



The Sustainable Development Commissioner, Mr. Paul Lanoie, issues the conclusions of his performance audit concerning silvicultural work – Press Release no. 4

Québec, May 31, 2017 – Today, Ms. Guylaine Leclerc makes public the Spring 2017 Volume. In **Chapter 4**, the Sustainable Development Commissioner makes known the results of his audit concerning silvicultural work carried out at the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP).

Several objectives of the *Sustainable Forest Management Strategy* are unclear. There are few indicators and targets that specify the expected results and allow to measure whether objectives are met. The national wood production strategy that will define what will be produced and how to produce it is under development; some elements are yet to be defined.

The process for selecting silvicultural work does not allow for the best decision making to maximize their benefits. There is no commitment to undertake all the silvicultural treatments defined as conditions for success; for example, many plantations are not adequately maintained. Economic profitability and the impacts of climate change are rarely taken into account when selecting treatments, while budget allocation is not conducive to the best investments.

The MFFP has not justified the high volume (more than 80% in 2015-2016) of contracts awarded by mutual agreement based on long-term (5-year) agreements for non-commercial silvicultural work. This justification is especially relevant considering that this process limits free competition and that large amounts are allocated to it (\$120 million).

Little information is available about the contracts awarded by Rexforêt for non-commercial silvicultural work. The process is more transparent when the MFFP awards contracts, since it has to disclose specific information in the Government of Québec's electronic call for tenders system.

The MFFP does not know whether the price paid for silvicultural work is the market price. Too few public calls for tenders are issued to make it possible to revise the fee schedule based on market price.

The MFFP does not know whether the silvicultural investments of recent decades have yielded the expected results. The few efficiency follow-ups performed are insufficient. The expected results are apparently not always achieved. According to an advisory opinion of the chief forester covering the period 1994-2013, the plantations have seen mixed success.

The Highlights are available at www.vgq.qc.ca. The full report and a video summarizing the audit are available only in French.