society which would have to be brought to governments too, as an offer, saying we've been asking you to make a choice, and we've been lobbying you heavily on both sides as either First Nations or territorial governments and often that results in a difficult situation where compromises are made that are not all that productive... The ideal model was you bring that together and say, 'Here is something that we would like to offer to you as a government that could be a potential solution that would maximize ecological integrity and allow for economic developments.' Though in this sort of rarefied world, where people are thinking about how it all could be a big shiny win-win, that was some of the thinking on it. (Ibid)

As Young has elucidated, for groups like the CBI and the David Suzuki Foundation, the choice to be involved in bilateral negotiations was difficult, and their relationships with First Nations suffered because of this decision. Latent in Young's response, still, is the notion of neoliberal reregulation, where ENGOs and industry create ecological and economic solutions and bring them to First Nation and provincial governments, a technique that has been vehemently rejected by several individuals, environmental and Indigenous groups and First Nations' leaders across the country.

As Bevan from the CBFA Secretariat explains, negotiations between the two parties did not end when the CBFA was released in 2010, where:

The reality is that... all the work that is being undertaken by the agreement is an ongoing negotiation, where very important interests are at stake, both environmental and economic. So by definition, that's going to feel at the very least tenuous, always. In fact, if it didn't feel tenuous it would probably mean you weren't doing the right thing. It's meant to feel tenuous, it's meant to feel tense to some degree. (interview, January 22, 2013)

As such, the dual interests of ecology/economy, as represented by CBFA signatories, have been the basis for which ENGOs and FPAC have organized their approach to negotiating the CBFA, and applying their objectives on the ground. As Bevan explains:

All the regions of the country where the boreal forest exists have a regional working group, and those regional working groups are mandated to work on specific land-bases to come to agreements that have both environmental and ecological outcomes that are as positive as possible – we call that the twin-pillars approach, the goal is to have dual outcomes that work to break down that paradigm of the economy versus the environment. (Ibid)

As the next section depicts, the CBFA document was generated under the signatories' "twin-pillar" approach to ecological and economic issues, which shaped the goals of the agreement, and rooted their exclusionary tactics within the logic of Western science, sustainable development, and market environmentalism.

Section 4.2: Inside the CBFA: Six goals for greater peace and prosperity in the boreal forest

The CBFA, a 66-page document, identifies six main goals for the signatories to accomplish over the course of the agreement, which, according to the CBFA Secretariat, never expires as long as the remaining parties are committed to carrying out these established objectives (Andrew Bevan, interview, January 22, 2013). This section provides a discussion of five of the six goals of the CBFA, which have been defined as the "core elements of the agreement" (2010: 6), and have provided the basis for which ENGOs and FPAC have rationalized and legitimized their decision to both exclude all other stakeholders from the negotiations, and prioritize their interests in caribou conservation through sustainable forest management and market-based solutions.

The six key goals of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (2010) are as follows:

1. World-leading boreal “on-the-ground” sustainable forest management practices based on the principles of ecosystem based management, active adaptive management, and third party verification.
2. The completion of a network of protected areas that, taken as a whole, represents the diversity of ecosystems within the boreal region and serves to provide ecological benchmarks.
3. The recovery of species at risk within the boreal forest, including species such as Woodland Caribou.
4. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions along the full life cycle from forest to end-of-product life.³⁰
5. Improved prosperity of the Canadian forest sector and the communities that depend on it.
6. Recognition by the marketplace (e.g., customers, investors, consumers) of the CBFA and its implementation in ways that demonstrably benefit FPAC Members and their products from the boreal.

Goal 1: Sustainable forest management as a function of sustainable development discourse

To start, the CBFA (2010) has been established within the traditions of Western science, where signatories have agreed to “base strategies and outcomes on the best available science and information” (8). Furthermore, the agreement states that the signatories’ “individual and joint outreach in the marketplace [will] communicate that they are working collaboratively, informed by science, to achieve agreed-upon goals for the boreal” (32). The rationale of science, as Dempsey (2011) explains, assumes that one can have a “knowledge of Nature, [which] provides a trump card to dictate what we ought to do” (214). The logic of science as indisputably true permeates the discourse within and surrounding the CBFA.

³⁰ Forest preservation plays a significant role in climate change discourse, which, in the context of this analysis, is too broad an issue to be explored in this thesis, especially in light of the burgeoning literature in political ecology surrounding ecosystem services, carbon credits and cap and trade policy developments (see Wynne-Jones, 2012; Dempsey and Robertson, 2012)

The CBFA (2010) itself was designed to establish and promote what the signatories call “on-the-ground” practices in “sustainable forest management (SFM)” in the boreal forest (18). Crucial to this point is how the formulation of sustainable forest management has been based on the tenets of sustainable development. As Luckert et al. (2011) explain, sustainable development, a key message of the Brundtland Commission’s report, *Our Common Future* (1987), emerged as a concept that “captured the public’s imagination, stirred governments to action, and galvanized the efforts of the environmental movement worldwide” (10). Since the late 1980s, sustainable development has dominated the discourse and agendas of industry, government, and many mainstream environmental groups that are engaged in boreal forest politics. Drawing on the three pillars of sustainable development, sustainable forest management, Luckert et al. (2011) argue, has therefore been based on three general dimensions: “economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability,” which hinge on the “maintenance of the health and integrity of forest ecosystems in a condition that will allow them to flourish and produce multiple economic, social, and cultural benefits for present and future generations” (10-11).

Sustainable forest management, with its roots in sustainable development discourse, situates the CBFA within a conceptualization of “nature” that, by definition, does not demand radical changes from its industry-based participants. In fact, as Escobar (1996) has argued, sustainable development does a very good job at maintaining the status quo while offering the illusion of change, which, as MacDonald (2010) explains, “has been achieved through a language that sought to replace protest and conflict with consensus and consent by claiming that economic and environmental goals were

compatible” (518). CBFA signatories have established the agreement as a space in which they “can put aside traditional differences, build on past collaboration, and pursue a shared desire for a renewed and world-competitive sustainable forest sector, robust northern communities, vibrant wilderness, and a healthy, fully functioning boreal ecosystem” (CBFA, 2010: 3). Here they fuse their conflicting differences by claiming that, in the end, they all want the same thing. These “conflicting interests,” Adkin (2009) claims, “such as those of capitalist accumulation versus those of ecology and equality, cannot be dissolved into a common, generalized interest, despite the pretensions of sustainable development discourse” (316). The roots of the CBFA are deeply problematic, and offer an agenda based on a concept that is riddled with contradictions in a language that has been deeply engrained in mainstream environmental politics.

Images have served to reinforce the (socially constructed) binary of conservation versus forestry, which will be discussed throughout this thesis, and, in the context of the CBFA document, can especially be seen in the map that signatories generated (see Figure 4.1). This map delineates provincial boundaries, the boreal forest zone, the range of caribou, and the FPAC member tenures, highlighting the areas of suspended harvesting within these tenures that fall in the caribous’ range, while at the same time leaving out any sign of First Nations presence across the landscape.

Goals 2 and 3: Caribou, protected areas, and an iconic boreal wilderness

Over the last 10 years, several of the ENGO signatories have released reports on the conditions of caribou habitat loss and population decline within boreal forest ecosystems [see CPAWS, 2004; CPAWS and the Sierra Club of Canada, 2006; Wells et al., 2010 (for PEW), Greenpeace, 2010; Putt et al., 2011 (for Greenpeace); Badiou et al., 2011 (for

CBI), ForestEthics, 2004, 2007]. These reports have also served to establish the health of the caribou and the health of the boreal forest as inherently bound, where CPAWS (2004) suggests:

Canada's boreal forest is North America's greatest remaining conservation opportunity and woodland caribou are its **iconic** species. Unfortunately over the past century, the habitat they require has eroded steadily and many of their populations have declined. Today, they are gone from close to half of their historic range, and the pace of habitat loss continues to quicken. If we are to be successful in conserving Canada's boreal forest we must ensure a future for its woodland caribou. (4, emphasis added)

Describing the caribou as “iconic” has imbued the species with a special significance – as representative of both Canadian wilderness and Canadian values. Many ENGOs have used targeted marketing campaigns against unsustainable forestry practices by companies in the boreal forest (to be addressed at greater length in the discussion of goals 5 and 6), using the image of wilderness and caribou to affect consumer choices. In the report *Robbing the Carbon Bank*, ForestEthics (2007) demonstrated the success of their market-based campaigns with a boreal products consumer testimonial, which stated:

The growing controversy about logging in caribou range in Canada is of serious concern to us, and we want to ensure that our paper consumption does not contribute to the demise of endangered species and reflects our commitment to environmental responsibility and leadership. To this end we will not buy from caribou range and we now have a preference for products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (Tom Katzenmeyer, Senior Vice President, Community and Philanthropy Limited Brands, December, 2007). (5)

By associating caribou populations with undisturbed wilderness through both literature and images [see especially Figure 4.2, CPAWS (2004) *Grey Ghosts: can we save the woodland caribou in Canada's boreal forest?*], these reports demonstrate a considerable effort by ENGOs to position the topic of caribou conservation (and biodiversity

conservation, more broadly) at the top of the agenda for boreal forest management, which has been fed primarily into two of the six goals of the CBFA.

Goals 2 and 3 forward a conservation agenda that highlights the importance of a network of protected areas within the boreal forest that is “consistent, coordinated, and/or integrated with the completion of recovery plans and action plans for species at risk such as woodland caribou” (2010: 23). According to Andrew Bevan of the CBFA Secretariat (and consistent with the messaging of ENGOs):

[Caribou are] iconic in terms of being a representative species... [and are] a useful species to concentrate on because they roam so broadly – this means that if you’re dealing with a caribou range, you’re dealing with a fairly broad expanse of territory around which one can build a proposal for protected areas on top of a caribou action plan, which is specific to the species itself. (interview, January 22, 2013)

Like the Northern Spotted Owl in Prudham’s (2005) study of the Douglas Fir region along the US Pacific coast, caribou have become the “touchstone for much broader debates about the politics of nature” (6). Woodland caribou, which occupy vast ranges in often remote locations, serve as an indicator species for the success of the CBFA, which has various strategic effects that reinforce specific conceptualizations of caribou as representative of, and manageable under, a national strategy. Furthermore, in identifying the necessary measures for recovery planning for Species at Risk, the CBFA (2010) states:

FPAC, FPAC Members, and ENGOs agree **it is important to start with the science** (i.e. what measures would be taken if acting solely on the basis of best available science) and then **overlay** this with a consideration of agreed upon social and economic criteria. (24, emphasis added)

Signatories continue to privilege the role of science in justifying their approach to conservation (and in their communications to the marketplace), not unlike the Conservation Areas Design (CAD) of the Great Bear Rainforest, which was drafted by

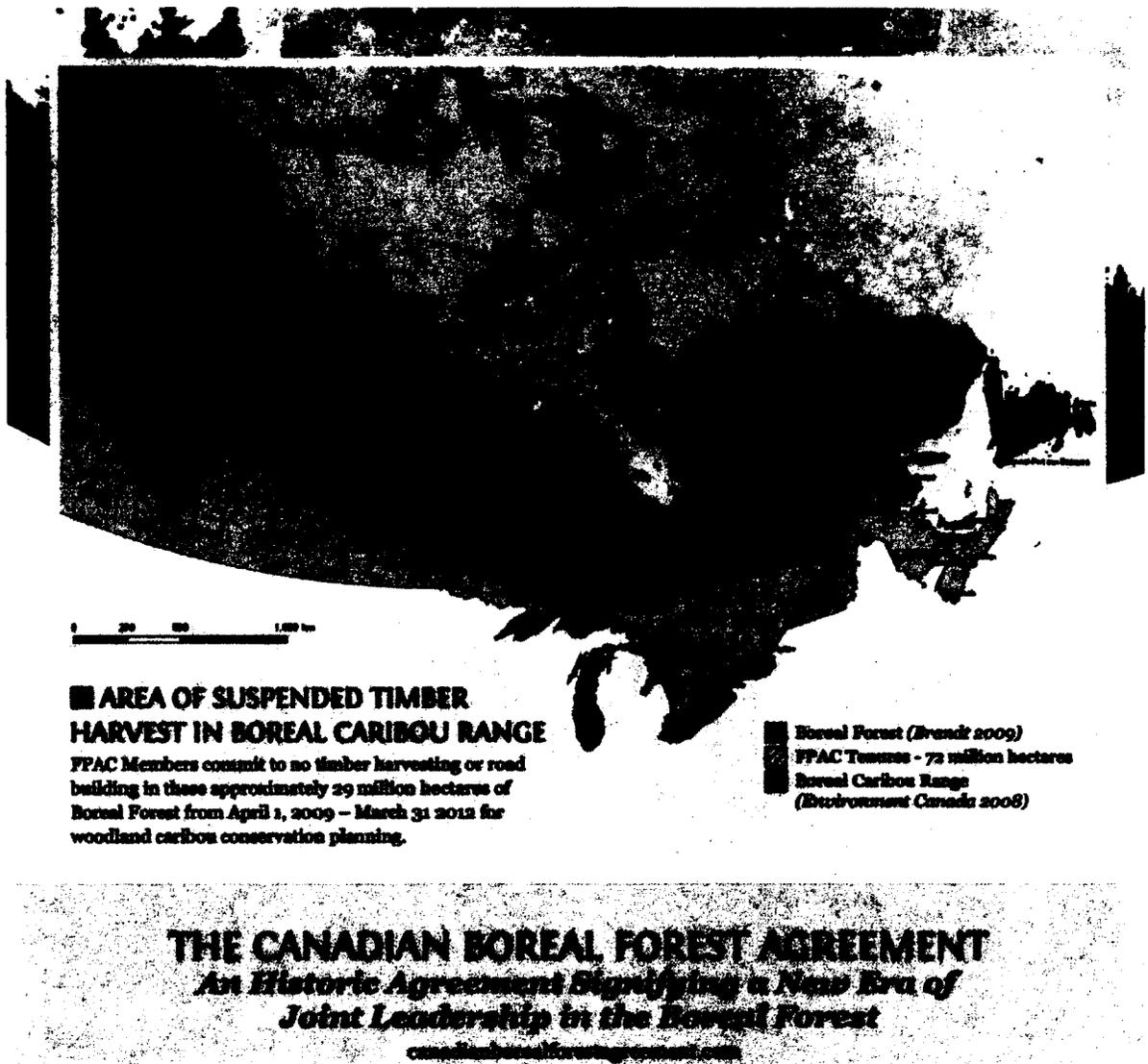
only ENGOs, without any initial input from local First Nations. According to Dempsey (2011), while those who produced the CAD “recognize[d] that First Nations and socio-economic interests must be incorporated, those [were] to be layered on top of [the] conservation plan, raising the question of how adequately any of those others could be addressed within a geography already constituted and solidified” (216). This concern is particularly relevant to the terms already laid out in the CBFA, which are bound not only to the logic of Western science, but also to “minimizing the effects” of this science-based conservation on the prosperity and growth of the Canadian forest products industry (CBFA, 2010: 24).

Goals 5 and 6: Neoliberal conservationism through market environmentalism: re-regulating the role of government

The final area of analysis regarding the content and goals of the CBFA text surrounds the ways in which goals 5 and 6 demonstrate a perpetuation of market environmentalism, where signatories have agreed to conduct “various actions that specifically target marketplace recognition of the actions taken to develop and implement the CBFA” (2010: 31). On the ENGO side, Alan Young, Executive Director of the Canadian Boreal Initiative, offers that the agreement was:

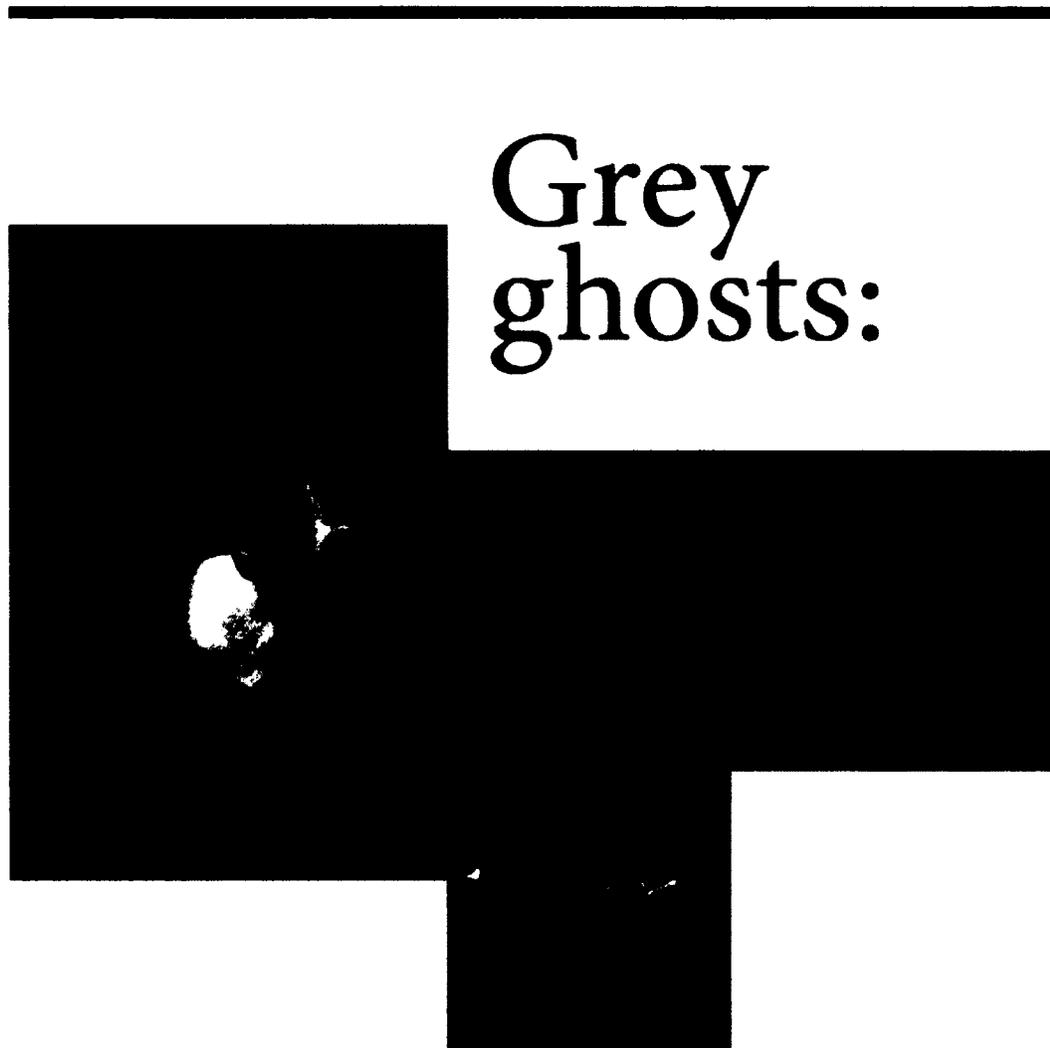
Largely driven by the market groups... [where] in order for the companies to be able to enter the market in a different way, not just on a cost basis but a green basis, they would have to try to get a market advantage by getting the endorsement by the NGOs and at the same time take the pressure off them in the market by the NGOs and have more latitude to, if you took it at face value, fulfill the potential green vision that people like Avrim Lazar and some of the CEOs [in FPAC] had, to say, ‘If we work together we can actually build the forest industry that you want.’ (interview, December 20, 2012)

Figure 4.1: Map of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement



(Source: The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, 2010)

Figure 4.2: CPAWS report cover on the state of caribou populations



A special report and action plan prepared by:



OCTOBER 2004

(Source: Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, 2004)

Under the CBFA, ENGOs went from boycotting FPAC members to endorsing them. This endorsement of FPAC operations by ENGOs to increase the visibility and recognition of FPAC companies in the marketplace demonstrates a key aspect of neoliberal conservationism, which ensures that biodiversity conservationists provide, what Corson (2010) calls, a “stamp of environmental approval... for corporate and political leaders” (594). A key passage within the CBFA (2010) – and one of great controversy amongst many non-signatories – is the one that calls for ENGOs to change the methods of their boreal-related campaigns. Under goal 6, signatory ENGOs are obligated to:

Suspend all activities that seek as their primary intent to have existing customers of FPAC Members reduce or eliminate their purchases of forest products from the boreal operations of FPAC Members, discourage potential customers from making purchases of forest products from the boreal operations of FPAC Members – by way of example, this includes things such as direct actions targeting FPAC Members or their customers in relation to forest products from the boreal operations of FPAC Members, negative media work targeting FPAC Members or their customers in relation to forest products from the boreal operations of FPAC Members, targeted requests to customers of FPAC Members for cancellations of contracts that pertain to forest products from their boreal operations, and requests to boycott forest products from the boreal operations of FPAC Members. (36)

Upon signing the agreement, ENGOs suspended boycott operations, and, after “substantial completion of the ecological elements of the CBFA,” they will also be responsible for communicating to the marketplace that the “forestry operations of FPAC members in the boreal [are] positive examples of boreal forest management” (2010: 33). Once the agreement was announced, all signatories changed the content of their websites to reflect their participation in the CBFA. Greenpeace placed “pop-ups” on their webpages overtop of former boycott campaigns, announcing their commitment to the

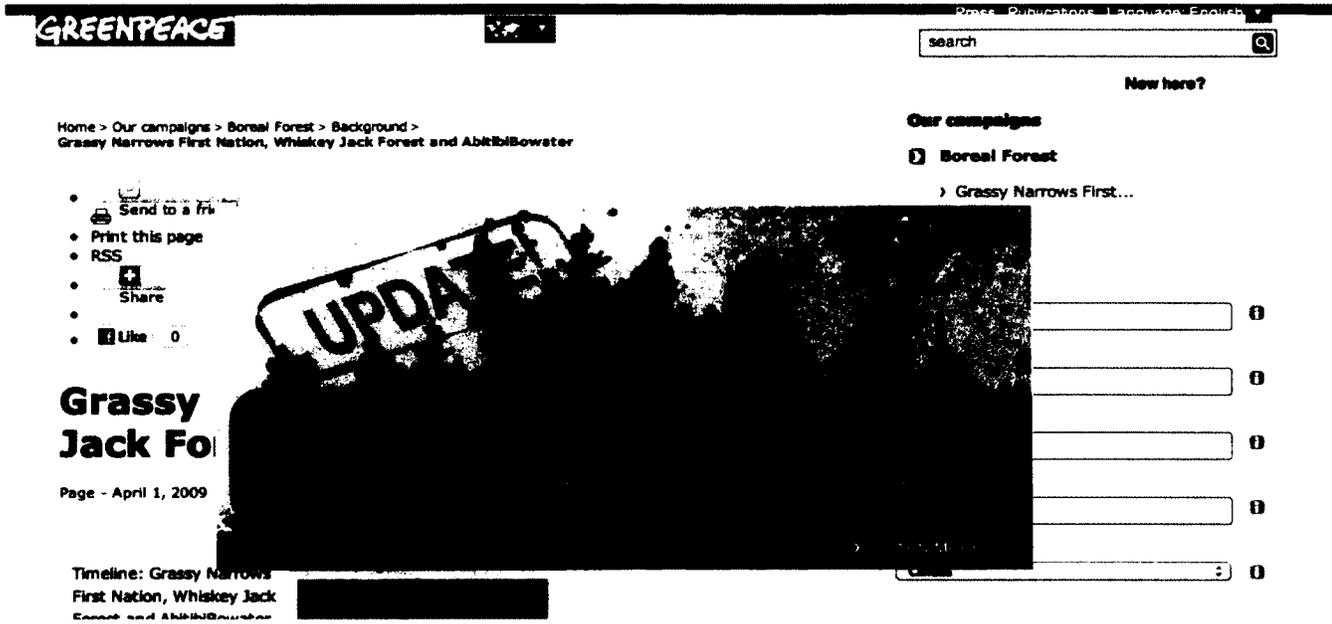
goals of the CBFA.³¹ In Figure 4.3, this image shows how Greenpeace placed a “CBFA stamp” overtop of their original page of support of efforts by Grassy Narrows First Nation to resist the clear-cutting of their traditional territory, and specifically the Whiskey Jack Forest, by FPAC member, and CBFA signatory, AbitibiBowater.³²

“Market environmentalism,” claims Bakker (2007: 102), involves the “the application of market institutions to natural resource management as a means of reconciling the goals of efficiency and environmental conservation,” which serves to reinforce language that subscribes the recovery of caribou as dependent on the demand for sustainably-sourced wood products in the international economy. An emphasis on fixing the problems of market-decline through conservation efforts and improved sustainable forest management lends the CBFA to the functions of neoliberal conservationism, which embraces what MacDonald (2010) calls an “eco-modernist rhetoric of environmental management that positions corporate actors as having the will, resources and knowledge to engage in environmental repair or caretaker services to solve the environmental problems that global capitalism has itself created” (529).

³¹ Greenpeace pulled out of the CBFA in December 2012, and resorted back to their target-based campaign methods, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

³² As of 2011, Abitibi-Bowater has changed its name to Resolute Forest Products, and is still a member of the CBFA.

Figure 4.3: Screenshot of Greenpeace’s website with a “CBFA stamp” overtop of their page of support for Grassy Narrows First Nations



(Source, Dawn Paley, email communication, 2013)

The CBFA has become an important text for the CBFA signatories because it crafts a specific set of knowledges about the boreal forest and how the space is to be used and understood. This frame of knowledge, which has been largely informed by sustainable development, prioritizes economic growth and evades any attempt to address the roots of environmental degradation within the boreal forest: industrial-capitalist production and consumption. Despite extensive ENGO involvement in shaping the agreement, the CBFA only contains one instance (throughout the whole agreement) that offers a reduction in consumption as a solution to environmental degradation in the boreal forest. In terms of “ENGO Advocacy,” the CBFA (2010) recommends that the groups:

Promote Forest Stewardship Council (“FSC”), promote protection and conservation of species at risk, promote improved wood and paper recovery and use of recycled forest products, promote agriculture residue and other potential low impact alternatives, **promote use reduction**, raise awareness of biodiversity conservation issues, and raise awareness and promote solutions in relation to climate change. (5, emphasis added)

As Dempsey and M’Gonigle (2003) write, advocating for a reduction in the “market utilization of forests” remains, for the most part, outside the goals of conservationists’ market campaigns (113). This aversion to truly addressing consumption perpetuates what Dempsey and M’Gonigle refer to as a “blind spot in conservation activism” – one that the CBFA does not escape (Ibid).

Conclusion

In drawing on theoretical insights from within the field of political ecology, this chapter has revealed the emergence of an ENGO-FPAC alliance, their strategy behind the bilateral CBFA negotiations, and the priorities within the goals of the agreement, which have been informed by the signatories’ collective drive towards sustainable development

and neoliberal conservation. By basing their rationale within this frame of knowledge, ENGOs and FPAC were able to unify their *joint* interests in the boreal forest, and justify the exclusion of First Nations from the CBFA. As evidenced in the testimonials by CBFA signatories, ENGOs and FPAC operated under the belief that, as Berman expressed, they all “lived and breathed the issues” within the boreal forest, and therefore had enough common knowledge to put forward an educated plan for the future of the boreal forest. Furthermore, under the logic of sustainable development, which is deeply engrained within mainstream environmentalism and corporate social responsibility, the CBFA was understood by the signatories as a “truce” between the two self-proclaimed representatives of the ecology/economy dichotomy, which, fundamentally, has excluded First Nations. These developments have provided the basis for signatories to advance their binary interests of ecology/economy, which has promoted a politicized conceptualization of nature – one that emphasizes the role of Western science, sustainable development, and market-based solutions to determine the best outcomes for “nature.” Borrowing from Scott (1988), these “discursive fields overlap, influence, and compete with one another; they appeal to one another's ‘truths’ for authority and legitimacy” (415).

The agreement has also provided a space for signatories to selectively make visible the crisis of the caribou, which, they have argued, can be resolved by addressing the crisis of the forest economy through the use of market-based instruments. By operating within the logic of sustainable development and neoliberal conservation, the CBFA signatories have marginalized the interests and involvement of First Nations to exist outside the crises of ecology and economy, which serves to reinforce the

signatories' decision to exclude First Nations from negotiating and designing the agreement as both practical and necessary. The next chapter explores the crisis narrative that CBFA signatories and supporters invoked as a means of normalizing debate surrounding the CBFA, further removing concerns expressed by First Nations who spoke out against the CBFA. As the next section depicts, the goals of the CBFA have provided the basis for signatories to assert their authority in boreal forest politics, which has been communicated to the Canadian public through mass media distribution, interviews, press releases, expert endorsements and signatory panels.

Chapter 5: Normalizing hegemonic discourses in the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement

While Chapter 4 addressed questions surrounding why CBFA signatories deemed the exclusion of First Nations and governments from the negotiations to be a practical and necessary approach to boreal conservation and planning, Chapter 5 explores how this exclusion was normalized by signatories and supporters from the moment the CBFA was released in May 2010, and how this normalization was resisted by several Indigenous and non-Indigenous dissidents. Section 5.1 of this chapter interrogates how the presence and active involvement of key participants in the CBFA has served to legitimize the authority and leadership of the CBFA signatories, as well as the overarching goals of the agreement. Section 5.2 revisits the ecology/economy crisis narrative that surfaced throughout the analysis of the CBFA document, and considers how this narrative has become a key component of Brockington and Duffy's (2010) "disciplining power of hegemonic conservation," which has been reiterated by signatories and supporters over the three years that the CBFA has been in effect (471). This section aims to demonstrate the narratives and messages that emerged through the public presentation and circulation of the CBFA, whereby signatories and non-signatory supporters engaged with specific naturalizing, and sometimes totalizing, language to promote the CBFA, while at the same time assigning First Nations and provincial and federal governments to limited roles under the CBFA. Section 5.3, in turn, explores how normalization tactics were resisted by non-signatories who rejected both the content of the agreement, and the strategy that the signatories have used to impart their *joint* authority in boreal forest politics.

Section 5.1: CBFA radicals and poster boys: Greenpeace, David Suzuki, and Avrim Lazar

This section discusses the ways in which specific actors have used their political and public influence in order to advance the CBFA agenda in boreal forest politics. In drawing on the work of Braun, Baldwin (2010) suggests that “forest conservation discourse, like any natural discourse, comes to rely on powerful *cultural* formations to gain political purchase, and, in this sense, is indelibly linked to questions of subject formation, power and authority” (428). Each signatory has both their own and many of the same supporters (especially in the case of ENGOs), and each group and its organizers that are involved in the agreement has important reputations that have assisted in widespread exposure of the CBFA. As Waitt (2010) explains, “the way that knowledge becomes understood as appropriate is not restricted to the use of particular technologies in the production of texts, but also encompasses the way that sets of ideas are legitimized by the subtle deployment of different knowledge-making practices or categories of spokesperson (politician, academic, celebrity)” (234). In this analysis, I have focused on the ways in which three specific groups/actors involved in the agreement, which includes Greenpeace, David Suzuki, and Avrim Lazar, have served to normalize both the exclusion of all other stakeholders from the agreement, as well as the acceptability of the CBFA as an appropriate approach to addressing the current crises in Canada’s boreal forests.

Greenpeace

For the last 30 years, Greenpeace has built its image and its reputation atop their radical tactics: various sit-ins; spray-painting ships; banner-dropping off of towers, balconies, and the sides of ships; chaining themselves to all kinds of objects; climbing on the roofs

of Parliament buildings; and more recently and arguably less radically, adopting edgy market campaigns (like the “Kleercut: wiping away ancient forests” campaign aimed at Kimberly-Clark). Using high-profile targeting of companies who purchase products from the boreal, Greenpeace has spent the last decade constructing meaning and producing a set of knowledges that characterize the boreal forest as an extractive site for southern consumption. As Richard Brooks, Forest Campaigner and key CBFA negotiator for Greenpeace, explained during a 2011 panel session at the Canadian Museum of Nature:

When we were designing these campaigns... we quickly came to the realization that many people in Canada didn't know what the boreal forest was. They had this concept in their head that there was a big forest across the country, the great wilderness of Canada. Most people if you asked them 8 years ago, 10 years ago, what's the boreal forest, they'd look at you blankly... most people didn't know that they were using products on a daily basis that were coming out of the boreal forest... so we designed the campaigns around products people were using on a daily basis.

Greenpeace has an international membership that includes activists who are notorious for getting arrested in order to make their message “newsworthy,” which Doyle (2003) has described as “acts of daring,” whereby:

If Greenpeace activists make themselves outlaws, they are heroic outlaws. Part of Greenpeace's appeal is the daring of its eco-cowboys, its rebels, its 'rainbow warriors.' The stunts are presented as David standing up to Goliath, as acts of desperate courage by small bands of individual underdogs and individual heroes... against international corporate villains. This belies Greenpeace's latter-day status as a large multinational organization. (121-2)

As Doyle suggests, Greenpeace's activists are known for their non-violent confrontations with law enforcement agents, and, although the organization itself often characterizes the work that they do as “grassroots,” Greenpeace is one of the largest ENGOs within Canada, and has a strong international presence across 40 countries worldwide. In a study conducted by Garcia (2011) on the public perception of Greenpeace in their 10-year

conflict with British Petroleum from the late 1990s to the late 2000s, Garcia found that Greenpeace was largely framed as a hero, and authors of the news articles that Garcia reviewed “perceived protests, boycotts, and public accusations [against BP by Greenpeace] as actions that enriched the organization’s [Greenpeace’s] reputation” (2). In taking hard lines against corporations, Greenpeace, unlike most of its ENGO counterparts³³ in the CBFA, is more than just a conservation group. Its reputation rests on the shoulders of, as Doyle calls them, “desperate acts of courage” by environmentalists who are also *activists* that are ready to prove their courage. Greenpeace has acquired a certain image within the Canadian public and around the world, whereby their quest for truth has been looked upon as both unconventional and heroic, and informs their role and appeal as the “radicals” at the CBFA table (which also had implications on their withdrawal from the agreement in 2012, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 6).

David Suzuki

According to Foxman (2010) of *Reader’s Digest*, David Suzuki has been recognized as Canada’s “champion of the environment,” and in the CBC’s *The Greatest Canadian* series, Suzuki “received the most votes of any living figure.” Foxman (2010) continues: “Why do Canadians trust this diminutive 74-year old force of nature? Perhaps because he

³³ Although, ForestEthics has produced very strategic and targeted market campaigns against companies, like their campaign “Victoria’s Dirty Secret,” which focused on the company’s purchase of boreal pulp and paper products. However, ForestEthics has not been in existence for as long, nor does it have as significant of an international presence, as Greenpeace.

makes us care.” And, in *Reader’s Digest’s* annual “Most Trusted Canadian” poll, Suzuki has very recently come out on top two years in a row, in both 2010 and 2011.³⁴

Over the last 50 years, Suzuki has made a name for himself in the Canadian public as an award-winning authority on what is best for the environment, and has pushed up against corporations and all levels of government for greater sustainability, corporate responsibility, and change within environmental politics. In the 1990s, Suzuki co-founded an organization that bears his name, the David Suzuki Foundation (DSF), which transfers his years of moral clout to the projects that the DSF embarks on and endorses. The DSF holds a highly coveted “stamp of approval” from the Canadian public because of the moral authority that Suzuki, one of Canada’s most trusted citizens, has built around environmental issues. By participating in the CBFA, the DSF sends a message to Canadians that the agreement comes from a dependable source. The DSF’s role in the CBFA is also significant because of the organization’s close relationships with First Nations, and active support for Indigenous rights issues.³⁵ As Alan Young from CBI explained during interview (which was quoted in the epigraph to Chapter 4), the DSF and CBI were held more accountable for the exclusion of First Nations from negotiations because of their especially close ties with specific Indigenous communities and organizational partners. On May 26, 2010, following significant outcry from several First Nations communities upon the public release of the CBFA, David Suzuki and Faisal Moola from the DSF co-authored a public statement titled “Canada’s Aboriginal People

³⁴ See <http://www.readersdigest.ca/magazine/2012-trust-poll/most-trusted-canadians-2011-trust-poll-results>

³⁵ For example, the David Suzuki Foundation wrote a letter of support for the Idle No More campaign. See: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/media/news/2012/12/david-suzuki-foundation-letter-of-support-for-idlenomore/>

are key to Boreal Agreement's success." In the article, they stated, "the success of this world-class effort to protect the boreal will depend in large measure on the support and leadership from Aboriginal people." After continued opposition to the CBFA by First Nations across the country, Suzuki prepared a separate statement for the Boreal Chiefs of British Columbia on July 8, 2010, where he admitted:

I and the Foundation did not do our due diligence to realize that First Nations weren't involved and I am ashamed that we supported this agreement without first rectifying this omission. I cannot and do not speak for the other signatories or the Canadian Boreal Initiative, but I want to make my position very clear. I am here to offer my sincerest apology for the disrespect shown by the failure to include boreal First Nations in this process and by the failure of the David Suzuki Foundation to recognize and correct this egregious mistake. I am truly sorry.³⁶

Suzuki, though not directly involved in the agreement, had to do substantial damage control for both the organization that bears his name, as well as for the CBFA signatories, who still need First Nations engagement within the areas of critical caribou habitat. And to some degree, Suzuki's presence in the CBFA has had an effect on even the opposition. In an interview I had with Wolf Lake First Nation's Chief St. Denis, who has taken a stand against the CBFA, he explained:

[The David Suzuki Foundation] realized it was a mistake not to involve First Nation communities because David Suzuki, personally, is a supporter, I think, of First Nations people and the land and the environment... I think maybe there was some realization there after the fact that they didn't approach this right. (February 21, 2013)

However, Chief St. Denis was also under the impression that the DSF had since withdrawn from the CBFA, which is not the case. For Suzuki, the omission of First Nations from the negotiation process was a mistake worthy of forgiveness, and notably,

³⁶ See Appendix E for a copy of David Suzuki's apology letter.

to this day, the David Suzuki Foundation remains a signatory to the agreement, even after Greenpeace and Canopy have dropped out.

Avrim Lazar, former CEO of the Forest Product Association of Canada

In the first two years of the CBFA's release, Avrim Lazar played an especially active role in communicating the CBFA to the public, speaking at press conferences and panels, and conducting interviews with mainstream media outlets. According to an interview Lazar did with *The Globe and Mail's* Shawn McCarthy (2012a), Lazar made the jump from working in government to working in the private sector because: "You realize that a lot of powers to make changes aren't in government; they're in civil society. On the environment, the industry has done great things and being able to support them was exciting and at least as powerful as anything I could do at Environment Canada."

Over the last 10 years, Lazar has been working with FPAC members to change the way forestry companies do business, with Lazar claiming that: "When I came in, I said we were going to set some higher standards and have a certification system. Anybody who didn't want to meet the standards didn't have to stay" (S. McCarthy, 2012a). In his statements, Lazar takes responsibility for the seemingly progressive changes being made by forestry companies, thereby representing a renewed (and more accountable) boreal forest products industry. In his time as the CEO of FPAC, he also won over the hearts and minds of key actors involved in the negotiations of the CBFA. According to the co-founder of ForestEthics, Tzaporah Berman (2011):

We planned to start by convincing every logging company in the country to stop logging in all caribou habitat—30 million hectares across the country—at a time when their mills were shutting down due to economic downturn. Everyone said that was impossible. Everyone hadn't met Avrim Lazar. (168)

Berman continues:

When we met I was totally surprised to realize Avrim is a spiritual, socially conscious man who told me about the progressive synagogues he goes to in Ottawa, where social justice issues are part of the mandate. As we ordered dinner, I discovered that he has been a strict vegetarian since his teens—is, in fact, quite militant about it and will happily go on about the carbon footprint of cattle. This was not the opponent I was expecting. (Ibid)

For Berman, Lazar became the face (and lifestyle) of a changed industry, an opponent worthy of negotiating with. Richard Brooks, who played an integral role in the

negotiations for Greenpeace, echoed a similar admiration during his speech at the

Canadian Museum of Nature in 2011, where he described his relationship with Lazar as the following:

We began to see each other as people, one of the real lessons of the agreement... Some have accused me of doing a deal with the devil and selling out the environmental community in Canada..., and it's a hard thing to hear, especially when many years ago we saw Avrim as the devil. He was a great rallying point for troops at Greenpeace... we would put Avrim on the wall in the war-room in Greenpeace. But now we have a very different relationship, Avrim and I, we go for walks along the waterfront, sometimes we hold hands, we do yoga together, well we don't hold hands, but we do do yoga together, and that's come about because of the time we spend together and the trust that we've been able to build together to create an agreement that needs to happen.

Last, while reflecting on the role of FPAC within the CBFA, Alan Young of the

Canadian Boreal Initiative stated:

I mean it wouldn't have happened without him [Avrim Lazar], and it's interesting, he said that he was working in government around climate change issues and he watched the stalemates happen within government with NRCAN and Environment Canada – he watched big issues go nowhere. And at a personal level, as well as at a professional and political level, one of the things he said is, 'On my watch, I really don't want another one of those things happening where a big set of issues was left in détente while I was there, would it be possible for us to do something different?' So there's that bold vision, and on the other hand, had people like Pew, and Ivey, and Greenpeace and others who said 'We've been fighting this fight for a long time could we think about what a solution would really look like, and if you're serious about that conversation, we're serious about that conversation.' (interview, December 20, 2012)

As head of the Forest Products Association of Canada, Lazar's enlightened demeanor reflects the Canadian boreal forest industry as a likeable and sympathetic opponent – a revolutionized industry. Through their active and public endorsement of the CBFA, and wide and varying public appeal, Greenpeace, David Suzuki, and Avrim Lazar have helped to portray the CBFA as a credible solution to the crises of the boreal forest.

Section 5.2: Taking the CBFA out of the boardrooms and into the limelight

This section explores the coverage of the CBFA, which involved extensive public and mass media distribution across Canada by signatories and non-signatories. It seems safe to assert that few Canadians are likely to read the six goals of the CBFA, and even fewer will read the 66-page agreement in its entirety, especially because, as the CBFA Secretariat offered, it is a document designed “primarily for government” (interview, January 22, 2013). Most of the CBFA's dissemination has been through the signatories' individual websites and their collective CBFA website, alongside various independent and mainstream media outlets. These mainstream media outlets include: *The Guardian*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Toronto Star*, *The Vancouver Sun*, and *The Canadian Press* (which made its way onto CTV News), to name a few. In fact, the CBFA has received (and continues to receive) extensive coverage in *The Globe and Mail*, which is hardly surprising considering they are in a partnership with Canopy, one of the CBFA signatories. It is, therefore, important to understand how the CBFA is being communicated to the public, and the types of messages that are surfacing within this coverage. As well, how widely the CBFA was distributed provides some (if only presumed) sense of how much exposure the CBFA had in its initial release, and continues to have over the nearly three years that the agreement has been in play. To that effect, the

CBFA has received fairly extensive coverage since its release in 2010, which has included dozens of print and online mainstream, First Nations, and alternative-press news articles, press conferences and several public panel events, innumerable blog posts by both supporters and non-supporters, signatory updates and online posts, and a 13-page spread in the January/February 2011 issue of *Canadian Geographic*.³⁷

The widespread circulation of the CBFA has assisted the signatories in communicating the goals of the agreement and securing authority and legitimacy in mainstream Canadian environmental politics. This section explores various communication medias, like video, literary, and visual ‘texts,’ which have generated specific messages about the CBFA. In particular, this section highlights how signatories have used crisis narratives to instill a sense of urgency within boreal forest conservation, which has been reinforced through the use of aggressive language (which is arguably masculinist) to assert their collective authority and *effect truth* in public perception on how to address both the caribou crisis and the crisis of the forest sector. Overall, the goal of this section is to understand how the CBFA was carried out of the private boardrooms and into the public light in an attempt to establish and normalize joint authority (ENGOS, FPAC, and FPAC members) over the future of Canada’s boreal forest.

*A winning combination, a fearsome gang: mighty FPAC and staunch environmentalists*³⁸

Due to the volume of releases, I have focused my analysis on key illustrative texts and images that have been produced over the past three years, starting with the first CBFA

³⁷ Online searches for “Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement” resulted in hundreds of hits, especially with the increasing popularity of Twitter and blogging. Unfortunately, due to time and space constraints, not every blog or news article could be factored into this analysis. A separate project could be to compile a database of all the search results to track public opinion.

³⁸ Mighty FPAC and staunch environmentalists were the descriptors used on a poster for a CBFA event held on September 19, 2011. See Figure 5.1.

press conference. This is an important text because it was the world's first glimpse of the CBFA, which was widely distributed, posted on the CBFA website and YouTube, and referenced by many mainstream papers during the first week of the agreement. As well, this conference set the stage for the type of content the signatories would be highlighting from the CBFA, and demonstrated some interesting dynamics and use of language to enforce their roles as leaders in boreal forest politics, the holders of the best science and standards, and impenetrable allies. On May 18, 2010, the CBFA was launched, and, to inaugurate the agreement, signatories held a press conference in Toronto, Ontario, featuring presentations by Richard Brooks of Greenpeace, Steve Kallick of the Pew Charitable Trusts, and Avrim Lazar of FPAC. In this first public appearance by the CBFA signatories, Richard Brooks posited:

This is our **best and last chance** to save woodland caribou in the boreal forest over a vast area that is twice the size of Germany... It is our **last chance** to preserve vast tracks of forest that will be durable in the face of climate change,... it's our **best and last chance** to put in place world leading forest management practices that we can be proud of here in Canada... And it's our **best and last chance** to create a sustainable and healthier forest sector in Canada. (emphasis added)

Throughout his speech, Brooks insisted that the CBFA represents the *best and last chance* to address a number of interrelated crises in the boreal forest with the solutions that the CBFA signatories have created in order to resolve the crises of ecology and economy.

Furthermore, Brooks flexed their collective power by emphasizing how:

The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement changes the old dynamic, the win-lose dynamic. It sets a new dynamic for a win-win engagement between **very strong, powerful parties** that together are going to work and move forward together. (emphasis added)

In a letter that David Suzuki and Faisal Moola (2010) wrote shortly after the release of the CBFA, they stated:

For many conservationists, the motivation for entering into negotiations with industry was the urgent need to stop the "bleeding" in boreal woodland caribou habitat. According to a federal government report, many of Canada's caribou herds face extinction if status quo industrial practices that lead to further habitat loss and fragmentation, like logging and road-building, aren't stopped.³⁹

However, they argue further, "caribou aren't the only species in crisis,... boreal forests across the planet are facing a perfect storm of threats" (Ibid). Suzuki and Moola's letter reiterates Brooks' (and the overall agreement's) emphasis on the escalating caribou crisis, where, they claim: "Scientists believe [the Little Smoky herd], in fact, every herd in Alberta, will go extinct unless we work to protect current habitat and restore damaged habitat" (Ibid). The impending extinction of an *iconic* species like the caribou, they argue, provided "motivation" for conservationists to enter into the bilateral negotiations.

At the May 2010 press release, Steve Kallick, went on to describe those that were involved in the CBFA as "heroes" and, if it were not for "FPAC's vision and courage, we would not be here today." During the question and answer period, all three speakers (Brooks, Kallick, and Lazar) took to the stage to field questions. According to Lazar:

One interesting piece of the agreement is, with Greenpeace, David Suzuki, ForestEthics, and Canadian Parks and Wilderness on our [FPAC's] side, when someone else comes and tries to bully us, the agreement actually requires that they [the signatory ENGOs] come and work with us in repelling the attack, and we'll be able to say, "Fight me, fight my gang."

In this remark, Lazar emphasizes the strength of this new alliance by the involvement of people like David Suzuki, who will help FPAC repel the attacks of bullies (presumably, other, less moderate environmentalists) who come after their new gang. The language

³⁹ Interestingly, during an interview with Yale Environment 360, Steve Kallick from Pew Charitable Trusts explained: "Clearcutting will continue as an appropriate silviculture method... The FSC does not prohibit clearcutting in the boreal forest because it's not ecologically required. This is industrial forestry, with improved practices." See: http://e360.yale.edu/feature/forging_a_landmark_agreement_to_save_canadas_boreal_forest/2323/

Lazar used actively discounted the concerns of dissidents and emphasized the signatories' collective power, much like Brooks did when he described the signatories as "very strong, powerful parties."

Figure 5.2 is a picture taken at the May 18, 2010 press release that has key members up on stage, notably all White males, with Kallick, Brooks, Lazar, and the Ivey Foundation's Tim Gray all enjoying a group handshake. These images, including Figure 5.3 with the three speakers smiling together, help reinforce their projection of peace and friendship, and provide a telling display of who was at the table, and who was not.⁴⁰ Together, these public speakers and authors used crisis rhetoric and aggressive language to emphasize urgency and reinforce their authority as well as the validity of their joint recommendations for future action in the boreal forest.

On September 19, 2011, I attended an event hosted by FPAC and the Royal Canadian Geographic Society at the Canadian Museum of Nature in "celebration of the International Year of Forests 2011, and Canada's National Forest Week [with] a panel session on the world-renowned Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement" (see Figure 5.1). In the invitation, the CBFA is also referred to as "a uniquely Canadian solution uniting mighty forest companies and staunch environmentalists." Before anyone had entered the room, the flyer provided a depiction of the two parties: FPAC is mighty, ENGOs are staunch. The panel itself was composed of three speakers: Tim Gray of the Ivey Foundation, Richard Brooks of Greenpeace, and Avrim Lazar of FPAC. During his

⁴⁰ It is also worth noting that the press conference in May 2010, and the panel at the museum in September 2011, both involved presentations from three CBFA signatories that were White males. Unraveling the gendered, colonial, and racialized implications of the CBFA lies beyond the scope of this analysis, but does play a role in forwarding what Baldwin (2009) has referred to as "white ethnoscaping... [whereby] boreal forest conservation comes to be associated with 'white' identity, although by no means exclusively so, and certainly not without significant contradictions" (428).

presentation, Gray made the following statement about the interests of Indigenous people within the CBFA:

Many of the issues that are included in the agreement have been issues of long-standing concern for First Nations communities: protection of cultural values, ecological values, species like caribou, creation of protected areas like cultural reasons, new employment opportunities.

Undoubtedly problematic here is how signatories have made claims to what is valued most by First Nations, actively speaking for them in light of their exclusion from negotiations. In doing so, signatories have worked to position Indigenous issues as representable under the ecology/economy paradigm, which both limits Indigenous interests and minimizes questions surrounding treaty rights and title. In Lazar's presentation at the Canadian Museum of Nature, he further emphasized the necessity of an ENGO-FPAC-led conservation plan when he stated:

The government is going to have to play its role, but there also has to be a role for leadership from the environmental community, the conservation community, and the private sector. In other words, a truly national conservation plan has to have civil society leadership at its center. We need government to do its bit, we need government support, but this agreement provides a core of civil society leadership across a huge part of nature in Canada, which can bring a national conservation plan to life in a way that government can never do itself.

Here, Lazar suggests that the government's role (though, he did not specify which government, the agreement itself acknowledges the role of Aboriginal, provincial, and federal governments) is to support the work of the CBFA signatories – "to do its bit" – and leave the leadership up to these members of the private sector and civil society, which is certainly not an inclusive membership, but in fact highly selective. According to Lazar, this agreement also does something that government "can never do itself," which is bring this (self-proclaimed) core of civil society together in order to make a conservation plan "come to life." Removing government from the center actively works

to reregulate their responsibility, infusing a neoliberal conservationist discourse into their agenda.

Another piece worth deeper analysis is the January/February 2011 edition of *Canadian Geographic* that featured a 13-page piece on the CBFA called “The Boreal Handshake,” by Rick Boychuk, which took him into the boreal forest north of Cochrane, Ontario with CBFA signatories Janet Sumner, Executive Director of the Wildlands League, and Al Thorne, Chief Forester for Tembec Inc. The cover of this issue (see Figure 5.4) provides the message “Peace in the Forest: Two Landmark Deals to Protect Our Woodlands” atop a backdrop of beautifully shaded forest landscape. Inside the article, Boychuk juxtapositions his two companions with the following quip: “Her job is to help conserve Ontario’s boreal forest. His is to turn it into paper and pulp” (35). In another passage, Boychuk offers the following:

People such as Sumner learn how mills operate, get to know the communities dependent on them and understand how forest-management plans are developed, and forestry officials such as Thorne learn the physics of the carbon cycle. And if that doesn’t seem like such a radical change, think of the millions of dollars climate-change campaigners are still spending on ads that demonize the oil sands industry and the tens of millions the industry is pumping into efforts to restore its reputation. (42)

And, according to Sumner: “That can work for a period, but the best solutions come out of having conversations” (42). Together, Boychuk and Sumner present the CBFA as a more logical option than other initiatives, now that Sumner has been educated in the ways of forest-dependent communities, and sees these communities as people. And in turn, Thorne learns more science. Climate-change campaigners, on the other hand, are wasting

their time and money in their attempts to “demonize” proponents of the tar sands.⁴¹ This type of language undermines the efforts of grassroots organizers and the struggles that many First Nations are still facing for self-determination in and around the tar sands, while at the same time, Boychuk claims that current anti-tar sands campaigns are simply trying to demonize big corporations, despite the complexity of issues at work in those efforts. As well, it also sends a signal to readers that the efforts found within the CBFA, as a best practices model, need to be applied to the current disputes between climate change campaigners and companies involved in the tar sands.

As Boychuk (2010) points out in his article, “final authority rests with federal, provincial and territorial governments, and they have other players to consult, principally First Nations with claims to many of the forest tenures that have been allocated to the forest industry” (41). What Boychuk left out of his article, the “silences” that Foucault cautions researchers to be wary of, was any mention of the resistance to the CBFA by non-signatories, including the First Nations he mentions with claims to FPAC-tenured land, some of whom are in direct conflict with FPAC companies. With over 4.5 million readers,⁴² *Canadian Geographic*’s significant audience has played an important role in disseminating the goals and messages of the CBFA signatories.

During the first year of the CBFA, signatories faced considerable criticism from a handful of small Indigenous and environmental groups, independent journalists, and First Nations leaders, which will be discussed in greater detail in Section 5.3. In reacting to

⁴¹ Referring to the “oil sands” as the “tar sands” has been used by activists/opponents to destabilize the legitimacy of oil-extraction operations by emphasizing the ‘dirty’ nature of this endeavour. Oil sands tends to invoke a more neutral positioning, which I do not subscribe to.

⁴² According to *Canadian Geographic*, posted on their website at <http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/magazines/>

CBFA critics during an interview with Yale Environment 360 in September 2010, Steve Kallick from the Pew Charitable Trusts offered the following opinion:

So we've had two parties that have voluntarily agreed to do something extraordinarily different, and yet there are people that act as if somehow we have given something up. It is really the most ludicrous criticism I've ever seen and I'm having a very hard time understanding the nature of it... I'm almost incredulous over the vehemence of the criticism.

From key actors in the CBFA, critics have been portrayed as bullies or, according to Kallick in the Yale Environment 360 interview, "beyond ridiculous" (2010). During my interview with Alan Young from CBI, he reflected on the agreement, claiming: "I have spent as much time cursing this agreement as I have supporting it. It's a very noble thing at some level, but it's just so quixotic at another that it's really been one of the most challenging things I've ever seen." However, he claims, some critics like "Ovide Mercredi took a very hard line, and frankly there are people, certain folks in certain sides of the First Nations grassroots activist community that deliberately misinterpreted and misrepresented it for their own political ends. There's a full spectrum out there. It is complex" (interview, December 20, 2012).

For signatories, establishing winners and losers has become an important tactic for communicating the efficacy of the CBFA in addressing the crises of ecology/economy, which serves to quell debate and minimize the concerns of outspoken non-signatories. On the one year anniversary of the CBFA, the David Suzuki Foundation (2011) quoted Avrim Lazar, FPAC President and CEO, as stating:

It has been an amazing year... Together with environmentalists, we are learning to take a pragmatic and productive problem-solving approach towards integrating the economic and environmental challenges in the boreal forest. This unprecedented agreement is serving as a shining example to other industries and countries that there can be a win-win rather than win-lose approach to resolve

difficult issues. It is clear that we can continue succeeding with continuing good will and sufficient resources.

With enough resources and the continued good will of the participatory ENGOs and forestry companies, the CBFA offers an image of the boreal forest that is full of ecological and economic winners, which, as the next section reveals, was ardently rejected by several non-signatories from across the country.

Figure 5.1: Invitation to a Panel Session on the CBFA at The Canadian Museum of Nature

The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC)
and
The Royal Canadian Geographical Society

Cordially invite you to
THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE
on **Monday September 19th, 2011** for

**A CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS 2011, AND
CANADA'S NATIONAL FOREST WEEK, A PANEL SESSION ON THE
WORLD-RENOWNED CANADIAN BOREAL FOREST AGREEMENT.
GET THE INSIDE STORY BEHIND THE LANDMARK AGREEMENT AND
THE CHALLENGES AHEAD.**

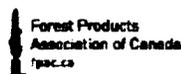
Featuring **Avrim Lazar**, President and CEO of FPAC, **Richard Brooks**, Forest Campaign Director, Greenpeace Canada and **Tim Gray**, Program Director, Ivey Foundation.

The panel session will be followed by a reception and public screenings of the International Forest Film Festival documentaries.

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement - A uniquely Canadian solution uniting mighty forest companies and staunch environmentalists.
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Reception
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. International Forest Film Festival – documentary film screenings (open to the public)

Canadian Museum of Nature
240 McGill Street, at Metcalfe
Ottawa

RSVP by September 17th to Sandra.Smith@cmn-mcg.org

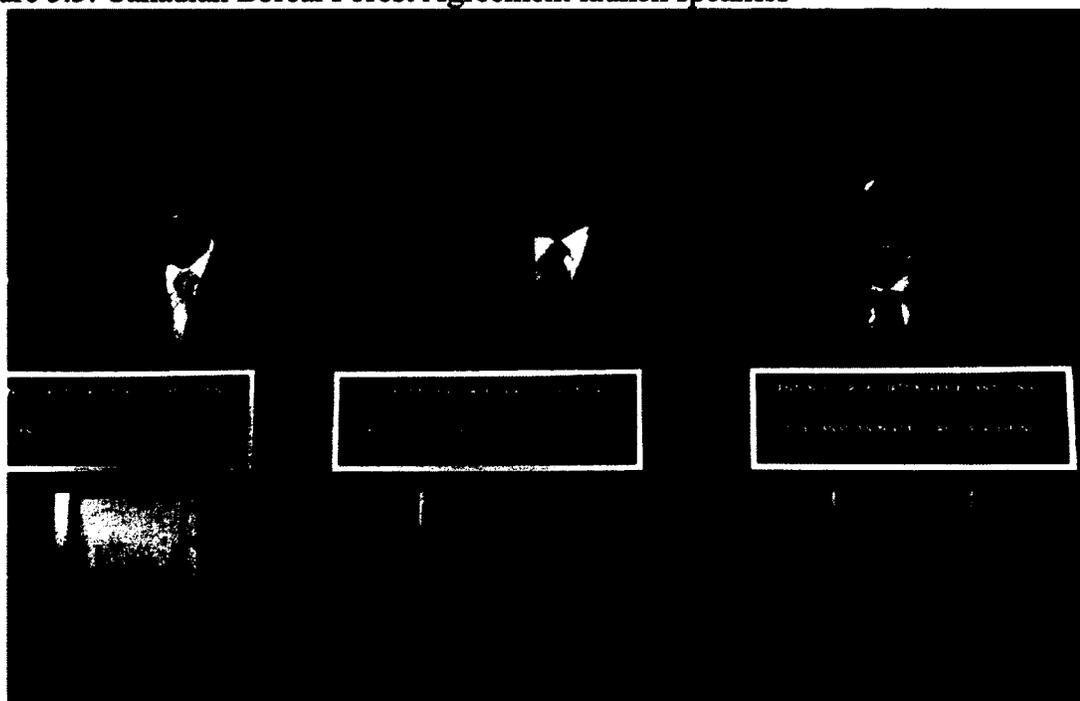


(Source: Royal Canadian Geographical Society, e-mail communication, 2011)

Figure 5.2: A handshake to remember: FPAC and ENGOs join forces

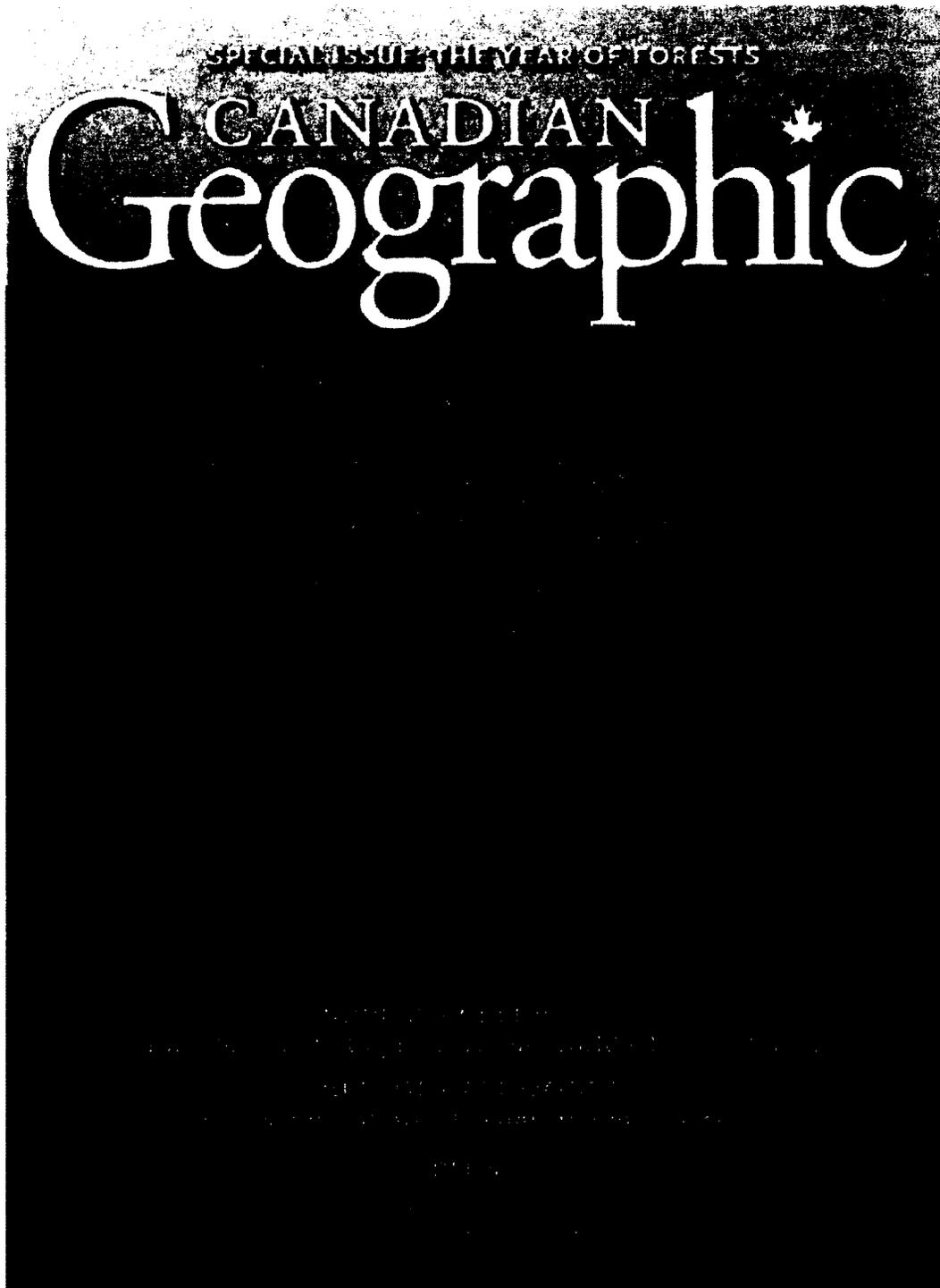


Figure 5.3: Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement launch speakers



(Source: The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement media archives, 2010)

Figure 5.4: January/February 2011 issue cover of *Canadian Geographic*, featuring Boychuk article *A Boreal Handshake*



(Source: Canadian Geographic, 2011)

Section 5.3: Responding to exclusion: First Nations divided (and conquered?)

If there was a way to involve all those chiefs and set up some sort of national framework, we would have done it. – Avrim Lazar, former President and CEO of the Forest Products Association of Canada⁴³

Key pieces have emerged over the last three years from alternative and indie media outlets, environmental groups and activists, and First Nations communities and organizations, which have come to represent, though not uniformly, the opposition to the CBFA. This section discusses a selection of these pieces, which demonstrate how opponents have placed an emphasis on the exclusionary nature of the CBFA, while also working to confront the authority of the signatories and unsettle the goals of the agreement. In turn, these groups and individuals have been working to penetrate the binary focus that signatories have placed on the crises of ecology/economy to include Indigenous rights, which, as Chapter 6 explores, has come to loosely inform the counter-narrative to the CBFA.

Dawn Paley: "Boreal Conflicts are Far From Over"

On May 18, 2010, Vancouver Media Co-op (VMC) journalist Dawn Paley posted her article on the VMC's website about the CBFA, which, after wide circulation across the country, triggered a flurry of public reaction by non-signatories (and subsequent damage control by CBFA signatories). Titled *Boreal Conflicts Far From Over*,⁴⁴ Paley (2010a) interviewed Clayton Thomas-Muller, who is a member of the Mathias Colomb Cree

⁴³ As quoted by Wendy Stueck in *the Globe and Mail's* October 20, 2010 article, "Native groups split over boreal deal."

⁴⁴ I have chosen to start with this piece for two reasons: Paley's piece was one of the first responses to the CBFA that I could find, and, for me, was the first time I had heard about the CBFA. Paley's piece, in many ways, was one of the entry-points for my interest and research in this field.

Nation, Manitoba, and the Tar Sands Campaigner at the Indigenous Environment Network (IEN),⁴⁵ who stated:

I think we have to remember the previous version of this deal, which was the Great Bear Rainforest, and we have to remember how that deal in the end was signed: it was signed not with all the First Nations partners, it was signed behind closed doors, by Tzeponah Berman and company... And many First Nations felt extremely burned by that.

In a follow-up article that Paley wrote for *The Dominion* on May 26, 2010, Paley featured a version of the CBFA map that had been modified by fellow VMC author Dru Oja Jay and Petr Cizek (see Figure 5.5). On their version of the map, Jay and Cizek contest the validity of the claims made in the CBFA surrounding the 30 million hectares of caribou habitat to be deferred from logging by FPAC tenure-holders. According to Jay and Cizek's calculations, significant parts of the deferral were not even slated for logging during the three-year agreement, and the CBFA only technically protects 72,205—not 30 million—hectares of caribou habitat. These accusations have worked to delegitimize the promises made by FPAC in the CBFA, rendering the signatories to appear ineffectual in this image. The July 2010 print issue of *The Dominion* featured an updated version of Paley's article, and Figure 5.6 is an image of the journal issue's cover. Contrasted to the cover of the *Canadian Geographic* issue (see Figure 5.4), *The Dominion's* cover features a giant boot that reads: "The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement" with an image of a caribou stamped on the bottom of the boot, and the boot appears to be stepping on top of a forest. The two journal covers provide an important visualization of the vastly different interpretations of the agreement that were made by two popular mainstream and grassroots media outlets.

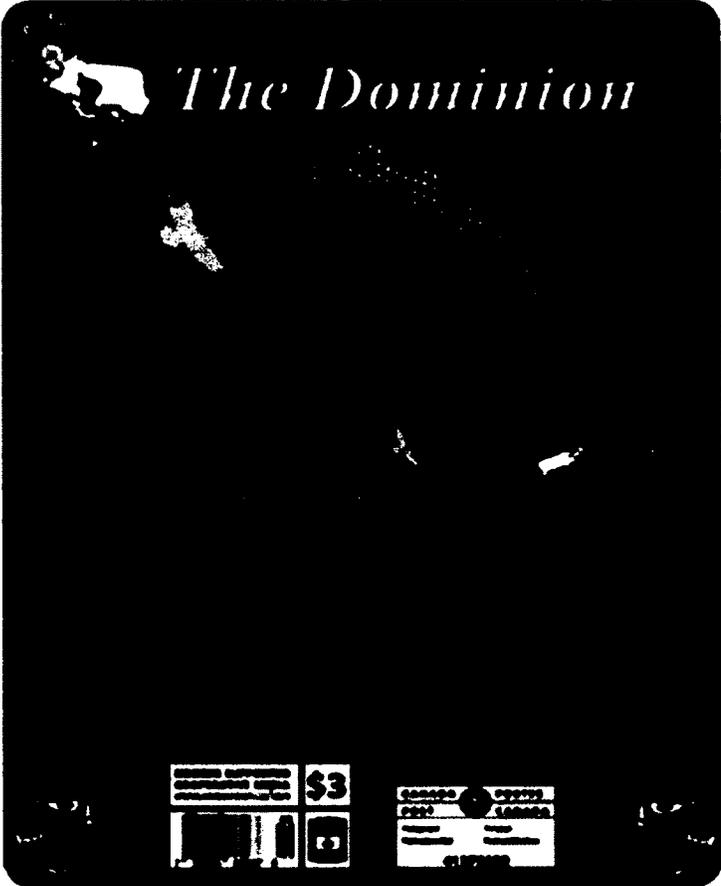
⁴⁵ As of February 2013, Thomas-Muller's anti-tar sands campaign has moved from the American-based Indigenous Environmental Network to the Ottawa-based Polaris Institute.

Figure 5.5: Dru Ojay Jay and Peter Cizek's version of the CBFA logging deferrals



(Source: Paley, 2010b)

Figure 5.6: The cover of the July 2010 issue of *The Dominion*, featuring an article on the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement



(Source: Dominion Paper, 2010)

Figure 5.7: Map of Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory



(Source: Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2013)

A conversation across the boreal: First Nations leaders in Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario take the lead in rejecting the CBFA

Several First Nation leaders from across the country responded quickly to the announcement of the CBFA, where, Russell Diabo, policy analyst for Wolf Lake First Nation, explained:

Going through [the agreement], it was pretty clear the deal was between the environmental organizations not to campaign against the companies in exchange for some promises from the companies on agreeing to some protected areas, on agreeing to some species protection for woodland caribou. But, they were also in there promoting carbon issues, [which is] something that Wolf Lake has been seeking:... control of the carbon in its territory. [Wolf Lake First Nation] saw it as a grab by the forestry industry to try and get a hold of the carbon credits rather than the First Nations who have Aboriginal title or treaty rights to that territory.... And then on top of that, you saw Ontario passing the Far North Act and Quebec pushing Plan Nord, they were using the CBFA to justify what they were doing there. And that was one of the issues we talked about when developing the National Boreal Standard for the FSC – they wanted to set a percentage, the environmental organizations, on protected areas, and I said, ‘How can you arbitrarily set a percentage when you know First Nations occupy that territory, they live there?’ [First Nations] should be deciding how areas should be set aside for protection and what percentage. Not outside groups that don’t live there. (interview, February 22, 2013)

While ENGOs and FPAC used the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement to push forward a crisis narrative in the boreal forest, Diabo, among others, saw the CBFA as a ploy by environmental groups and forestry companies to tap into the carbon offsets market, especially considering the carbon-rich terrain of the boreal forest.

Soon after the CBFA was released, a noteworthy dialogue emerged between several First Nations leaders and organizations, which, as Peggy Smith, Associate Professor at Lakehead University explained, became a tense exchange between western and eastern⁴⁶ First Nations (interview, March 8, 2013). One of the first Indigenous

⁴⁶ By western, Smith was referring to a few key First Nations councils and organizations in British Columbia that have played a role in advocating in favour of the CBFA; whereas central/eastern First Nations includes

organizations to respond to the CBFA was the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), which represents 49 First Nations communities in northwestern Ontario (see Figure 5.7). NAN has taken a strong, and very public, stand against the CBFA, and on May 20, 2010, two days after the CBFA was launched, Grand Chief Stan Beardy⁴⁷ released a statement on the CBFA, which claimed that the agreement “disrespects First Nations rights.” Beardy also stated:

Nobody has the right to develop an agreement that affects any of NAN’s lands and resources without consultation, accommodation and consent from us. This Agreement was made without our knowledge and treats NAN as a stakeholder – not a government. (Ibid)

Since their original statement in May 2010, NAN has listed the CBFA under “Political Action” on their website, where they maintain: “Even though [the CBFA] directly impacts First Nations’ rights and territories, including forests, this agreement was negotiated without First Nations’ knowledge or participation. First Nations in NAN are not in support of the CBFA” (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2013). In 2010, NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly also passed Resolution 10/60, which called for the termination of the CBFA (Ibid). Over the last three years, NAN has been especially active in addressing their contentions with the CBFA, and have issued several statements on the CBFA that have circulated online through mainstream and alternative medias and First Nations’ websites, some of which will be discussed in further detail in this section.

Amidst the reactions that the CBFA excluded First Nations involvement, the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC), which represents eight First Nations communities

memberships in Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec that have taken a strong stand against the CBFA (though in all cases, opinions *within* and *between* communities have not been unanimous throughout all provinces).

⁴⁷ As of June 2012, Beardy has since moved on to become the Ontario Regional Chief, and was succeeded by Harvey Yesno as Grand Chief for NAN.

in British Columbia issued a statement on May 21, 2010 that was titled: “ENGOs do not speak for Carrier Sekani Tribal Council” (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, 2010a). Following their statement, the CSTC decided to: “invite two of the key players that established the CBFA to meet with the Boreal leadership in B.C. to account for their actions,” where, at this meeting, “an explanation and apologies were issued by internationally renowned scientist Dr. David Suzuki, of the David Suzuki Foundation and Larry Innes, Executive Director of the Canadian Boreal Initiative” (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, 2010b).⁴⁸ After the meeting between Suzuki, Innes and the CSTC, the First Nations Energy and Mining Council (FNEMC) and the CSTC expressed the need for a “national meeting of First Nations leaders from across Canada to discuss their role in managing and protecting the boreal region” (CSTC, 2010b). The meeting was held in Prince George, British Columbia, from October 19 to 21, 2010.

According to Chief Harry St. Denis of Wolf Lake First Nation in western Quebec, the Canadian Boreal Initiative offered money to Dave Porter, head of FNEMC and member of the Kaska Nation in B.C. (which works closely with CBI), and the CSTC to hold the national meeting in Prince George (St. Denis, 2010). In response to this “national meeting,” NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Grand Chief David Harper, and Algonquin Nation Secretariat (ANS) Grand Chief Norman Young did not attend the meeting, and issued instead a statement on October 19, 2010,⁴⁹ with Beardy claiming that:

The meeting this week in Prince George, B.C., is a backdoor approach to coming up with a national First Nations strategy regarding the CBFA as there was no

⁴⁸ See Appendix E for a copy of David Suzuki’s apology letter.

⁴⁹ Which received coverage in *The Globe and Mail* on October 20, 2010 by Wendy Stueck, under the title “Native groups split over boreal deal.”

consensus that the meeting was a good idea. If we are going to be discussing our role in the management and protection of the Boreal region, it will be outside any agreements such as the CBFA. (Beaton, 2010)

Furthermore, MKO Grand Chief David Harper stated: "The CFBA is yet another blatant disregard of treaty rights,... our woodland caribou are already protected by our Customary Laws we use in our territories and through our community-based land use planning initiatives. The 30 MKO First Nations call on the National Chief to hold a national meeting on the future of our forests" (Ibid). Last, ANS Grand Chief Norman Young made the assertion that:

The CBFA is a trade-off agreement between certain environmental groups and members of the Forest Products Association of Canada about forestry... First Nations were deliberately excluded from the negotiations and signing of the CBFA. Our Algonquin First Nation members will not be bound by any of the terms of the CBFA in our deliberations regarding forest planning and management issues with provincial and/or federal governments, or with third parties, such as forestry companies or environmental groups. We were not even invited to the meeting in Prince George, British Columbia, even though our Aboriginal Title Territory includes part of the boreal forest. As such, we view the meeting in Prince George, B.C., as merely a regional meeting, not a national meeting. We are calling on the AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo to work with First Nations across Canada to organize a truly national meeting on forestry issues related to climate change, including a discussion of the CBFA. (Ibid)

Efforts by First Nations leaders from ANS (which represents Wolf Lake First Nation), NAN, and MKO to challenge the legitimacy of both the CBFA and the national meeting held in Prince George resulted in the CBFA landing at the top of the agenda of several Assembly of First Nations (AFN) meetings. The strong, though not unanimous, stand against the CBFA by First Nations in Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec has continued to be a significant challenge for CBFA signatories to establish protected areas in these First Nations territories, which are, evidently, home to critical caribou habitat. However, Russell Diabo, policy analyst for Wolf Lake First Nation, offered:

Caribou are a source of food for Indigenous peoples, so it's not just habitat issues, although those are definitely part of it for the survival of the herds. But caribou management is also part of the relationship between the hunters and the animals themselves. And that's another reason why excluding First Nations from that agreement – you know, if that were their concern, protecting those herds – they should have went to those communities relying on those herds to begin with, to start with. Like the Cree in Northern Manitoba or Ontario, or Quebec, the Innu – they're the ones who rely on the caribou. So to me, if that was their intent, they went about it the wrong way because they should have involved the people who depend on those herds for their survival, their sustenance. Like I said, it's not just a habitat issue. (interview, February 22, 2013)

As demonstrated in Section 5.2, CBFA signatories, like Richard Brooks and David Suzuki, worked to normalize their actions by framing the CBFA as an essential and urgent response to the caribou crisis. Diabo, in turn, has interrogated the authenticity of the signatories' concern for caribou herds, and critiqued their exclusionary processes. Moreover, the dialogue that emerged across activist and First Nations circles, like the one between “eastern” and “western” First Nations, worked to destabilize projections of *truth* within the discourses that have circulated throughout the CBFA.

Taking the CBFA to the Assembly of First Nations

As Chief Harry St. Denis (2010) explained in his report titled *Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement: conservation groups and forest companies coordinate to violate and undermine Indigenous peoples rights*, the CBFA made its first appearance in discussions at the Assembly of First Nations' Annual General Assembly that was held in Winnipeg from July 20-22, 2010. At this meeting, claimed Chief St. Denis (2010), a draft resolution on the CBFA was withdrawn from the Assembly when the CSTC and Dave Porter from Kaska Nation “didn't change the wording of the resolution to reject and condemn the CBFA” (7). However, at the December 14-16, 2010 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, a resolution titled “Call for National Meeting – Future of the Boreal Forest and Rejection

of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement” was moved by Chief Ovide Mercredi, seconded by Grand Chief Stan Beardy, and passed by consensus (see Appendix F for a copy of Resolution 65/2010). Within the resolution, the Chiefs-in-Assembly have agreed to:

Condemn the disrespectful manner in which the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement was negotiated by the Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOS) and Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and hereby reject and demand the termination of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and declare that the Agreement shall be of no force and effect within the traditional territory or resource management area of any First Nation.

In a letter issued on February 16, 2011 by Grand Chief Stan Beardy on behalf of NAN to all CBFA signatories, Beardy demanded signatories terminate the CBFA by March 18, 2011 (see Appendix G for a copy of the letter). In this letter, Beardy reminded signatories that “the two main forest blocks in Ontario covered by the CBFA are mostly in NAN territory or adjacent to it.” Furthermore, Beardy argued:

The CBFA is a fundamentally bad deal for most Canadians, but especially First Nations. It is a bold and radical attempt by private interests to force the hand of provincial and federal governments in critical policy areas such as resource development, environmental protection, species protection, and First Nation rights. The signatories to the CBFA are not government agencies with the public interest in mind. They are private interests with narrow and self-interested agendas. (Ibid)

And last, while the letter called for immediate action by CBFA signatories to end the agreement, Beardy also reinforced NAN’s commitment to engaging in a healthy dialogue on the future of the boreal forest, stating that:

NAN is calling upon the parties to the CBFA to immediately terminate the CBFA and hereby give notice that this must be done on a voluntary (and unconditional) basis by **March 18, 2011**. This radical and irrational experiment must be abandoned. It is necessary to go back to the drawing board and engage First Nations in a respectful dialogue consistent with the domestic and international obligations of Canada, including those set out in the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. NAN is committed to such an open-ended and

respectful dialogue with the conservation organizations, the forest companies, and Canadian governments, but only if the unilateral CBFA is abandoned. (Ibid)

Following a month of unresponsiveness from members of the CBFA, NAN issued a press release on March 18, 2011, which stated that NAN will be “taking the next steps in the fight against the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement,” as, NAN claims, the agreement is in direct “violation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) (2007), which provides, in Article 32, that First Nations are entitled to “free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories or their resources.” The assertion of rhetoric from the UNDRIP by NAN, alongside several other First Nations and allies, works to disrupt the normalizing debate within the CBFA, which is further discussed in the next chapter.

A week after NAN issued their statement, the AFN, under the direction of resolution 65/2010, jointly held a national meeting on the future of the boreal forest with the National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) on March 29 and 30, 2011 in Ottawa, Ontario. Following the meeting, the AFN (2011) produced a document titled *Proceedings of the National Forum on First Nations Forest Land Stewardship*, which, on the topic of the CBFA, concluded:

Ultimately, the CBFA is a rights-based issue, and it is for this reason that many participants maintain that Aboriginal treaty rights must be the basis for First Nations engagement in forest sector activity, and that this has to be reflected in national and provincial forest policy and forest management regimes. (4)

The move to respond to the CBFA at a national level has been an important step for First Nations who maintain that the CBFA is fundamentally flawed in its use of exclusionary tactics. However, in echoing a concern that Alan Young from CBI had indicated during our interview, Russell Diabo, policy analyst for Wolf Lake First Nation, explained:

The Assembly of First Nations doesn't have a mandate to deal with land rights. The rights voters are the peoples in the communities... They're the ones that use the land, they're the ones that are connected genealogically to their ancestors who occupied that land for thousands of years. (interview, February 22, 2013)

While the AFN has passed a resolution to support First Nations collaboration on the future of the boreal forest (see Appendix F), like Diabo said, the AFN has no jurisdiction on First Nations lands, and it is up to the rights holders within the boreal forest to decide how they wish to manage their lands.

In an article on the CBFA by Smith et al. (2010) titled "It's easier to plead for forgiveness than ask for permission," which was posted on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) website, the authors stated: "As with previous experiences, industry and ENGOs put the cart before the horse, making major policy decisions that will impact Indigenous communities and their lands without their input — the common ruse of speaking for First Nations before speaking with them." Mel Bazil, a member of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Nations in British Columbia, shared a similar sentiment when he described some the developments that he has witnessed around his community's territory:

Based on current and past processes, our communities have always been the last to know. So... duty consult requires consultation with the peoples, but companies usually wait until all their baseline studies are finished, they usually wait until all their promises and investments are all ready, and then they consult our communities. So they've busied themselves with promising communities neighbouring us all these jobs, kickbacks, royalties, they've promised all these things, plus returns on investments, they've made all these moves and then they consult with our people. (interview, March 4, 2013)

Since the release of the CBFA in 2010, several First Nations and allies from across the country have responded negatively to the exclusionary negotiation process as well as the content and goals of the agreement. These reactions have surfaced questions surrounding,

for instance, management and enforcement of protected areas in First Nations traditional territories, the role of First Nations in the carbon offsets market, and, as is explored in the next chapter, what the CBFA means in terms of boreal forest solidarities.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to demonstrate how both the exclusion of First Nations and governments from the negotiation process and the overarching goals of the agreement were normalized by CBFA signatories and supporters. This chapter analyzed in greater depth the messages and tactics used by signatories to assert the CBFA agenda into boreal forest discourse. The endorsement of the CBFA by specific groups and individuals has given weight to the goals outlined in the agreement, with a radical group like Greenpeace, a trusted Canadian like David Suzuki, and a spiritual businessman like Avrim Lazar⁵⁰ playing especially important roles in promoting the content of the CBFA while excusing the bilateral negotiations. This has largely been achieved by the signatories and supporters who have perpetuated the “twin-pillar” approach, which has prioritized the ecological and economic issues within the boreal forest, on the grounds that these issues are crises, and in urgent need of action. Drawing from Waitt (2010), this chapter highlights how these narratives and tactics were employed to “generate particular kinds of knowledge,” and how this knowledge about the CBFA has “become understood as valid, trustworthy, legitimate, [and] authoritative” (234). This chapter shows how the CBFA signatories and supporters reinforced the dualistic language of ecology versus economy to legitimize the presence and authority of only two sets of boreal forest stakeholders: the ENGOs (a select group of ecologists/conservationists), and FPAC (the

⁵⁰ Avrim Lazar retired from FPAC in 2012, and has been succeeded by David Lindsay.

industrialists/economists). By projecting the caribou crisis as a matter of impending extinction, signatories justified their negotiation tactics as necessary, and discounted those who were critical of their approach and goals through the use of aggressive language.

The texts in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 also demonstrate the concerted effort by signatories to instill an image of peace and friendship amongst the ENGOs and FPAC, which, as Chapter 6 discusses, continues to be a tenuous union of their joint interests. And while signatories and supporters of the CBFA employed specific discursive tactics in order to normalize the ecology/economy debate, Indigenous and non-Indigenous opponents continue to disrupt these *hegemonic* narratives by calling into question the motives of the signatories, and challenging the collective authority of the CBFA signatories by insisting that they are not representative of all interests in the boreal forest. Dissidents of the CBFA further resisted the crisis rhetoric that was being employed by ENGOs and FPAC by insisting that, for First Nations, the CBFA was a “rights-based issue,” with many demanding that the CBFA be terminated. Despite resistance to the CBFA in areas of critical caribou habitat, signatories continue to frame the agreement as the ideal package for responding to the current crises in the boreal forest, the *best* win-win solution to everyone’s problems, except Indigenous rights issues, which, for the signatories, exist outside the scope of their ecology/economy lens.

As Tim Gray from the Ivey Foundation expressed during the panel at the Canadian Museum of Nature, the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement offers the boreal forest as “a gift to the world on a truly global scale” (September 19, 2011). The neoliberal discourse generated around the CBFA has also suggested how the various levels of

government within Canada should maintain their legislative roles. However, considering the impetus behind the CBFA for both ENGO-industry “blueprinting” and voluntary forestry certification measures, the government’s role has been reregulated as a stakeholder to be consulted by this new alliance, which has serious implications for the state of democratic processes taking place within this new paradigm. Chapter 6 will explore the tensions that emerged between and amongst signatories and non-signatories, and what the CBFA means in terms of solidarity, legitimacy and democracy in Canadian environmental politics.

Chapter 6: Troubling trends in the boreal forest: democracy from the benches⁵¹

I guess it's just the way we are used to being dealt with. – Chief Harry St. Denis, Wolf Lake First Nation⁵²

Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis have provided an analysis of the rationale that CBFA signatories were operating under, and the ways in which the CBFA was normalized within public debate. CBFA signatories and supporters have sought to achieve legitimacy in Canadian environmental politics by engaging in the deceptively harmonious discourse of sustainable development, which has been facilitated through the persuasive appeal of win-win-win: saving the caribou while saving the jobs while saving the forest industry. This legitimacy has further been achieved through the reinforcement of a dual ENGO-FPAC authority regarding what is “best” and most “logical” in the boreal forest, thereby forcing alternative voices to the *benches*, only to be called up to the plate (both the batter’s plate and potentially a dinner plate) as signatories continue to “court”⁵³ First Nations for endorsement. The CBFA has invoked what MacDonald (2010) would consider to be the “near conflation of nature and capital which has established itself as a dominant view,” whereby ENGOs and FPAC have worked together to assert one image and one meaning of the Canadian boreal forest (540). This assertion has largely been assisted by the deployment of scientific, expert data that is trumpeted by eco-icons, like David Suzuki, and the reliance on “charismatic mega-fauna,”⁵⁴ like the woodland

⁵¹ Adapted from Laurie Adkin’s “Democracy from the trenches” in L. Adkin, E.d, (2009). *Environmental conflict and democracy in Canada* (pp. 298-319). Vancouver: UBC Press.

⁵² Interview, February 21, 2013.

⁵³ Avrim Lazar stated in an article with *The Globe and Mail’s* Wendy Stueck (2010): “There is lots of room for [First Nations] participation. It’s not only welcome, it’s being courted.” Available online <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/native-groups-split-over-boreal-forest-deal/article4268156/>

⁵⁴ Peggy Smith, interview, March 8, 2013.

caribou, to create a landscape conceptualized as both pristine and manageable, while selectively employing the visibility of First Nations in the boreal forest. First Nations visibility, the signatories have demonstrated, is contingent on their endorsement of the agreement.

Attempts by signatories and supporters to center the conversation around the intersection of ecological and economic crises, however, have been countered over the last three years by a number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous dissidents who have questioned the motives behind, and the content of, the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. This chapter considers the question: what kinds of effects has the exclusion of First Nations from the CBFA, along with the signatories' normalization tactics, had on boreal forest politics in Canada? Section 6.1 approaches this question by exploring the changing relationships and solidarities across First Nations, between First Nations and ENGOs, and amongst ENGOs. Section 6.2 addresses the implications that the CBFA document and processes have had on democratic involvement in environmental decision-making, which, as Section 6.3 discusses, has been radicalized by the assertion of "free, prior and informed consent" (FPIC) into boreal forest politics.

Section 6.1: "What happens to solidarity?"⁵⁵

I think that, if anything, the CBFA has resulted in an immense fracturing, not only in the ENGO sector, but also among First Nations. – Clayton Thomas-Muller, First Nations activist and Tar Sands Campaigner⁵⁶

The exclusion of First Nations from negotiating the terms of the CBFA, and the subsequent mix of reactions across the country has provoked important questions around

⁵⁵ Mel Bazil, interview, March 4, 2013

⁵⁶ In Dawn Paley, February 25, 2011, "Fracturing Solidarity: The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement in Context," *Briarpatch*.

the role of solidarity amongst First Nations across the country, between First Nations and ENGOs, and between diverse conservation groups. This section explores the impact of the CBFA on these three varying sets of relations.

*First Nations solidarity: "Now is not a time to retreat or sulk"*⁵⁷

In an e-mail message that was circulated on *Native News North*, Ovide Mercredi, Councillor to the Mispawistik Cree Nation in Manitoba and the former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations from 1991-1997, described the CBFA negotiations as secretive, and that the signatories bargained like "thieves at night that have something to hide" (October 30, 2010). In his message, Mercredi continues:

The so-called "boreal peace" agreement did not bring the end of conflict on our traditional lands. It just returned a conflict we have had since the early days of colonialism. It merely re-awakened the First Nations (those who are not apologists for Environmentalists and/or Resource Development Colonists) that the fight to keep our LIFE cannot be set aside to accommodate special interests like the NGO's that signed the colonial boreal agreement. (Ibid)

As discussed in Section 5.3, what started as a difference of opinion between First Nations on how to approach the CBFA turned into a tense, and sometimes heated, divide amongst First Nations that made its way into *The Globe and Mail*, and, as this section explores, several AFN meetings as well as Thunder Bay's *The Chronicle-Journal*.

Several publications, press releases and statements (made in public and during interviews) have come to constitute a "counter-narrative."⁵⁸ This counter-narrative has placed emphasis on the questionable nature of the relationships between the First Nation leaders that have been advocating in favour of the CBFA and specific signatory ENGOs,

⁵⁷ Stephen Kakfwi in an opinion piece directed at Nishnawbe Aski Nation, published on April 4, 2011, in Thunder Bay's *The Chronicle-Journal*.

⁵⁸ Which, in this analysis, has included publications from: alternative and indie medias, First Nations leaders and organizations, non-signatory ENGOs, concerned citizens, academics, and interviews that I conducted.

especially the Canadian Boreal Initiative and the David Suzuki Foundation. At the Assembly of First Nations meetings in July 2010, December 2010, and March 2011, the CBFA was a topic of great concern and debate amongst First Nations. According to Russell Diabo, the CBFA funded people to come in and speak in favour of the agreement at the March 2011 AFN/NAFA meeting in Ottawa (interview, February 22, 2013). These proponents included: Larry Innes from the Canadian Boreal Initiative; Dave Porter from the B.C. First Nations Energy and Mining Council (FNEMC) and member of Kaska Nation; Miles Richardson, who has been on the Board of Directors for the David Suzuki Foundation since 1992, and is a member of the Haida Nation; and Stephen Kakfwi, former premier of the Northwest Territories, a member of the Dene Nation, and, according to Smith, is also on the “CBI payroll” (interview, March 8, 2013). As Smith recalled from the March 2011 meeting: “It was obvious that they showed up because they were asked to by the environmental organizations” (Ibid). At this meeting, Russell Diabo explained:

[These four] were all arguing for the CBFA and how it was a good thing, but Ovide Mercredi was there from the Manitoba MKO... and Stan Beardy was there for Nishnawbe Aski Nation and they both pushed back and talked about how they weren't involved. And they had some guy [with] a map showing the boreal forest, [which] showed the most intact boreal forests were in northern Manitoba and Ontario, where those two leaders were from. And they made it clear that they weren't consulted and they didn't agree with it. So they pushed back against Miles, Steve Kakfwi, and Dave Porter, basically the guys that Larry Innes paid to bring in to promote it. (interview, February 22, 2013)

It is clear from this meeting that First Nations with close ties to the Canadian Boreal Initiative and the David Suzuki Foundation were also the ones in favour of the agreement.

As Diabo explained, in British Columbia there is the B.C. First Nations Forestry Council, and the B.C. First Nations Energy and Mining Council (which Dave Porter heads up), which are basically “middlemen between communities on the ground and industry and government to influence policy” (interview, February 22, 2013). At this meeting in March 2011, Diabo recalls:

I got up and said I thought that was really dangerous because [Dave Porter] was proposing a national version of that [the two B.C. organizations, above]. And I said that’s the last thing you want to see is organizations like that being middlemen on policy when that should be worked at on the ground because otherwise you could have your rights exploited through these organizations that are developing policy which may not be in your interests. You know, more pro-development and less conservation. And that’s where Porter is you know, he leans definitely towards development. (Ibid)

The AFN/NAFA (2011) proceedings reported on these discussions, calling the CBFA “contentious,” and that it “remains **potentially divisive** since some Chiefs will continue to refuse to negotiate with ENGOs unless they rescind their support for the CBFA” (emphasis added.) The report goes on to state: “others...are committed to engaging in dialogue with ENGOs so long as their rights are recognized and respected” (Ibid).

Despite the debate amongst First Nations, and the efforts by CBI and their First Nation partners to promote the CBFA at these meetings, the AFN/NAFA (2011) proceedings reported:

Governments will not go out of their way to accommodate First Nations. It is for this reason that First Nations have to organize themselves and exert jurisdiction, not only in forestry, but in multiple resource sectors... [P]articipants emphasized that First Nations must cultivate relationships between each other because building an alliance is key to protecting First Nations rights across Canada... Although there were conflicting views with regards to the CBFA and partnering with ENGO’s, in general participants agreed that they must commit to working together in the goal of developing a foundation upon which to move forward. The global forestry sector is in transformation, and First Nations must likewise adapt. Of particular promise is the proposal to create a network-based national First Nations natural resources council, organization or institute that would provide

capacity and assist First Nations in developing the tools needed to excel in all aspects of forestry, including energy, mining, environmental health, food security, etc.

Although the AFN/NAFA meeting ended with the goal of moving forward on the topic of the CBFA collaboratively, disputes between First Nations continued outside the AFN forum.

In response to NAN's press release on March 18, 2011, which stated that they were prepared to take further action against the CBFA, Stephen Kakfwi submitted an opinion piece on April 4, 2011, in Thunder Bay's *The Chronicle-Journal* titled "Boreal Forest Agreement: It's time to forgive and move forward." In the piece, Kakfwi stated:

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Stan Beardy recently called for the termination of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement... While I agree that the process to reach that agreement was flawed, and that the announcement could have been handled better, I believe it is time for collaboration, not conflict... Part of me recognized that it was an outstanding achievement, but another part of me felt that it was profoundly wrong, because these groups were talking about aboriginal land and aboriginal resources... I felt they had disrespected our aboriginal leadership and First Nations governments by not involving us at the start. I felt they should apologize. And they have. [...]

In my years in politics, I've learned that the world around us is not perfect. My advice to native leaders has been to recognize that an apology has been made, and that there is a public commitment to recognize our leadership and our rights on the part of the industry and conservation groups.

Furthermore, Kakfwi states:

Now is not a time to retreat or sulk; it's time for us to show our leadership and commitment to protecting our forest, land, waters and wildlife, and to build our economies. To do that successfully, I believe we need alliances with environmental groups and industry. The environmental organizations who signed this agreement are set up for the primary purpose to protect nature, including the caribou. And God bless them for it; we know they'll keep at it with us or without us.

In turn, Aboriginal people will continue to fight to regain control of our lands, waters and wildlife, with or without environmental allies. Yet, it's perfectly logical to say that we should work together because we share a common purpose.

We should continue to build alliances between our communities, but there are other good allies out there, and we should also work with them.

In this public letter, Kakfwi asserts his wisdom, “logical” thinking, and long-term experience in politics to deride the concerns of First Nations who oppose the CBFA, specifically targeting the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Kakfwi insists that “now is not a time to retreat or sulk,” and that the ENGOs have sufficiently apologized, where: “Groups such as the David Suzuki Foundation and the Canadian Boreal Initiative have apologized directly to First Nations leaders.” However, the CBFA has never issued a formal apology as a signatory body, nor have any of the member companies of FPAC, including former FPAC CEO, Avrim Lazar. In this piece, Kakfwi also claims that the ENGOs are “set up for the primary purpose to protect nature, including the caribou... and God bless them for it,” which serves to normalize the agenda and goals of the ENGOs as good-intentioned and “common” to the goals of *all* Aboriginal peoples to regain the control of their lands. This normalization, which can be understood as a variant of the crisis narrative that the CBFA signatories invoked during their public presentations and interviews, has had adverse effects on the solidarity of First Nations leaders, with Kakfwi calling these ENGOs “good allies” that should be worked *with*, not *against*. As Kakfwi justifies: “Yes the path that was taken to reach the agreement was flawed, but it offers us a way forward to meet our shared goal of conservation and sustainable development of our lands and resources.” Accepting the ENGO’s mistake as flawed but necessary also forwards the tendency within neoliberal conservation, which was discussed in Chapter 2, of what Fletcher (2010) has described as the exchange of “moral terms... for cost-benefit analyses” (176). This piece helps to reposition the ENGOs as desirable allies in First Nations struggles, despite the concerns raised by dissidents that the recent actions of

NGOs are systemic of contemporary colonialism, which, this thesis argues, has been influenced by a more recent drive towards neoliberal conservationism within Canadian boreal forest politics.

On April 8, 2011, Grand Chief Stan Beardy responded to Kakfwi in Thunder Bay's *The Chronicle-Journal* with the piece, "Apology not enough." In the article, Beardy states:

This is about the right of our Treaty Nations to determine the future of our homelands and the ability to be lead decision-makers. This is why the First Nations of Nishnawbe Aski Nation have called for the termination of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and not an apology. Apologies are not responsive to what First Nations feel is being potentially compromised and are reminiscent of the Lands for Life/Living Legacy and the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework processes which continued their work even after apologies were provided and over the continuing objections of northern First Nations. [...]

The key difference between the position of the 49 First Nations of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the commentary of Mr. Kakfwi appears to be whether an apology can effectively address the profound wrong and the fundamental disrespect of First Nations leadership, governments and authority represented by the notion that conservation organizations and forest companies have any independent capacity whatever to arrive at private agreements which purportedly affect the use, planning, management and protection of First Nation lands. Ultimately, it is about meaningful recognition of, and respect for, the sovereignty, authority and stewardship of First Nations within our homelands.

For Beardy, the CBFA is a part of a living colonial legacy in Canada, one that has seen decisions about his peoples land being made by outside interests, a pattern that he has demanded to end, not end each time with an apology (though the apology from CBFA signatories remains partial, at best).

The CBFA appears to have instigated an open dispute amongst First Nations about not only the role and intentions of NGOs in conservation efforts on Indigenous territories, but also the position of First Nations on how, or even whether, sustainable

development occurs on their lands. Perhaps these differences have been festering between First Nations for a long time and the CBFA, as Mercredi stated in his e-mail in 2010, has served to “awaken” First Nations in Canada. Regardless, First Nations solidarity, according to those who oppose the CBFA, has been compromised by both the negotiation tactics of the ENGOs involved in the agreement and the selective alliances ENGOs have been building with First Nations, which has been the case with the CBI and the DSF with Stephen Kakfwi, Miles Richardson, and Dave Porter.

Furthermore, consultation with First Nations, as Andrew Bevan, Executive Director of the CBFA Secretariat indicated, has been “quite specific” because the signatories are focused on select forest management units (FMU) based on the caribou ranges (interview, January 22, 2013). On June 28, 2012, Chief Linda Job of Taykwa Tagamou Nation, which is a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, endorsed the CBFA in her First Nations’ territory alongside representatives from ENGO and FPAC signatories, as well as the Mayor of Timmins, Tom Laughren, who stated: “The Northeastern Ontario Municipal Association (NEOMA) membership fully supports this approach to managing the Abitibi River Forest” (Canada Newswire, 2012). As Jim Lopez from Tembec claimed at the announcement:

The CBFA's cooperative, multi-stakeholder approach has produced an action plan which strengthens Canada's position as a progressive forestry leader by preserving jobs and strengthening communities, while protecting forest ecosystems and natural habitat. It is yet another example of our industry's commitment to true sustainable development. (Ibid)

Further perpetuating sustainable development discourse through the ecology-economy binary, Janet Sumner, Executive Director of CPAWS-Wildlands League also stated:

This proposed breakthrough plan for the Abitibi River Forest underscores that prosperity and conservation go hand-in-hand by recognizing that conservation is

not at the expense of economic prosperity, but complementary to it. It is also a testament to the collective efforts of the environmental groups and companies that have been able to find common ground. (Ibid)

After being in effect for over two years, the CBFA, as Bevan explained, has finally had some progress on the ground, where:

On our first announcement in northeastern Ontario, we had a Chief, a First Nations Chief, on the stage with the signatories announcing this, saying that her First Nations' interests had been met, and had been a good process, healthy process. (interview, January 22, 2013)

And last, in Shawn McCarthy's (2012b) *Globe and Mail* article on the announcement, which never mentions Chief Linda Job's name, or the name of her First Nations community, McCarthy informs readers that: "The province must approve the plan, and Natural Resources Minister Michael Gravelle – who praised the effort – pledged speedy review." Gravelle's promise of a speedy review, which unproblematically declares the support of the Ontario government for the CBFA, came on the same day Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) announced \$70 million in cut-backs and job losses (Ferguson, 2012). Gravelle went on to state that the CBFA-backed proposal for northeastern Ontario balances "what's best for industry, for northern communities and for the protection of the woodland caribou" (Ibid). Amidst significant budget cuts, the OMNR has pledged to maintain its "commitment to natural resource management conservation;" however, their commitment will have to be met with fewer people and less money (Ibid). Although the June 2012 announcement was lauded as a product of CBFA negotiations, Alan Young from CBI indicated that:

On a regional basis, in northeastern Ontario, where you've got Tembec-Wildlands engagement, you had the community centrally involved right from the beginning on that, arguably that predates CBFA, but it was certainly underscored that that was one that could go ahead because it did have the genuine engagement of the community. (interview, December 20, 2012)

As Young suggests, in the case of northeastern Ontario, the Tembec-Wildlands League relationship (which was also featured in Boychuk's article in *Canadian Geographic*), along with the engagement of the local communities, predated the work within the CBFA, yet was lauded as a success under the agreement.

According to conversations that emerged in the counter-narrative, First Nations solidarity, though compromised by the omnipresent CBFA, was not the only set of relationships that experienced tension. As is explored in the next sub-section, First Nations and ENGO alliances, which have been tenuous since the birth of conservationism in Canada, have been further strained by the process and content of the CBFA.

*First Nations – ENGO relations: “fragmenting solidarity”*⁵⁹

For many of those who have expressed concern over what the CBFA means for First Nations solidarity, they too have expressed a sense of uncertainty surrounding what the CBFA means for relationships between First Nations and the ENGO signatories. As was demonstrated in Braun's (2002) and Ballamingie's (2006) studies on the struggles in Clayoquot Sound and Ontario's *Lands for Life*, respectively, First Nations and ENGOs have had strained relationships that have repeatedly, as both authors exposed, resulted in the “erasure” of First Nations from environmental politics in Canada. In many ways, the treatment of First Nations in the CBFA process is not unlike what has happened within First Nations-ENGO alliances in Temagami, Clayoquot Sound, Great Bear Rainforest, and

⁵⁹ Mel Bazil, interview, March 4, 2013.

during the *Lands for Life* negotiations and consultations, to name a few. As Thorpe (2011) discussed in her analysis of the making of nature and wilderness in Temagami: “During the 1980s, while environmentalists struggled to save the pristine wilderness, the Teme-Augama Anishnabai were enmeshed in a legal battle with Ontario in order to have a Canadian court recognize the region not as wilderness, but as their territory” (196). In many ways, as is discussed below, Grassy Narrows First Nation, as well as several other First Nations in Canada, are still enveloped in the struggle for recognition.

On the impacts of the CBFA on both First Nations’ and ENGO–First Nations solidarity, Mel Bazil, a Gitksan and Wet’suwet’en from British Columbia, expressed:

Why [the CBFA] affected native communities so strongly was that people had solidarity with different communities that were affected by the CBFA. So even if it didn’t affect me in particular, we work in solidarity with different communities, and what does this do to solidarity? And that was the main thing that I was critiquing: how this affected solidarity. We [Bazil and Dawn Paley, in the 2011 *Briarpatch* article] quoted it as fragmenting solidarity. That these kinds of agreements – can Greenpeace ever say they’re in solidarity with Grassy Narrows ever again? That’s probably some of the reason why they backed off this agreement. And out of all the groups that we argued with the strongest, Greenpeace got the worst from us. Because they operate so strongly with communities that are fighting the tar sands and the very fact that much of the lands targeted by the CBFA were actually surrounding the tar sands. So... how much of tar sands expansion was benefitted by the CBFA is a really good question. (interview, March 4, 2013)

For Bazil, among others, the CBFA has raised important questions around what the agreement means to current and future efforts by First Nations communities to influence the course of development on their traditional territories. Of particular concern amongst many has been the effects of the CBFA on struggles in Grassy Narrows First Nation (GNFN) for control over the resources in their territory.

Grassy Narrows First Nations has upheld the longest blockade in Canadian history—over 10 years—to protect their traditional territory from industrial logging. For

a large portion of that time, the blockade has been against FPAC company, and CBFA signatory, Weyerhaeuser. In a statement issued by GNFN Chief Simon Fobister in July, 2010, he claimed: “Weyerhaeuser is the only multi-national logging company in our region which refuses to publicly commit to respect our rights.” The letter also stated that the CBFA does not apply to GNFN territory as it is “entirely outside the area covered by the agreement,” which means: “Weyerhaeuser’s participation in that process has absolutely no bearing on their violation of our rights” (Ibid). Despite the fact that GNFN’s dispute with Weyerhaeuser is physically located outside the Forest Management Units (FMUs) being targeted by the CBFA, ENGO-signatory Greenpeace still, as was mentioned in Chapter 4, placed a “CBFA stamp” overtop of their webpage on Grassy Narrows’s struggle for the Whiskey Jack Forest, thereby honouring the anti-boycott clause in the CBFA (see Figure 4.3).

In January 2013, the Government of Ontario began its proceedings in the Ontario Court of Appeal in an attempt to overturn the 2011 ruling made by Ontario Superior Court Justice Saunderson, which “found that the Government of Ontario does not have the power to unilaterally take away the rights promised in Treaty 3 by authorizing industry, including logging and mining” (Grassy Narrows First Nation, 2013). As Grassy Narrows heads back into a legal battle with the Ontario government, it is unclear if they will have the support of major ENGOs; although, now that Greenpeace is no longer a part of the CBFA, they are not bound to the anti-boycott clauses. As Thomas-Muller explained to Paley (2010a):

I hardly think that [the CBFA] in any way represents an end to the conflict between the true proponents of the war over the boreal forest, which of course are corporations and First Nations. What this means is that First Nations no longer

have the support of these mainstream environmental groups that have fallen into the strategy of conquer and divide deployed by industry.

Russell Diabo and Chief St. Denis of Wolf Lake First Nations expressed concerns similar to Thomas-Muller's. As Diabo reflected:

When I saw the CBFA and [how it] excluded First Nations yet made references to them, I was pretty angry, because I thought that was a terrible thing to see going on that environmental organizations were doing this who purport to be allies with First Nations.

The agreement “undermines First Nations,” Diabo continued, because:

Environmental organizations can be allies with First Nations on conservation or protection or management roles in the forest. And that's one of the pressures that First Nations have, is working with groups like that to help get the [forestry] companies to behave. Like Grassy Narrows for example, once that happened, well there goes Grassy Narrows support from the outside for the pressure they were trying to put on the companies for clear-cutting their territories. Same with Barriere Lake. Barriere Lake has, in the past, had some allies within Greenpeace, who supported the Trilateral Agreement process. But by the time the CBFA was signed, Barriere Lake was in disarray and that agreement was sidelined, so it wasn't really an issues for them, but I think Grassy Narrows was still involved in the campaign. I think they lost their support from the outside from those environmental groups that signed on. (interview, February 22, 2013)

Likewise, Chief St. Denis stated:

And [environmental groups], they're the ones that pretend to be our friends. Like when they need us for a certain cause, well geez they're our best buddy. But when it comes time... for a big agreement like this that affects our people's daily lives, the ones that are living in that territory, it's just, I guess it's just the way we are used to being dealt with. That has to change. (interview, February 21, 2013)

For Grassy Narrows First Nation and the Algonquins of Barriere Lake (ABL), whose territories' fall outside the CBFA's caribou directive, but are impacted by FPAC companies, there is concern that these First Nations communities will not receive support from the ENGOs that are involved in the CBFA. Grassy Narrows and Barriere Lake have both been, for many years, in direct conflict with FPAC companies—Weyerhaeuser and Resolute Forest Products, respectively. The ABL have, since they signed the Trilateral

Agreement with the Province of Quebec and the Canadian government in 1991, been in ongoing struggles for their land, which has resulted in numerous arrests of First Nations and allies, and expensive legal fees, while Resolute continues to log on their land, against their wishes.⁶⁰

One final example that explores the effects of the CBFA on First Nations-ENGO (and, evidently, FPAC company) relations is the case of the Eeyou Istchee (James Bay) Cree, whose land has a “thriving population of caribou,” especially along the north and south banks of the Broadback River, in northwestern Quebec (Grand Council of the Crees, 2010). Of particular concern in this area for the Grand Council of Crees (GCC) is that:

Although Abitibi-Bowater [now Resolute] has no plans to carry out cutting operations on this FMU in the next two years, Quebec's Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife has granted Domtar, who is not a member of FPAC, the right to log this Broadback River area. To access this area, Domtar has plans to build a major 76 km log hauling road across the Broadback River directly through this sensitive caribou habitat in 2011. (Ibid)

The concerns of the GCC reflect a broader concern amongst CBFA opponents: what about the land tenures that are operated on by forest companies that are not members of FPAC? How will they be held accountable by ENGOs, when companies like Domtar have no obligation to abide by the CBFA? Amid these questions, the Quebec government has instigated a forest tenure reform process across the province, which goes into effect on April 1, 2013, generating much uncertainty around the future of boreal forest conservation, Forest Stewardship Council certification transfers, and First Nations rights to their land in the province.

⁶⁰ For more information on the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, visit: <http://www.barrierelakesolidarity.org/2008/03/resources.html>

ENGO solidarity and Greenpeace's withdrawal from the CBFA: Can Brooks and Lazar still do yoga together?

With the aid of American and Canadian funders, the CBFA was signed, by and large, by the most influential ENGOs in Canada. And for those who didn't sign the agreement, like the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Canada, their frontman, Monte Hummel, is now the Chairman to the CBFA. As for the Sierra Club of Canada, another major ENGO across the country, Alan Young of CBI explained:

Partly there was a bunch of leadership changes going on at the time in the Sierra Club and their focus was really on climate and other things like that... They just haven't been active players in the boreal so it wasn't anything particularly deliberate around that. (interview, December 20, 2012)

With WWF Canada now at the table, and the Sierra Club seemingly ambivalent, most of the opposition to the CBFA within the ENGO community has been from small, grassroots organizations.

Organizers from Earthroots, Indigenous Environmental Network, Oil Sands Truth, and the Wilderness Committee, to name a few, have opposed the CBFA, with the Wilderness Committee's Manitoba Campaign director, Eric Reder, stating:

The result of this phony good news announcement is that the forest industry has garnered some sort of green reputation which they have not earned. My concern is that as a result there will be less people paying attention and holding the forest companies accountable. (Wilderness Committee, 2010)

While there remains a rift between ENGOs that have signed the agreement and those who oppose it, Greenpeace's withdrawal from the CBFA in December 2012 sparked some speculation on the relations between the signatory ENGOs. On December 11, 2012,

Bruce Cox, Executive Director of Greenpeace Canada announced: “The CBFA is simply no longer a credible environmental initiative.”⁶¹ Cox went on to state that:

Greenpeace investigators traveled deep within Resolute Forest Products' managed areas to find kilometres of freshly built logging roads in critical caribou habitat – a clear violation of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement... Our trust was broken. (Ibid)

Greenpeace has gone on to wage a significant campaign against Resolute Forest Products, challenging the merits of the CBFA—which Greenpeace had a significant role in creating—along the way. Following their withdrawal from the CBFA, Greenpeace (2012) released a report called *Boreal Alarm*, where they described Resolute as “reluctant” in their efforts to protect areas in Montages Blanches, Quebec. Greenpeace also asserted that under the CBFA, Resolute has “blocked progress towards finding solutions, and recently began building roads in off-limits forest areas” (Ibid, 13).⁶² Greenpeace has, however, not given up on market-based solutions to conservation issues in Canada, and in the same report that they questioned the effectiveness of the CBFA and the actions of Resolute Forest Products, they also dedicated a section to promoting market solutions, which was titled: “Joining ecology and economics: how the marketplace can drive boreal forest conservation” (24). Though their commitment to neoliberal conservationism has not wavered, their model for engagement, apparently, has. In Figure 6.1, Greenpeace has mapped out their “pathway to solutions,” which lists “adopt First Nations conservation proposals” before “collaborate between stakeholders:” a formula much different from the CBFA (25).

⁶¹ As of April 2012, this post has been removed from Greenpeace’s website.

⁶² On March 19, 2013, Greenpeace issued a statement revoking all of their accusations against Resolute Forest Products. See http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/Global/canada/pr/2013/02/Notice_of_correction_regarding_Resolute_Forest_Products_operations.pdf

Despite Greenpeace's charges against Resolute, the CBFA Secretariat claims that: "Resolute was at more negotiating tables than any other company at present, [and] continues to make a large investment in driving towards positive environmental and economic outcomes in the agreement" (interview, January 22, 2013). As Bevan continued:

I think to a certain extent some of the signatories... would like to be able to say, 'I told you so' to Greenpeace, 'I told you we were going to do it and here are some more outcomes.' So that's the kind of feeling that will be broadly held in the agreement. (Ibid)

Though it may seem as though Greenpeace's attack on the CBFA and Resolute Forest Products would jeopardize their relationships with the other ENGOs still at the table, Alan Young from the Canadian Boreal Initiative stated otherwise. As Young explained, Greenpeace's withdrawal from the CBFA was quite strategic in two key ways:

I think it's a good thing in that it allows Greenpeace to play the role that it plays well which is pressurizing the environment. It's been too slow,... there hasn't been enough progress, we're all frustrated by that. There have been actors within the agreement at FPAC, particularly Resolute, that have been playing a very regressive role just blocking stuff, bargaining in bad faith,... I think some of them actually believe [in] what they're doing but that's hard to imagine given what the outcomes are. So one of the significant impediments to progress has been Resolute. They are not by any stretch of the imagination the only impediment to progress, there are structural reasons, political reasons that progress isn't being made, but a real sore point in Quebec and in northwest Ontario has been Resolute. They've been going down the Forest Stewardship Council path, but at the negotiating table they've been... causing problems at the policy level... they're not being very productive, in contrast with Tembec, where we are actually seeing some real movement...

So the problem of working within the [CBFA] process to deal with Resolute, is that it is all very organized with dispute mechanisms, which these guys, frankly, are playing to their advantage. And it was making Greenpeace crazy; it was making everybody crazy. And so for its own constituency and to play the role that it most effectively does, which is bring pain and exposure to non-productive companies, they couldn't do that inside the context of the agreement anymore. So generally the approach that has been taken has, it's not that we don't believe in the agreement, it's that we don't think the agreement's making its progress it

needs to. And we have given up thinking that Greenpeace can work effectively inside this agreement, so we want this agreement to succeed, but in order to do that, we're going to have to get on the outside and we're going to have to play by our own rules. (interview, December 20, 2012)

Aside from their ability to work on pressuring companies like Resolute from the outside with their current high-intensity campaign featuring hostile video-footage alongside the release of their report *Boreal Alarm*⁶³ it was also important for Greenpeace to get out of the CBFA so more progress could be made with First Nations in Manitoba. As Young explained:

The other problem is that in places like Manitoba, Greenpeace is not welcomed by First Nations communities, which, for historical reasons, which I think are probably not really justified, but history is history and the fur trade and all the stuff is not forgotten, and they're not welcome, so playing a role there would have been almost impossible, so again if they're not at the table, that frees up others to negotiate in a different way, and so that's just one of the harsh realities of again, the politics, the 'No, sorry, I don't negotiate with those people,' and so for us it works out well, again, they get to play to their strengths, they can pressurize the environment, they can pound on Resolute because Resolute needs to get pounded and... they're [not]... burdened by the process and the procedures [of the CBFA]. (Ibid)

In fact, in his joint statement against the CBFA in October 2010, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Grand Chief David Harper stated this very concern when he said: "Greenpeace almost destroyed our fur trade, now they and other groups and a U.S.-based foundation are telling us how to make a livelihood on our own land with our own resources?" (in Beaton, 2010).⁶⁴

⁶³ Available online at:

<http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/campaigns/forests/boreal/Resources/Reports/Boreal-Alarm-A-wake-up-call-for-action-in-Canadas-Endangered-Forests/>

⁶⁴ In the 1980s Greenpeace was heavily involved in anti-fur trade campaigns, which they pulled out of by 1985 under the pressure of other environmental and Indigenous groups to respect Indigenous rights to hunt and trap. For more on the Greenpeace vs. Manitoba fur trappers conflict, see <http://www.carc.org/pubs/v14no2/5.htm>

While Greenpeace's withdrawal appeared to cause tension amongst signatories, Young's reflections on the falling-out suggest that Greenpeace's withdrawal was strategic and beneficial for the ENGOs who remain bound to the CBFA, so that Greenpeace could do "what its good at:" waging high-stakes campaigns against companies through extensive publicity. According to Young:

The real concerns I had about that was whether or not the [FPAC] companies would see value in the agreement when Greenpeace was no longer in there. And the companies have said 'Yes, that's fine.' I think they understand what's going on and they're willing to do that, and frankly a lot of them would say if they're [Greenpeace] out there pounding on Resolute, it's probably better for the rest of us. (interview, December 20, 2012)

For Greenpeace, withdrawing from the CBFA has served to facilitate the signatories' negotiations with First Nations in Manitoba, and target the forestry companies that are dragging their heels on the terms of the agreement. As ENGOs continue to strategize for legitimacy at FPAC's table, there have been internal struggles between ENGOs involved in the CBFA. As Young explained:

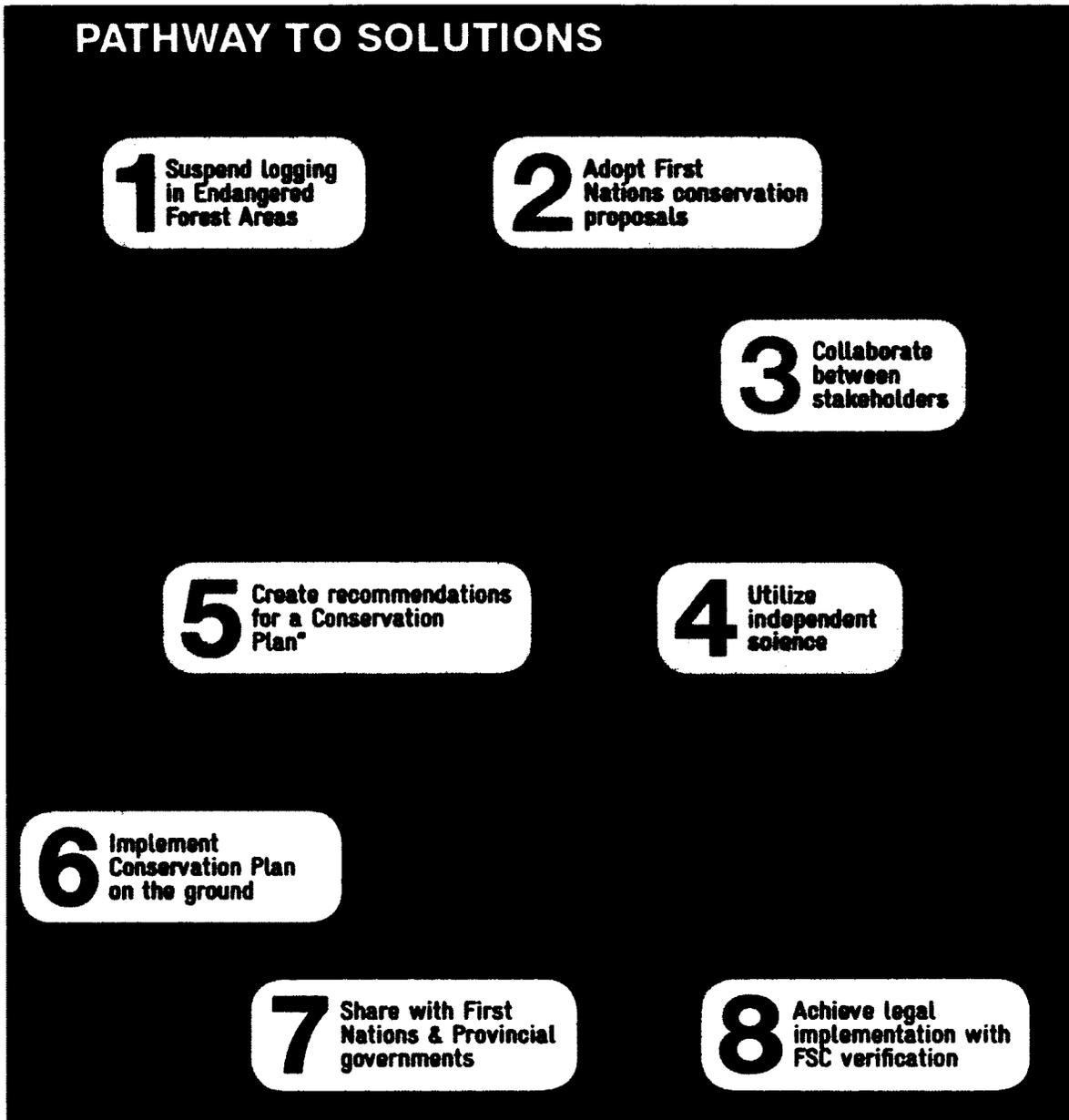
[It has] been a significant challenge to have to work through different sorts of methods, approaches, compromises, negotiations, inside the ENGO caucus to make sure there's enough balance there to carry forward something that has both the leverage and the power of an external campaign and the sort of grounded reality of local negotiations, and that's been sort of fascinating to watch. (Ibid)

The conversations that have emerged between First Nations that are in favour of the CBFA and those that are not have raised important questions surrounding First Nations solidarity at both regional and national levels. As individual First Nations communities take part in the CBFA process, there lies the concern that First Nations solidarity will further be fractured, with some groups maintaining that they will not negotiate with ENGOs until they disband the CBFA. In Steven Kakfwi's response to Grand Chief Beardy's objection to the CBFA, his criticism of other First Nation's has

served to repress an alternate imagining of cooperation in boreal forest politics (which is discussed in Section 6.2), while reaffirming the ENGO's sustainable development agenda as both legitimate and even valiant. And while Greenpeace's withdrawal in December 2012 may have appeared as a white flag to First Nations communities,⁶⁵ their withdrawal has only served to facilitate the efficacy of the CBFA in regions Greenpeace cannot negotiate, while they wage war on Resolute, as Young stated, "by their own rules."

⁶⁵ Which both Chief Harry St. Denis and Mel Bazil speculated about during our interviews.

Figure 6.1: Greenpeace's Pathway to Solutions



(Source: Greenpeace, 2012: 25)

Section 6.2: (Re)positions of power: the erosion of democratic processes in boreal forest politics

In considering the effects of the exclusionary negotiation process, and the crisis-based narratives that signatories and supporters employed in their attempts to normalize the agreement, this section explores how the CBFA has impacted environmental decision-making processes surrounding the future of the boreal forest. This section highlights how the CBFA embodies a shift within neoliberalism that sees the reregulation of government away from environmental decision-making, which has significant implications on democratic processes, like inclusion and accountability.

The erosion of democratic inclusion through government reregulation: the promise of a “speedy review”

While a significant response from detractors of the CBFA has been that the agreement’s negotiation and consultation process continues to be sufficiently lacking in consideration of Indigenous peoples’ rights, there too lies an undercurrent within the counter-narrative for the democratization of environmental politics in Canada. Over the course of the last 10 years, the CBFA has emerged as but one of a number of examples from across the country of environmental projects that have been developed with very limited involvement of both non-Indigenous and Indigenous Canadians alike.

As Stainsby, coordinator of OilSandsTruth.org stated in an interview with Paley (2010a) following the release of the CBFA:

The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement is essentially another huge jump away from democracy, towards corporate control of the lands of Canada, as well as the corporatization of what is left of a once defiant environmental movement.

Despite knowing the risks of engaging in an exclusionary process, signatories continue to defend this tactic by adopting narratives to obscure the rights of First Nations with the

urgency of ecological and economic crises in the boreal forest. In an attempt to (purportedly) salvage caribou populations quickly, ENGOs knowingly excluded all other “stakeholders” from negotiations, where Young explained:

Both ourselves and the David Suzuki Foundation, who had a lot more experience with First Nations [than the other ENGOs] were flagging that okay, there will be a cost of doing it this way but we understand, it would bog down... we'd never reach that truce point if we brought in other parties. (interview, December 20, 2012)

Ironically, in their attempt to avoid getting “bogged down” in their negotiation process by not including First Nations in the formulation of the CBFA, ENGOs have been subsequently shut out of First Nations communities in two critical caribou habitats that the CBFA has targeted in northwestern Ontario and northern Manitoba.

The exclusion of all Canadians, but especially the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities who live in the boreal forest, from the two years of negotiations has been the primary motivation for several First Nations leaders, among many other citizens in Canada, to reject the CBFA in its entirety. Considering what Stainsby expressed, the CBFA contributes to a disturbing trend in Canadian environmental politics that has seen, as was discussed in Section 4.1, an increase in the corporatization of ENGOs through ENGO-industry alliances.

Central to the CBFA's success is how the Canadian government, through neoliberal processes, has been actively retreating from environmental regulation for some time, which, federally, pre-dates the current Harper government. However, as was mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the Harper government has been conducting what Greg Albo (2013) has described as a further gutting of Canadian environmental

legislation through the recent introduction of private members bills, like Bill C-47, which was passed without public consultation and limited legislative debate.

It is important to recognize that the absence of a strong leadership presence by the Canadian federal and provincial governments in forest management is not a new phenomenon, where Luckert et al. (2012) explain that “all provinces followed the pattern established prior to Confederation and put in place licensing arrangements that delegated responsibility for managing public forestland to the private sector” (5). Hence, forest management in Canada has always had a significant corporate presence. As McCarthy (2007) explains, the enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has functioned to further rework the role of government’s “regulatory power and capacity” (42).

The exclusion of all levels of government from negotiating the objectives of the CBFA only reinforces the provincial government’s reliance on the private sector to direct environmental planning within Crown lands. What is more, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) has gone on to praise the CBFA signatories for both the process they undertook and their on-the-ground solutions, as was seen in the June 2012 announcement in northeastern Ontario, where the OMNR promised a “speedy review.” Whereas some studies on neoliberal environments have associated increased privatization of public assets with the roll-back of the state, the CBFA actually assigns some responsibility to the government, which Bakker (2010) refers to as “facilitative government activity” (720). As the CBFA (2010) states, signatories:

Recognize that the legal responsibility and authority for land use decisions and for conservation and resource management policy rests with governments, and that successful implementation of many aspects of the CBFA will require the support of and/or actions by governments. (7)

The reregulation of the Canadian government away from forest planning through the support of the CBFA has resulted in the re-positioning of ENGOs and industry actors to develop conservation and economic plans that are determined through undemocratic consultation processes. In the United States, Corson (2010) explains:

Neoliberalism has become manifest not only in deregulation, but also in re-regulation designed to create new commodities and new governing structures that sustain neoliberalism. As states have faced cuts to fiscal and administrative resources and functions under neoliberal reforms, there has been an associated move toward public-private partnerships, which bring increasing influence by the private and non-profit sectors on what was once state policy. This transition has diffused environmental governance among states, individuals, NGOs, private companies, transnational institutions and local communities. In particular, as the boundaries among the state, private sector and non-profit worlds have become more porous under neoliberalism, certain NGOs have stepped into the vacuum of state social provision. (579)

Canada has undoubtedly experienced similar institutional shifts and processes, and the CBFA has become a stage for ENGOs and FPAC to merge interests in order to better influence government decision-making bodies.

Returning to Chapter 2, de/re-regulation was defined as a process that involves the “restructuring of state regulatory apparatuses in ways that tend to enhance private and corporate authority over economic, environmental, and social action” (Heynen et al., 2007: 6). The CBFA has benefitted from the federal and provincial governments’ inadequate involvement in boreal forest management—an historical process, with a further retrenchment under NAFTA—while also actively reregulating the role of all governments (Indigenous, provincial, federal) as they work to generate ENGO-FPAC-focused solutions for governments to enact.

The government's role in sustainable forest management has been further reregulated through its support of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification processes. The FSC is an NGO that sets voluntary standards for forestry companies to abide by in order to get their forest products stamped with the FSC logo. Peggy Smith has described the FSC as a "private certification system...[that turns to the] marketplace in order to put pressure on the private sector," where, Smith continues:

[ENGOs and FPAC] are not forgetting about governments, they're trying to work their way around government... The role that the government plays in a lot of cases has been, when... they engage with the private sector, it puts pressure on governments to change. Because governments, in the past in natural resources development, have been focused on economic development and finding ways to attract foreign investment and... so there will be local employment and revenues for government and publicly owed resources... So when the ENGOs are able to engage the private sector in the level that it did in the CBFA, that... puts pressure on the provincial governments, and in fact what we saw as a result, they were doing it kind of parallel, was you get the Far North Act in Ontario where you have the provincial government agreeing to a 50% protection level target in the far north... And again, it doesn't end-run any kind of Indigenous decision-making in their territories because you've got these very powerful groups—private sector companies that government is used to working with—and now environmental groups who are powerful unto themselves, but then become more so when they're linked up with the private sector... I don't want to do a "Joe Oliver"⁶⁶ here, when you talk about foreign environmental groups, he doesn't seem to have a problem with a foreign private sector, but he seems to have a problem with foreign environmental groups. (interview, March 8, 2013)

Instead of establishing a government-based, legally-enforced set of practices, the FSC fills that "vacuum of state social provision" by setting quality standards and sustainable practices *for* the government (see also Klooster, 2010; McDermott, 2012). Furthermore, the relationship between the FSC and the CBFA remains more than incestuous, as the Board of Directors for the FSC includes members from Canadian Parks

⁶⁶ On January 9, 2012, Joe Oliver, Canada's current Minister of Natural Resources, wrote an open letter against "environmental and radical groups" who oppose the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline. See the letter at: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/an-open-letter-from-natural-resources-minister-joe-oliver/article4085663/>

and Wilderness Society, Canadian Boreal Initiative, Cascades Inc., and Tembec, who are all signatories to the CBFA.

Beyond the secretive nature of the negotiations between ENGOs and FPAC is the ambiguity surrounding the current consultation methods being deployed by the signatories to garner support within First Nations and forest-dependent communities. As CBFA Secretariat member Andrew Bevan explained, the consultation process is “quite specific,” with consultations being based on the caribou ranges “within land-bases and specific forest management units,” where, as Bevan explained:

You know which First Nations are in that land base, you know which communities are affected, you know where industrial activity is taking place, you know which communities are affected by the mills etc., [and] we know where other extractive resources might be located within those land-bases – that’s how it gets organized. (interview, January 22, 2013)

The reliance on certification projects like the FSC, and the active exclusion of government from devising the CBFA (and carrying out community consultations) work to reregulate the government away from environmental planning in the boreal forest, further eroding democratic processes that ensure inclusion and accountability. The targeted nature of community consultations serves to keep the public in the dark about how consensus is being established at the negotiation tables within each community. Furthermore, much of the ENGOs’ legitimacy has been achieved through their appearance as representative, civil society groups. As Stainsby and Jay (2009) demonstrated in their report *Offsetting Resistance*,⁶⁷ several of the environmental groups involved in the CBFA do not operate on democratic principles, where organizations like Greenpeace, ForestEthics, Canadian Boreal Initiative, and World Wildlife Fund are

⁶⁷ Available online at: <http://www.offsettingresistance.ca/>

actually governed by non-elected individuals with ties to the corporate sector. Similarly, in a study of US AID for conservation, Corson (2010) found that “idealized visions of NGOs as representing civil society...[has] sustained their influence on policy formulation and implementation” (595). As was discussed in Chapter 4, some of these organizations are neither legal-entities nor even Canadian-based. As former FPAC CEO Avrim Lazar stated at the Museum of Nature in 2011, “this agreement provides a core of civil society leadership across a huge part of nature in Canada, which can bring a national conservation plan to life in a way that government can never do itself.” Signatories to the CBFA, however, represent a very small faction of civil society (i.e., if you consider some of the ENGOs to even be a part of civil society), and it is problematic that to Lazar, corporations represent part of the “core of civil society” in Canada.

The question of who counts in boreal forest politics has become ever more convoluted, and Adkin (2009b) has found that “criticisms and demands emerging from the environmental struggles of citizens, communities, and Aboriginal peoples constitute demands for the democratization of the state and the economy, and for the transformation of citizenship” (298). The inadequacies of environmental regulation in Canada have been facilitated by what Adkin calls “decentralized governance [which] may serve hegemonic interests when it takes the form of consultation processes largely constructed and controlled by neoliberal governments and corporate interests” (Ibid: 302). In turn, the lack of transparency throughout the last five years has significantly impacted what Adkin (2009) has described as the “opportunities for citizens to intervene politically in decisions that constitute *societal* choices” (2). As a result, Adkin states, “environmental struggles [tend to] identify ways in which democracy must be *extended* or radicalized” (Ibid: 14).

Section 6.3: The democracy of free, prior and informed consent: the *right* to say no

“Free, prior and informed consent is a tool for forcing democratic debate” - Susan Spronk, Associate Professor, University of Ottawa⁶⁸

Amidst the neoliberal discourses that are at play within the CBFA, many non-signatories have been persistent in their call for greater democracy within the CBFA processes as well as Canadian environmental politics more generally. The call for democracy within the practices of the CBFA are symptomatic of a larger demand within the counter-narrative, which is now a growing movement in Canada, for greater accountability and transparency in all environmental decision-making, from the boreal forest to the tar sands. As Corson (2010) has discussed: “The rise of big conservation is a move within conservation away from engaging local actors,” which has been facilitated by the expansion of protected area networks (580). This section explores how the counter-narrative has responded to the undemocratic processes that are unfolding amid neoliberal shifts in environmental planning and decision-making in Canada, which has merged with a broader movement that seeks to insert Indigenous rights into environmental political discourse.

One of the ways that the counter-narrative has radicalized democratic debate in the CBFA has been through the injection of FPIC rhetoric in boreal forest politics, as well as environmental politics more broadly. As Russell Diabo explains:

I don't see it as simply democracy, I see it in the context of Indigenous rights, and we have Section 35 that protects Aboriginal treaty rights, recognizes and affirms them, and for third parties to be going outside of government and entering into agreements that impact territories and resources and environments of Indigenous peoples, I think, is wrong. And now that we have the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP)... that has a clear article with the

⁶⁸ Conference opening remarks, *Canada's Development Model: Beyond Extraction*. Carleton University, March 16, 2013.

rights of Indigenous peoples... and how they should be treated by the states they are in. And I think that's the context that you have to look at the boreal forest and the Indigenous peoples living there and their rights and in terms of that agreement. Because if it were just simple democracy you'd say majority rules and they outnumber the Indians, so let's take it. (interview, February 22, 2013)

As Diabo has expressed, for Indigenous peoples, democracy is simply not enough. The Canadian democratic system has continuously failed in securing Indigenous rights, especially surrounding natural resources. For Peggy Smith, Associate Professor at Lakehead University, "democracy means that people who reside in a place make decisions about that place" (interview, March 8, 2013). As Smith explained, it is important to consider how decision-making is occurring across various scales (locally, nationally, internationally), especially:

[Within] Indigenous communities who have constitutionally recognized rights in Canada and a commitment from the Canadian government to protect their way of life, to uphold their treaty rights. [So to] make these kinds of decisions that are going to have a major impact on their ability to make decisions in their territories, that, to me, is undemocratic. Even though the Premier of the province would argue that he's making a decision in the best interest of the citizens of Ontario, I would disagree because a number of the citizens in Ontario live in the north and have to face the direct impacts of these decisions, and certainly don't carry the same weight that you see the private sector, and environmental groups carrying, especially when they have large memberships in vote-rich southern Ontario. So we have just a real imbalance in how decisions are being made and by whom and in whose best interest. (Ibid)

One of the ways in which democracy can be *extended* is through the assertion of deliberative democracy in environmental politics. As Ballamingie (2009b) has argued, deliberative democracy involves "moving along the continuum towards greater inclusivity of diverse social actors, representing a broader range of previously silenced voices, and mitigating power differentials [to] ensure at the very least a more robust and deliberative democracy" (12). While there has been a call for improved democratic processes in environmental decision-making via deliberative democracy, several First

Nations and allies have sought to advance and radicalize this debate through the recent introduction of “free, prior and informed consent” (FPIC) into boreal forest politics.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The international adoption of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP)⁶⁹ in 2007 was a significant moment for Indigenous peoples in Canada and across the globe, but, unsurprisingly, the Canadian government was one of the four countries to vote against UNDRIP. It took three years for the government to endorse the declaration, with an announcement on November 12, 2010 that stated:

Although the Declaration is a non-legally binding document that does not reflect customary international law nor change Canadian laws, our endorsement gives us the opportunity to reiterate our commitment to continue working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples in creating a better Canada.⁷⁰

Within the government’s bittersweet endorsement of the UNDRIP, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development stated: “Canada has concerns with some of the principles in the Declaration and has placed on record its concerns with free, prior and informed consent when interpreted as a veto” (2011: 9).⁷¹ What the Canadian government does not want to endorse is a nation-wide tool for Indigenous communities to veto industrial projects on their own lands—to have the right to say no.

Despite the Canadian government’s reticence to endorse free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), First Nations and supporters have been calling on the Canadian and provincial governments to uphold the spirit of intent within UNDRIP by fully involving

⁶⁹ For the complete declaration, visit: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

⁷⁰ For their full statement, visit: <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1309374239861/1309374546142>

⁷¹ As was stated in the Government of Canada’s update guidelines on duty to consult, available at: http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/intgui_1100100014665_eng.pdf

First Nations in land-use planning in their territories. In particular, First Nations who have spoken out against the CBFA have referenced UNDRIP Article 19, which asserts:

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

In discussing the release of the CBFA and Ontario's Far North Act, Carol Audet (2011) of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation explained:

Another example of activities of conservation organizations that led to state (government) actions and the development of further protected areas is the... Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA). Even though it directly impacts Indigenous peoples' rights and territories, including forests, this Agreement between forest industry groups in Canada and conservation organizations, was negotiated in secret. An open letter to the CBFA signatories calling for the termination of this Agreement on a voluntary and unconditional basis was forwarded by NAN as directed by NAN communities. Rather than respect the rights of Indigenous peoples, including the right to FPIC, the signatories to the CBFA defended their actions and continued to move to implement the Agreement.

In defining FPIC, Audet (2011) refers readers to the Forest Peoples Programme⁷² website, which defines FPIC as the "right [of a community] to give or withhold its consent to proposed projects that may affect the lands they customarily own, occupy or otherwise use." They go on to describe FPIC, where:

FPIC implies informed, non-coercive negotiations between investors, companies or governments and indigenous peoples prior to the development and establishment... on their customary lands. This principle means that those who wish to use the customary lands belonging to indigenous communities must enter into negotiations with them. It is the communities who have the right to decide whether they will agree to the project or not once they have a full and accurate understanding of the implications of the project on them and their customary land. As most commonly interpreted, the right to FPIC is meant to allow for indigenous

⁷² The Forest Peoples Program was a global campaign created in 1990 to support Indigenous peoples who live in forests in their struggles to protect their traditional territories. For more information on the program and FPIC, see <http://www.forestpeoples.org/guiding-principles/free-prior-and-informed-consent-fpic>

peoples to reach consensus and make decisions according to their customary systems of decision-making. (Ibid)

Key to the counter-narrative's response to the CBFA has been its invocation of Indigenous rights as a basis for which land-use planning should be approached in Canada, especially on First Nations traditional territories in the boreal forest. Although Indigenous treaty rights are protected under Section 35 of *The Constitution Act* (1982), UNDRIP provides Indigenous peoples in Canada with a platform for recognition and support at an international level. Resonating the concerns of First Nations that the processes behind the CBFA were exclusionary and in violation of UNDRIP, Smith et al. (2010) purport:

We suggest that the responsibility of all actors attempting to influence policy change begins earlier in the process, be they private sector companies or ENGOs, and the governments that implement these changes. Canada recently agreed to endorse the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), [which acknowledges] the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination and to “*own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use*” (Article 26)... While UNDRIP focuses mainly on the responsibility of States to uphold the agreement, its principles of free, prior and informed consent should be upheld by any individual or group whose actions may affect the rights of Indigenous peoples.

What is needed at this critical juncture in Canadian environmental politics, Clayton Thomas-Muller recently argued, is the support of all Canadians for a “Native rights-based approach” to stop extractive industries from controlling the course of development in and around Indigenous territories.⁷³ As Mel Bazil explained:

FPIC is a living process [that] we're attempting... in our territories and it's really difficult because people see it as a blockade, and it's not a blockade, [but, companies are] being stopped at a certain point because they are not fulfilling FPIC. If it costs us anything or puts us in duress, it's not free. If we're the last to know, like all these processes are—the CBFA, the joint re-panel for Enbridge, you name it—we're the last to know... If they're trying to implement FPIC after

⁷³ Conference presentation, *Canada's Development Model: Beyond Extraction*. Carleton University, March 16, 2013.

the fact, it doesn't work... If they're looking to make a deal with forest companies,... those ENGOs need to ask permission to even operate on the peoples' lands to begin with... For instance, if Grassy Narrows says no, you're not to share this responsibility with us, we know the caribou, understand the forests, [and] the forest companies and the ENGOs don't fit, that's the people's choice. They need to be able to deny access. (interview, March 4, 2013)

The ability to "deny access" is an important point of departure in this discussion on the right of Indigenous peoples to be both fully involved in land-use planning in Canada, while also obtaining the ability to say no to unwanted corporate, ENGO, or governmental activity on their unceded lands (as well as lands to which they retain treaty rights).

For several First Nations, the CBFA not only conjures up questions about the role of free, prior and informed consent in establishing a precedent for Indigenous rights to be asserted into environmental conflict in Canada, but it also forces the question: whose interests does Canadian democracy serve to protect? As Mel Bazil explains:

If the CBFA were to attempt to adjust and reconfigure, they really need to get with the FPIC of Indigenous peoples. And they should not follow the suit of the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) who looked at how they could implement FPIC into their policies. They changed it to free, prior and informed "consultation," which still means that we don't have the power to say no. They still claim that it's still up to the government essentially, so Harper's rubber stamp is the only thing that matters... So going through our processes is merely a hurdle for corporations,... we need to be seen more as a wall. You want to get through us, you need to work with us. And you got to show us that this is not going to impact us, or our neighbouring communities. That includes climate change, so this is where pipelines and oil and gas expansion really is considered, including mining, [and] a lot of these systems have been deregulated heavily. (interview, March 4, 2013)

Instead of being a part of the negotiations that started in 2008, First Nations, along with every other citizen involved in resisting the CBFA, have had to play catch-up. Avrim Lazar stated that if the CBFA could have found a national framework to engage all the First Nations in Canada in the negotiations, they would have done it. In 2011, however, the Assembly of First Nations began to establish a national framework to address issues

concerning First Nations in the boreal forest, including the CBFA. Chief St. Denis of Wolf Lake First Nation stated that what really needs to change is how First Nations continue to be the last to know, where:

We're never told what's really going on, what's being negotiated between government, industry or the environmental groups... because everyone is looking out for their own interests, and when it comes to First Nations, we have to look out for our own interests as well. And it's not always easy, because you're taking on the biggest players in resource development all the time, which is the companies and the government. (interview, February 21, 2013)

The impacts of neoliberal shifts in Canadian environmental politics have surfaced many questions about the stability of democratic procedures within environmental legislation, like Ontario's Far North Act, and the methods of non-state actors in forcing their agendas through government bodies despite their undemocratic tactics in securing so-called "consensus" in the boreal forest.

Conclusion

In an attempt to reveal several of the intersecting effects of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, this chapter began with a discussion on the varying solidarities that have been impacted by the processes and content of the agreement. This chapter then explored how the CBFA signatories' joint message has largely been achieved through the neoliberal reregulation of the federal and provincial governments, who have come to depend on industry-led solutions like the voluntary Forest Stewardship Council certification process, which has further eroded democratic processes in environmental decision-making. Last, this chapter found that despite the efforts of ENGOs and FPAC to minimize the discussion of Indigenous rights within the CBFA, the counter-narrative has

pushed this discussion to the front of current debates within the CBFA, with Nishnawbe Aski Nation also taking their concerns with the CBFA to the United Nations in 2011.⁷⁴

By bringing Indigenous rights to the fore of Canadian environmental politics, First Nations leaders, like Chief Ovide Mercredi, have called upon ENGOs to respect First Nations desire to achieve free, prior and informed consent in the boreal forest. As Mercredi stated: “There is a role for ENGOs: that is to support us, not lead, not make deals behind our backs.”⁷⁵ Given the mandates and constituencies that ENGOs need to abide by (especially in order to maintain funding from donors), Mercredi’s demand may not be operative for ENGOs; however, the undemocratic processes adopted by CBFA signatories in order to affirm their authority within boreal forest planning and decision-making has, drawing on Adkin (2009), “wedged open discursive space for a reconceptualization” by non-signatories of the meaning of nature and the boreal forests of Canada (4). This discursive wedge has also enabled the counter-narrative to challenge the legitimacy of the ENGO and FPAC signatories as representative of Canadian civil society and holders of democratic values. This chapter concluded with a discussion on how the CBFA has been perceived as an infringement on not just First Nations’ right to fully participate in conservation and development plans in the boreal forest, but, moreover, their right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) in the international arena.

⁷⁴ Press release available at: <http://media.knet.ca/node/11235>

⁷⁵ Presentation at the Assembly First Nations, March 29, 2011. Notes provide by Dr. Peggy Smith, e-mail communication.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Are activists and conservationists forever doomed to bring nature into the realm of modern planning to ensure conservation? And if so, how can this be done without reinforcing coloniality? – Arturo Escobar, *Territories of Difference*

This final chapter begins with a reflection on the key research findings within this thesis, and the contributions this research makes to studies in political ecology. Second, this chapter reconsiders some of the key methodological limitations within this research project, and points to areas of future inquiry. Last, this thesis concludes with the resolve to impart one possibility for democratizing debate in Canadian boreal forest politics.

Summary of research and contributions to political ecology

In order to begin unraveling the complexity within the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, this research was approached with the overarching question: Why did ENGOs and FPAC exclude First Nations from negotiations, how was this exclusion normalized, and to what effect? This research project began by uncovering and problematizing the hegemonic discourses of sustainable development and neoliberal conservationism that have guided the signatories' rationale, which was found within the various texts that have been produced by the signatories and supporters of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA). Additionally, this thesis sought to juxtapose these discourses with the responses from non-signatories, and unearth key arguments that have come to loosely form a counter-narrative. In approaching the CBFA, this thesis drew on the work of political ecologists to situate this research within a body of knowledge that seeks to conduct "analyses across scales, from the highly local ways people make and represent ecological processes to the ways in which their experiences and understandings are nested in complex networks of interacting biophysical, institutional and discursive

processes” (Heynen et al., 2007: 12). This thesis turned to Foucault’s work on power, knowledge and discourse to understand how the hegemonic discourses surrounding the CBFA have come to define what is “true” about the boreal forest, where, as Peet and Watts (2004) have argued, “we can learn a lot about relations of power through an inquiry into the co-production of regimes of territorial rights and discourses of environmental truth” (33). In particular, this thesis looked at how sustainable development and neoliberal discourses can be seen as “subtle forms of social control and power,” where “one effect of discourse involves the privileging of relatively powerful social groups” (Waitt, 2010: 225).

This research demonstrated that while secret negotiations between ENGOs and forestry companies are not new, the signatories to the CBFA managed to keep their meetings secret for two years, with no involvement of any First Nations leaders or any levels of government. With the advantage of an unprecedented level of secrecy, the CBFA marks, in many ways, a significant shift in Canadian boreal forest politics, as ENGOs and FPAC align their goals for conservation and development. While the signatories continuously displayed their goals as a tense difference of values, their interests were found to be compatible under the CBFA because both parties are compelled, and have been since their respective inceptions, to commodify the boreal landscape. ForestEthics, Canopy, and Greenpeace have been especially active in market-based initiatives for the past decade by centering boycott campaigns on the consumer goods that are produced from the fibres of the boreal forest. As well, the Nature Conservancy has been involved in its own market-based conservation through the

assistance of ongoing land acquisitions in the United States, which is arguably a function of neoliberal privatization.

This research also found that the choice to exclude First Nations from negotiations was political, where ENGOs aligned their interests with FPAC in order to reposition their status as legitimate, cooperative planners and decision-makers for the boreal forest, and distance themselves from any other interpretations of the boreal forest. This exclusion of First Nations was a purposeful juncture for ENGOs and industry, as they worked to isolate Indigenous rights from their definition of the boreal forest in order to cement ecology and economy as the foundation of their vision for nature, where, as Braun and Wainwright (2001) found in their study of forestry in British Columbia: “the naturalness of the forest was simply assumed” (53). CBFA signatories employed specific discourses to define the boreal forest in terms of a “resource”—economic and ecological—of national and international importance. The ENGO-industry alliance in the boreal forest, in turn, has created a specific conceptualization of what the boreal forest *is* and *is not*, and what this *natural* space should be understood as: a *peaceful* space for ENGOs and industry to delineate caribou recovery through sustainable forest management, or, an ecological fix through greater economic technology. By constantly emphasizing their collective authority, while actively limiting the degree to which Indigenous rights could be addressed within the agreement’s framework, the ENGO-industry alliance has attempted to delegitimize the struggles of First Nations in Canada to that which exists outside their definition of boreal forest planning and decision-making. This was largely achieved through the deployment of specific political technologies: images (pictures, maps), expert science, spokespeople, selective First Nations

endorsement, and strategic use of charismatic mega-fauna. By establishing a sense of peace between ENGOs and FPAC, First Nations in the boreal forest are made to appear as the *difficult* stakeholder that would have “bogged down” the negotiations for peace in the forest. In the case of the CBFA, asserting legitimacy has become an exercise of power.

Another goal of this research was to identify the role of government within the CBFA. As Corson (2010) states: “neoliberalism has become manifest not only in deregulation, but also in re-regulation designed to create new commodities and new governing structures that sustain neoliberalism” (579). By excluding all levels of government from the two years of CBFA planning, the signatories have established governments (federal, provincial, Aboriginal) as external stakeholders, to be consulted, and, as Avrim Lazar stated, to “do their bit.” As governments, especially provincial, actively acknowledge the merit of the CBFA approach, they also increase their reliance on voluntary Forest Stewardship Council standards to establish sustainable forestry practices in the boreal forest. The CBFA works to reregulate the responsibilities of the government to exist outside the planning and management processes, and to act more as an approval body, which has serious implications for the accountability (and legality) of ENGOs and FPAC to carry out genuine civil society consultations.

Last, this research has found that the struggle between signatories and non-signatories has not simply been about how one must “manage” or “save” the boreal forest, but more about how we come to understand the boreal forest within our imaginations, especially when asked: “for whom is boreal forest conservation?” (Baldwin, 2009: 428). As Wainwright (2005) has stated: “Doing political ecology in

postcolonial spaces carries the responsibility of engaging with colonialism, because we cannot understand these spaces outside of, prior to, or apart from the fact of the colonial experience" (1034). In many ways the counter-narrative has been a response to both the colonial discourses of the signatories and the content of the CBFA, which are saturated in sustainable development discourse and the seemingly indisputable logic of science, where science, Gregory (2001) has argued, has "allowed the colonial domination of nature to extend their power over the colonized" (96). The persistent colonial language of sustainable development (Banerjee, 2003) has forced Indigenous rights to the margins of conservationism in the boreal forest, where several vocal activists, academics and First Nations leaders have pushed back at the CBFA by infusing their response with excerpts from the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, especially the article on free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). Besides the rights-based discourse of FPIC that swept across the boreal landscape, a deep concern has emerged about the future of Indigenous-NGO solidarity. What fragmenting effects does the CBFA have on the capacity for Indigenous peoples and NGOs to establish political affinities now that mainstream NGOs have merged their common goals with FPAC, which includes forestry companies that are in direct conflict with First Nations communities in and around the boreal forest? While speculating on the long-term impacts of these shifts lies beyond the scope of this thesis, this research does suggest that the CBFA has generated significant barriers for NGOs belonging to the CBFA to advance meaningful discussions with First Nations communities in northern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario, where there has been a call for the abolishment of the CBFA. To date, only two members of the CBFA (the David Suzuki Foundation and Canadian Boreal Initiative)

have apologized for the exclusion of First Nations from the CBFA (both of whom were from the ENGO side), while no efforts have been made to, as Ballamingie (2006) states, “redress the colonial (and post-colonial) inequities” present in the actions and language of the CBFA signatories (317).

As an original piece of research, this thesis contributes to the field of political ecology in two important ways. The first contribution can be found in the intersection of literature on neoliberal conservation, which analyzes the nature of public-private partnerships, with poststructural political ecology, which has, to a great extent, exposed struggles found within contemporary colonial landscapes. As Robbins (2004) has explained, these studies in political ecology have often highlighted how “the myth of a ‘pristine’ environment was itself important in the colonial process of marginalizing and disenfranchising native peoples. By writing Indigenous people out of the landscape, the business of control was easier to carry out” (12). By bringing neoliberal conservation discourse into dialogue with poststructural political ecology within a postcolonial landscape, this research has sought to demonstrate the pervasive efforts of neoliberal discourses to delegitimize Indigenous rights and disband democratic decision-making from Canadian boreal forest politics. Last, this thesis has also sought to contribute to a growing body of literature within and beyond political ecology that has been engaged in unpacking the meaning(s) of nature within environmental conflict and struggle, especially North American forests (see Braun, 2002; Prudham, 2005, 2007; Ballamingie, 2006; Baldwin, 2006; Dempsey, 2011; Thorpe 2012).

Methodological limitations and areas of future inquiry

This next section provides an overview of key methodological limitations found within this research, as well as insights into areas of future research within the CBFA. To begin, there are constraints that accompany the embrace of a poststructural lens, which, in the case of this thesis, has forced this research into the limited scope of discourse analysis. As Castree (2001) explains: “Geographers, regardless of whether they subscribe to ideological or discursive analysis, agree that knowledges of nature (even scientific ones) frequently express social power relations, and... these knowledges have material effects, insofar as people may believe and act according to them” (13). Indeed, it would be a valuable exercise to explore in greater detail the political economic effects of capital accumulation within the CBFA, as several political ecologists have demonstrated the value of maintaining a Marxist interpretation of systems of power and the materialization of hegemony in ecological analyses (see Smith, 1984; O’Connor, 1998; Ekers, 2009). This thesis marks but one of many approaches to problematizing the relations of power found within the CBFA, and hopefully serves as a catalyst for increased engagement in the academy. There is also great potential for a gendered analysis of the CBFA, which was alluded to throughout this thesis, as the signatory body was largely composed of White males who invoked masculinist and power-laden language throughout their press releases and public presentations. As Thorpe (2012) has demonstrated in her research on Temagami and travel writing, there is much to be said about the “gendering of wilderness space,” however, such analysis lies beyond the scope of this research (202).

Furthermore, this research did not include interviews with, or resources produced by, FPAC signatories. This choice was both political and pragmatic, and was necessary in

order to focus on the issues of solidarity, and the tensions between the signatories and non-signatories that emerged since the CBFA's release. That being said, former FPAC CEO Avrim Lazar (the official spokesperson for FPAC and key contributor to the CBFA), as well as select FPAC members, like Al Thorne and Jim Lopez from Tembec, made regular public appearances. Therefore, this thesis drew largely from the public statements made by Lazar and select FPAC members, and incorporated them throughout the analysis in this thesis. This research drew primarily on the texts that have been produced on the CBFA over the past three years, which was supplemented by seven semi-structured, in-depth interviews conducted with members of the CBFA and First Nations communities, the alternative press, and the academy. Given more time and resources, additional participants may have altered the data set and provided an even more nuanced reading of the CBFA; however, some key participants proved simply inaccessible throughout the research process. In turn, this thesis provided more space for participants to speak for themselves, which can be seen within the rich and substantive narratives provided throughout this text.

Research on the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement has the potential to go in a number of directions. During our interview, Chief St. Denis of Wolf Lake First Nation and I mused over the various research possibilities, when, anxiously, I admitted: "Trying to write a thesis on this topic is getting harder and harder because I keep coming up with more questions!" At which point, he responded, "Well when you turn over one rock there's something under there, and when you turn over another rock, there's something else under there. So you've just got to keep digging – it's a good one" (February 22, 2013). I wish I could say that his advice placated my nerves! What it did do was prompt

me to consider how this research could be different, and what possibilities lie ahead for areas of future inquiry. While the limitations of this thesis certainly provide fodder for future studies, it is also important to consider that, to date, the CBFA is still in operation, which means this thesis only provides a snapshot of a wheel that is still in motion. Getting inside the mechanics of the CBFA would be an important venture, as Alan Young of the Canadian Boreal Initiative explained, there are tensions that exist between the regional working groups and the national vision of the CBFA. Young offered:

How do you wed the national vision with the local realities and how do you resolve the tension, I mean as a classic Canadian federalism sort of problem, right? And that plays out... internally and it's a very productive tension that is a natural consequence of the ambitions and scope and the complexity of it. But it's a very real tension that threatens to, if not managed well, blow things up from the inside – not from the outside or from within industry. (interview, December 20, 2012)

These tensions provide productive entry points into the inner-politics of the ENGOs working within the CBFA, many of whom have different value sets and understandings of the boreal forest. The withdrawal of Greenpeace from the CBFA in December 2012 (and the recent withdrawal of Canopy during April 2013) has surfaced some of this instability Young mentioned, and speaks to the necessity of further investigation.

Placing Indigenous rights at the center of environmental conflict in Canada

This final section returns to the epigraph that opened this chapter, which was a question posed by Escobar during his research on development in Latin America. Escobar's question surfaces an important tension that exists beyond the struggles within Latin America, which resides within the work of mainstream ENGOs in Canada as well, who engage in market environmentalism in order to affect industrial activity in the boreal forest. In doing so, ENGOs have brought their campaigns into the realm of "modern

planning” in an attempt to prevent industrial development within tracts of crucial caribou habitat. But if conservation and sustainable development have been a function of broader colonial relations of power, this thesis must conclude with a reflection on the impact of the CBFA on solidarity between ENGO and Indigenous struggles, and the future of democratic decision-making in Canadian environmental politics.

The focus within the CBFA to unite the interests of ENGOs and FPAC has come with the cost of underrating the conflicts that exist between other sets of relations: FPAC and First Nations communities, ENGOs and First Nations leaders and communities, and the disputes and differences within and across Indigenous communities and organizations (and between Indigenous communities and various levels of settler governments). In an effort to offer one normative solution, I have drawn from Dempsey and M’Gonigle (2003), who advocate for a shift from “‘sustainable development’ to the creation of new systems that ‘develop sustainability’... whereas sustainable development means managing growth, developing sustainably means managing economic redirection” (115).

As Dempsey and M’Gonigle suggest:

This process for... re-formation and ‘developing sustainability’ is best cultivated from the bottom up through the assertion of new forms of territorial control and legitimacy. The growing interest in "common property resources," Indigenous land rights, radical municipalism and so on points to emerging spatial alternatives to the state as a primary reference point for political legitimacy and action. (Ibid)

These new forms of control, proponents of the counter-narrative have offered, would involve Indigenous leadership from the outset, where, according to Russell Diabo, the CBFA “should be scrapped and started over with Indigenous peoples being at the front and center of it” (interview, February 22, 2013). The Assembly of First Nations is currently in the process of playing catch-up with the CBFA, and is working on

establishing a framework for national First Nations leadership and guidance in matters relating to boreal forest initiatives and future management. For Peggy Smith, Associate Professor at Lakehead University:

A healthy democracy is one in which we have transparency, we have decision-making at the local level that has some weight, that there is a debate or a discussion about major policy decisions that will affect people who live in a territory... We saw none of that with the CBFA or the Far North Act. (interview, March 8, 2013)

The assertion of First Nations rights into the discourse of the CBFA has opened up a larger debate about the challenges neoliberal conservation and government reregulation pose to democratic planning and decision-making within Canadian environmental politics. As Adkin (2009b) has found, “opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making processes, along with deliberative democratic criteria, must be actively and permanently defended against powerful private interests” (315). For several who have rejected the CBFA, this deliberative process needs to involve the full recognition of every Indigenous community’s right to determine what happens on their land, including the *right to say no*. The future of the CBFA remains in the hands of the most powerful ENGOs and forestry companies in Canada, but for many who oppose the CBFA, the future of the boreal forest must exist outside this agreement, in the hands of the communities who live, work, and subsist in the boreal forest.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement Signatories

Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS)

- Canadian Boreal Initiative
- Canopy
- ForestEthics
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Pew Environment Group International Boreal Conservation Campaign
- The Nature Conservancy
- Ivey Foundation
- Greenpeace (withdrew in December 2012)

The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and forestry companies (all represented by the Forestry Products Association of Canada)

- Resolute Forest Products (formerly AbitibiBowater Inc.)
- Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc.
- AV Group
- Canfor Corporation
- Canfor Pulp Limited Partnership
- Cariboo Pulp & Paper Company
- Cascades Inc.
- Conifew Timber Inc.
- Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd.
- F.F. Soucy Inc.
- Howe Sound Pulp and Paper Limited Partnership
- Kruger Inc.
- Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd.
- Mercer International
- Mill & Timber Products Ltd.
- Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.
- NewPage Corporation
- Tembec
- Tolko Industries Ltd.
- West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd.
- Weyerhaeuser Company Limited

APPENDIX B: Research Instrument: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Research Title: A post-structural political ecology of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement

Researcher: Stephanie Kittmer, MA Candidate, Institute of Political Economy

Date of ethics clearance: July 24, 2012

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: May 31, 2013

Objective

The objective of this research is to explore the terms of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA), and the relationships that have emerged through this new partnership between environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) and the forest products industry. This research will look at the new narratives that have emerged within the CBFA on boreal forest conservation, planning, and management amongst signatories and non-signatories of the CBFA.

Procedure

Your participation in this project will entail an audio-recorded, semi-structured interview. You will be asked a predetermined set of questions and you can look over the questions before the interview and take as much time as you need to reflect upon how you might want to answer them. The interview is anticipated to take no more than an hour, but I have given myself more time, and am willing to meet again, should the discussion take longer. Data collected from the interview will be stored on a USB key which will be stored securely during and after the course of this study.

Risks

This project could potentially result in some professional and social risks depending on what information you share. In order to minimize these risks, you may request that some statements you make remain non-attributable in the final thesis. Due to the small sample, I cannot guarantee your statements will be unrecognizable to other research participants or readers.

Benefits

This research is being conducted to interrogate and highlight key features of the CBFA that may facilitate greater and more productive relationships between signatories and non-signatories, which will be of great benefit for those invested in the conservation and management of Canada's boreal forest.

Confidentiality, Participation and Anonymity

Any data collected from your participation will be treated with the utmost care, meaning that I will be the only person accessing the data directly, and all data will be stored in a

locked and secure space on an external USB drive. After I have finished the project, I will store the data in a secure manner, and I will contact you for permission if I wish to use the data in a future study.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study up until the analysis of the information, which will be one month from this interview. You also have the right to end the interview whenever you wish. You are free to refuse to answer any question(s) I might ask, and you can retract any responses or request that the interview not be used in the research up until the time I commence the analysis of this data. If you refuse further participation, any data that was collected will be immediately destroyed.

Every effort will be taken to protect the identities of interviewees from one another until the release of the final report, but due to the small size of the CBFA community, I cannot guarantee anonymity between interviewees. All statements will be attributed to you in the final report, but you have the option to request certain statements not be attributable.

Contact Information for Follow-Up

I may contact you for clarification or for a follow-up interview, and if you would like to stay informed on the progress or results of this research, you can contact me through the email address provided on your copy of the consent form. You are also free to contact me if you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding this research.

This project has been approved by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding their approval, the Chair of the committee, Professor Antonio Gualtieri, can be contacted at the information below:

Professor Antonio Gualtieri, Chair Research Ethics Board
Carleton University Research Office
Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6
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Thank you for your participation,

Stephanie Kittmer
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Carleton University
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Participant

I agree that I have received and understand the Informed Consent Form for this research project. I consent to my participation in this study.

Date Reviewed and Signed: _____

Printed Name of Participant: _____

Signature: _____

Researcher:

Date Reviewed and Signed: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX C: Research Instrument: Interview questions for CBFA Signatories

Interview questions for Environmental Non-governmental Organization CBFA Signatories

(In compliance with Section 10 of the Graduate Research Ethics Application)

1. How long has your organization been involved in boreal forest campaigning?
2. What kind of campaigning has your organization done – can you describe some of the events/activities?
 - What were the campaigns trying to achieve at that time?
 - Would you consider them to be successful and/or have impact on the framing of the CBFA?
 - What were the obstacles you faced?
3. How and why did your organization become involved in the CBFA?
4. How did the nine signatories come together to form the ENGO alliance that would sign the CBFA with the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC)?
 - Were other interested groups/communities outside of the final nine ENGOs ever a part of the negotiations? If so, in what capacity?
5. How would you describe the negotiation process for the CBFA with FPAC? With other ENGOs?
 - When negotiations began, was the CBFA what you had envisioned would be the result of these conversations?
 - Were there moments you thought the CBFA would not happen? Can you describe these?
6. Are there aspects about the CBFA that you would have liked to have seen done differently? Are there components that could be added or removed? Why?
7. The CBFA is a three-year agreement with a clause that allows the agreement to extend. Do you think the conditions of the agreement will take longer to fulfill than the three years allotted, and if so, why?
8. What is the role of government in this agreement? Do you think more or less government involvement (at the municipal, provincial, and/or federal level) is necessary for boreal forest management?
9. What role do you think industry should play in this agreement?
10. There has been some debate surrounding the CBFA. Can you provide some examples and perhaps some perspective on these opinions?
11. How would you describe conservation in Canada, and the mentality of Canadians in general on species preservation? Do you think it is on the rise?

12. How does your organization value the boreal forest in Canada? How do you personally value the boreal forest?

13. Considering the conversation we have had today, are there any people you would recommend I speak to on the CBFA? Is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you would like to mention?

APPENDIX D: Research Instrument: Interview Questions for Non-Signatories

Interview questions for non-signatories of the CBFA

(In compliance with **Section 10** of the Graduate Research Ethics Application)

1. How long have you been involved/interested in issues surrounding the boreal forest and/or its management?
2. Were you ever involved in the negotiations that led to the creation to the CBFA? If so, in what capacity?
3. What is your position on the CBFA? Do you think it is an effective framework for boreal forest management?
 - Are there aspects of the CBFA that you would have liked to have seen done differently? (Please explain)
4. What do you think should be the role of government in the CBFA, or in boreal forest management and conservation more generally?
5. What do you think the role of industry should be in the CBFA, or in boreal forest management and conservation more generally?
6. Whose interests are adequately represented by the CBFA? Are there perspectives you think should be added to the discussion?
7. One of the conditions of the CBFA is that all signatories must end boycott campaigns against members of FPAC. What is your opinion on this condition?
8. What do you think are the next steps of the boreal forest management? What needs to happen next, and who is responsible for making this happen?
9. Considering the conversation we have had today, is there anyone you would recommend I speak to about the CBFA and the research I am doing?
10. Is there anything else that we have not discussed that you would like to mention?

APPENDIX E: Letter and Presentation by David Suzuki on July 8, 2010

Presented by David Suzuki
to
The Boreal Chiefs of British Columbia
Prince George, BC
July 8, 2010

Thank you all for coming to this meeting on such short notice.

I asked Larry Innes to call a meeting as soon as possible when I learned that the First Nations of the boreal ecosystem had not been involved in the negotiations between environmental organizations and forestry companies over the boreal forest.

I believe that while the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) offers an enormous opportunity to sustain this great ecosystem while enabling the people who live in it to find economic opportunities, the entire negotiation process between environmental NGOs and the forest industry was fundamentally flawed.

I know there are statements by ENGOs that the CBFA is only the first step that First Nations have the right to decide where it does from here, and so on. But I do not believe that the ends justify the means. Of course we need to know where we are going, but the way we proceed defines our values.

I do not believe it is right to launch an international campaign to boycott boreal wood, to carry out negotiations between ENGOs and forest companies, and **then** to invite the First Nations of the boreal to the negotiation table.

None of this should have been started without the complete involvement and agreement of the First Nations to whom this forest is not just resources, opportunity or commodities, but first and foremost, your home, your history and culture, and the future. The fate of the boreal has the greatest implications for First Nations people and for you to have been left out is egregious and wrong.

I am here speaking as one person, but I am also a co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation which signed to support the CBFA very late when the boycott and negotiations were well underway.

I and the foundation did not do our due diligence to realize that First Nations weren't involved and I am ashamed that we supported this agreement without first rectifying this omission. I cannot and do not speak for the other signators or the Canadian Boreal Initiative, but I want to make my position very clear. I am here to offer my sincerest apology for the disrespect shown by the failure to include boreal First Nations in this process and by the failure of the David Suzuki Foundation to recognize and correct this egregious mistake. I am truly sorry.

It is my hope that the boreal First Nations will find the generosity to accept the apology so that we can get this process, however belatedly, onto the right track because I believe the CBFA offers an enormous opportunity to First Nations of the boreal.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide a context for this discussion. My environmental perspective has been shaped as much by indigenous people in many parts of the world as it has been formed by science. Traditional people are the ones who taught me to see the Earth as our Mother, to recognize the sacred elements – Earth, Air, Fire and Water. They informed me of our kinship with all the rest of life on the planet, a fact

corroborated by the completion of the Human Genome Project that showed more than 98% of our genes are identical to those in the Great Apes – they are our nearest relatives. Scientists have found that every person carries thousands of genes identical to those in our pet dogs and cats, in eagles, salmon, butterflies and cedar trees. All life is related through our common evolutionary history; other species are not resources, they are our relatives. And in a great act of generosity, they provide us with the most fundamental needs.

It is the web of living organisms, what scientists refer to as **biodiversity** that is the source of the four sacred elements. It was the evolution of photosynthesis that ultimately transformed the atmosphere by the removal of carbon dioxide and release of oxygen that created the air animals like us depend on today. And today, it is all the green organisms on land and at sea that continue to remove carbon dioxide from the air and replace it with oxygen. The problem today is that we are burning so much fossil fuel and creating so much carbon dioxide that plants can no longer absorb it all and it's building up and creating a blanket that is trapping heat.

Water cartwheels around the planet through the hydrologic cycle and it is soil fungi and bacteria and plant roots that filter water as it percolates through the earth. Every bit of our food was once alive and life creates the soil on which we grow food. All of our fuel – wood, peat, dung, oil, gas, coal – was created by life. So our most basic needs – clean air, clean water, clean food and soil, clean energy – are the gift of biodiversity, the plants and animals that are our relatives.

Today, the greatest threat to our own survival as a species, is species extinction, the loss of biodiversity on the planet, that Klaus Topfer, the former head of the UN Environmental Program, says is claiming 50,000 species a year. We are tearing at the web of living things that keeps the planet rich and resilient, rendering the future far less certain.

I have been privileged to travel to many parts of the world – the Serengeti plains in Africa, Australia, the Amazon rainforest, the Arctic and the Kalahari Desert. Everywhere I have sought out the oldest people to ask them what it was like when they were children and everywhere, the answer is similar. They say “It used to be so different. There used to be trees as far as you could see. Birds would darken the skies and fish jam the rivers at certain times of the year.” Our elders are a living record of enormous changes that have occurred in the span of a single life. So for many of us, **conservation**, the protection of species and their ecosystems has been our highest, most urgent issue.

That's why I've been involved trying to protect wilderness, many of which we have lost. I joined the battle to protect the Khutzeymatin, Stein Valley, Windy Bay, Carmanah and Clayoquot, I helped raise money to fight the proposed dam at site C on the Peace River and testified against drilling for oil in Hecate Strait.

In the 1990s, environmentalists realized one of the most rare ecotypes globally is temperate rainforest, and a quarter of it is in the north and central coast of BC. Forest companies were poised to enter this area and begin logging when a number of environmental groups threw down the gauntlet, starting an international campaign to shun wood from the BC temperate rainforest and called for a moratorium on cutting in a hundred watersheds. The David Suzuki Foundation (DSF) began from a fundamentally

different perspective. We recognized that the north and central coasts and Haida Gwaii were First Nations territory and we visited every village in the area to establish diplomatic relations. We asked what they wanted and most replied “community economic development”. We used the PAR (Participatory Action Research) an approach used with great success for decades.

The DSF began with the acknowledgement that this entire area belonged to the First Nations and pledged our support for each nation to seek recognition of their territory through government to government to government negotiation. Our priority was the protection of the temperate rainforest, but we knew the First Nations had sustained the forests for thousands of years. We also knew that traditional use of the forests had been affected by the arrival of chainsaws, feller bunchers, and heavy machinery so we prepared a document, *A Cut Above*, that outlined the basic principles of sustainable forestry through Ecosystem Based Management (EBM).

The international boycott made forest companies pay attention but the blockade collapsed as First Nations communities were angered and offended by the disrespectful actions that did not involve the First Nations.

At some point, a member of a coastal FN suggested the need for a meeting of all the communities and the DSF jumped at the chance, inviting them to a meeting on the Musqueam. Every community sent representatives and the delegates wrote a Declaration of Coastal Peoples, pledged to support each other while respecting the differences between them. The group that formed was called Turning Point. The DSF raised millions for Turning Point, urged each community to develop a land use plan for their territory, and brought a diversity of interests from truck loggers to mayors of towns, resorts, fishers, etc. Once Turning Point had a solid economic base and was staffed well, the DSF set them free, severing their need for us to raise and provide money while provincial and federal governments were brought to the table. Turning Point is one of our proudest moments.

The success of Turning Point encouraged us to use it as a model for other FNs and DSF called a meeting in Dease Lake of boreal FNs in British Columbia. Dave Porter chaired the meeting and Jim Fulton, executive director of DSF, Miles Richardson, President of the Haida Nation and board member of the DSF and I spoke about the Turning Point process and the opportunities it created. Attendees saw the potential and left in a state of excitement.

Subsequently, the PEW Foundation created the Canadian Boreal Initiative with a large grant, so the DSF turned its attention to other issues in our program. Then our Executive Director, Jim Fulton, was diagnosed with colon cancer and for three years, the Foundation struggled while he waged a valiant fight until finally succumbing. We had opened offices in Toronto and Ottawa and then had to find a new head and succeeded in appointing Peter Robinson as CEO. Peter immediately set us on a search for our long term direction while opening an office in Montreal.

Meanwhile, the Canadian Boreal Initiative was working away and their international boycott brought the forest companies to the negotiating table. The CBI then sought support from the NGO community and the DSF along with others, signed on its support, but it didn't occur to us that the FN would not be involved in the planning and negotiations. For that oversight, I offer again, my heartfelt apology.

But a deal has been struck, trumpets sounded and the media reported. It would be tragic if what has been achieved were to be discarded to begin again. If we can put the train on the tracks, acknowledge our grievous error, the First Nations can take advantage of a huge opportunity. Other guests here will discuss what those opportunities are. Thank you.

APPENDIX F: Assembly of First Nations Resolution 65/2010

SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 14, 15 & 16, 2010, GATINEAU, QC

Resolution no. 65/2010

TITLE:	Call for National Meeting – Future of the Boreal Forest and Rejection of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement
SUBJECT:	Forestry and Economic Development
MOVED BY:	Chief Ovide Mercredi, Misipawistik Cree Nation, Manitoba
SECONDED BY:	Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Proxy, Muskrat Dam First Nation, Ontario
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. For thousands of years, First Nations have been stewards of the boreal forest that sustains the cultures, environment, and economies of the hundreds of First Nation communities who call the boreal region home and this largely intact forest is now recognized as an area of global importance.
- B. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples to lands, territories and resources they own and traditionally own and Canada has endorsed these and other principles.
- C. On May 14, 2010 nine Environmental Non-Government organizations (ENGOS) and 22 Canadian forest companies belonging to the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) announced the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, a three-year agreement to end conflict between them and to work towards improving sustainable forest management practices, advancing forest conservation, improving economic prosperity for forest dependent communities and increasing market recognition for participating companies.
- D. First Nation governments were not included in the negotiations of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and are not parties to the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement.
- E. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement purports to acknowledge the Treaty and Aboriginal rights, title and aspirations of First Nations and further purports to recognize that what happens in the Boreal Forest within our traditional territories will be determined by government-to-government processes between First Nations and other governments.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Call on the National Chief to convene a national meeting of First Nations to discuss and develop policy on the future of the boreal forests within our traditional territories, including recognition of First Nation jurisdiction over traditional territories, climate change issues, the low-carbon economy, forest tenure, biodiversity and traditional uses.

2. Condemn the disrespectful manner in which the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement was negotiated by the Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOS) and Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and hereby reject and demand the termination of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and declare that the Agreement shall be of no force and effect within the traditional territory or resource management area of any First Nation.
3. Call upon the National Chief to communicate to the parties of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement the rejection and demand for the termination of the Agreement by the AFN Chiefs in Assembly and that First Nations will exercise their Treaty and Aboriginal rights and title for the conservation, management and development of the boreal region and that any interests the parties may express in relation to the boreal forest are subject to the free, prior and informed consent of First Nations, to the terms of Treaties and Agreements, to First Nation resource management authorities and to government-to- government processes.
4. Direct the AFN Secretariat to collaborate with First Nations and First Nation management authorities to monitor any policy, planning or development initiatives in the Boreal forest and to assist in ensuring that any such initiatives are consistent with First Nation resource management and planning authorities and with government-to-government processes.
5. Direct the AFN Secretariat to complete its analysis of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and to be tasked with collecting and making available all other First Nation reviews and analyses.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 16th day of December, 2010 in Gatineau, Quebec

SHAWN A-IN-CHUT ATLEO, NATIONAL CHIEF

65 - 2010

APPENDIX G: Open letter to CBFA Signatories from Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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OPEN LETTER TO THE SIGNATORIES OF THE CANADIAN BOREAL FOREST AGREEMENT ("CBFA") OF MAY 14, 2010 (AS HIGHLIGHTED BELOW)

Canadian Boreal Initiative, Canopy, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, David Suzuki Foundation, ForestEthics, Greenpeace, Ivey Foundation, Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts

Forest Products Association of Canada, Abitibi Bowater Inc., Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Inc., AV Nackawic, Canfor, Canfor Pulp Inc., West Fraser, Cascades, Daishow Marubeni International Ltd., Forest Products Association of Canada, Howe Sound Pulp & Paper Ltd., Kruger, LP Building Products, Mercer, Mill & Timber Products Ltd., NewPage, White Birch Paper, Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., Tembec, Tolko, West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd., Weyerhaeuser.

I am writing on behalf of the First Nations of Nishnawbe Aski Nation ("NAN")⁷⁶ to relay their urgent call for the immediate termination of the CBFA which was mandated by NAN Chiefs Resolution 10/60 and to clarify, from the First Nation perspective, some of the inaccuracies made in the promotion of the CBFA. In the NAN First Nations view, the CBFA is not viewed as an 'historic agreement signifying a new era of joint leadership in the boreal forest,' and nor will there be 'peace in the forest.'

First Nations in NAN are adamantly opposed to the CBFA, as it violates their Aboriginal, Treaty and Inherent rights, as well as their long term social and economic interests, and land resource stewardship rights bequeathed to them by the Creator. The Elders' wisdom is that Treaties 5 and 9 were intended to guarantee an equitable sharing of the vast lands and resources of the NAN First Nation territory. The CBFA is a direct attack on that vision of the Treaties. This position was stated shortly after the CBFA was signed, and reiterated on numerous occasions to the present time.

The two main forest blocks in Ontario covered by the CBFA are mostly in NAN territory or adjacent to it. The new protected area called for by the CBFA is in addition to the existing massive and lesser parks in NAN territory (Egs. Polar Bear and Wabakimi Parks), and the world-scale protected area (or "super park") of at least 225,000 square kilometres mandated by the recently passed Ontario Bill 191 (Far North Act). Incredibly, the Bill 191 protected area alone represents approximately 21% of the entire

⁷⁶ NAN represents 49 First Nations of Treaties 5 and 9 in the northern two thirds of the Province of Ontario, Canada

surface of Ontario, all of it expropriated from NAN First Nation Treaty territory. Some of the conservation organizations that are signatories to the CBFA were complicit in Ontario's imposition of Bill 191 over the strenuous objections of NAN. The bottom line of these overlapping expropriations is more than half of the NAN First Nation Treaty inheritance.

The First Nations in NAN have taken major exception to the CBFA being negotiated in secret, without any form of involvement or even notice to them despite the fact that it is proposing to regulate forest management practices across 72.3 million hectares of boreal forest across Canada, including 11.8 million hectares in Ontario, which, as you know, is subject to Aboriginal and Treaty rights guaranteed by section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act, 1982.

The CBFA purports to regulate the forests and expropriate massive protected areas without the free, prior and informed consent of First Nations. This makes a mockery of self-serving provisions in the CBFA, like section 8, that claims that the CBFA is "without prejudice" to Treaty and Aboriginal rights. Section 12, requires signatories to act as virtual spies and fellow travellers among First Nations. In this section, signatories are committed to monitoring any "third parties" that might have the temerity to oppose the CBFA, and informing on them. This double agent role is viewed as one of the most distasteful and unseemly aspects of the CBFA and calls into question its integrity.

The CBFA deal has been made at the expense of First Nations. In exchange for the expropriated protected area and unlimited caribou regulation, conservation organizations are agreeing to stop their publicity campaign against forest company harvesting practices. The quid pro quo for the forest companies is cynical in the extreme and very much contrary to the Canadian public interest. By Goal #1 of the CBFA, the forestry companies obtain the monumental concession that they can continue, more or less, with "existing" forestry management standards ("the existing three major certification programs"). The companies will not have to "build a new (fourth) set of standards from scratch." In effect, it will be business as usual in the non-protected area.

The CBFA is a fundamentally bad deal for most Canadians, but especially First Nations. It is a bold and radical attempt by private interests to force the hand of provincial and federal governments in critical policy areas such as resource development, environmental protection, species protection, and First Nation rights. The signatories to the CBFA are not government agencies with the public interest in mind. They are private interests with narrow and self-interested agendas.

The CBFA also violates the domestic and international legal obligation to consult and accommodate First Nations when a proposed measure affects First Nation land, resource and other rights. In particular, Article 32 of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ("UN Declaration") provides in part that "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources." Article 32 also provides that First Nations are entitled to "free and informed consent prior to the

approval of any project affecting their lands or territories or other resources." The CBFA violates the spirit and letter of the UN Declaration, which has been formally endorsed by the government of Canada. It also violates Article 8 0) of the international Convention on Biological Diversity, which makes reference to the importance of recognizing the rights of Indigenous peoples to use, own and control their traditional territories and to protect their ancestral knowledge and skills.

First Nations in NAN are deeply concerned that they have become special targets of the larger boreal forest movement of conservation organizations, of which the CBFA is a key component. By far and away, First Nations in NAN are the number one victim in Canada of this radical boreal forest agenda. We can only characterize it as an international disgrace and tragedy, similar in its moral dimension to the worst excesses of the Canadian colonial past. The boreal forest agenda, including the CBFA, is being undertaken devoid of respect for Indigenous Peoples' rights. This is not acceptable to the First Nations in NAN.

It is unfortunate that the boreal forest campaigns taking place in Canada are not in line with more progressive initiatives, such as those that are currently being undertaken by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature ("IUCN") and their upcoming programme of work for 2013-2016, which will include implementation of decisions made in support of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. The CBFA is in gross violation of several principles and commitments in the IUCN's Conservation Initiative on Human Rights and its associated framework (available at: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/cihr_framework_e_sept2010_1.pdf). Among other things, the framework commits the conservation organizations to "[r]espect internationally proclaimed human rights" (i.e. the 2007 UN Declaration) and to "respect for the right of indigenous peoples ... with customary rights to lands and resources to free, prior, informed consent to interventions directly affecting their lands, territories or resources" (emphasis added). The appalling inconsistency between the commitments in this framework and the CBFA (the Nature Conservancy is a signatory to both) is something we will be bringing to the attention of the international conservation community for action, starting with this letter.

For all of these reasons, NAN is calling upon the parties to the CBFA to immediately terminate the CBFA and hereby give notice that this must be done on a voluntary (and unconditional) basis by March 18, 2011. This radical and irrational experiment must be abandoned. It is necessary to go back to the drawing board and engage First Nations in a respectful dialogue consistent with the domestic and international obligations of Canada, including those set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. NAN is committed to such an open-ended and respectful dialogue with the conservation organizations, the forest companies, and Canadian governments, but only if the unilateral CBFA is abandoned.

There will be an opportunity to review the collective response of the CBFA signatories at the upcoming NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly and National Forum on First Nations Forest Land Stewardship, being jointly hosted by the Assembly of First Nations and the National Aboriginal Forestry Association, both taking place towards the end of March

2011. We are hoping for an amicable and rightful termination of the CBFA, but we are prepared to look at options available to protect our rights should this not be the case.

Sincerely,
Nishnawbe Aski Nation



Stan Beardy,
Grand Chief

c.c.

NAN Executive Council, First Nations and Tribal Councils
National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, Assembly of First Nations
Steering Committee, National Forum on First Nations Forest Land Stewardship
Regional Chief Angus Toulouse, Chiefs of Ontario
Minister Linda Jeffrey, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Harry Bombay, Executive Director, National Aboriginal Forestry Association
Robin Cardozo, CEO, Ontario Trillium Foundation
Caroline Schultz, Executive Director, Ontario Nature/Federation of Ontario Naturalists
Jamie Lim, President and CEO, Ontario Forest Industries Association
Eric Harris, EdHor, Canadian Geographic Magazine
Ashok Khosla, President, IUCN
Nik Lopoukhine, Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
Aroha Te Pareake Mead, Chair, IUCN Commission on Environment, Economic & Social Policy
Monte Hummel, World Wildlife Canada
Dr. Maurizio Farhan Ferrari, Forest Peoples Programme

APPENDIX H: List of research participants

Name	Position/Affiliation	Date	Location
Alan Young	Executive Director, Canadian Boreal Initiative	December 20, 2012	In person
Andrew Bevan	Executive Director, CBFA Secretariat	January 22, 2013	In person
Dawn Paley	Journalist, Vancouver Media Co-op	February 13, 2013	By Skype
Russell Diabo	Policy Analyst, Wolf Lake First Nation	February 22, 2013	By phone
Harry St. Denis	Chief, Wolf Lake First Nation	February 21, 2013	By phone
Mel Bazil	Activist; Member of Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Nations	March 4, 2013	By Skype
Peggy Smith	Associate Professor, Lakehead University	March 8, 2013	By phone

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