In the new forest regime, which came into force in its entirety on April 1, 2013, there are no major changes to the legislative provisions governing private forests, and the main elements introduced in the last 15 years are maintained, in particular those concerning forest producer status and regionalization of the decision-making processes through the regional agencies for private forest development. The Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs has also maintained its financial support programs for forest producers.

Massive Investments

The Québec Government invests approximately $70 million per year to support the efforts of thousands of forest producers who develop their woodlots. These investments are managed by a network that the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs continues to support, while ensuring that Québécois derive the maximum benefit from each dollar invested in the private forest sector. The network of professional and technical expertise developed over the years to assist woodlot owners, promote sound practices and help supply the mills plays an important role in ensuring that the amounts invested are managed properly.

A private forest summit in 2011

Although there are few apparent changes in the Sustainable Forest Development Act, the private forest partners were nevertheless invited to review their methods, so as to ensure that the private forests will contribute more to the social and economic development of the regions.

A private forest summit, known as the Rendez-vous de la forêt privée, was held on May 30, 2011. For the fourth time in the last 15 years, the partners were invited to renew the consensus on the development of Québec’s private forests.

The summit was attended by all the national partners [the Fédération des producteurs de bois du Québec (FPBQ), the Regroupement des sociétés en aménagement forestier du Québec (RESAM), the Conseil de l’industrie forestière du Québec (CIFQ), the Fédération québécoise des municipalités (FQM), the regional agencies for private forest development and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles (now known as the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs)], as well as by many actors from the professional sphere concerned by private forest development. Since the summit, the group has welcomed a new partner, the Association des entrepreneurs en travaux sylvicoles du Québec (AETSQ).
THE BASIS FOR A PARTNERSHIP: SHARED VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The vision developed by the partners:
A private forest that contributes in a sustainable way to the development of Québec and its regions, by creating economic wealth as well as social and environmental benefits.

Five objectives support this vision:
- **Objective 1**: Increase the production of value on private forest land.
- **Objective 2**: Maintain, develop and improve access to the existing network of expertise in order to support the actions of forest owners.
- **Objective 3**: Contribute to the renewal of the silvicultural, technical and professional labour force.
- **Objective 4**: Develop the quality of environmental benefits (biodiversity, water, soils and landscapes).
- **Objective 5**: Seize opportunities generated by the carbon market and play a role in the fight against climate change.

A RENEWED PARTNERSHIP IN THE PRIVATE FORESTS

At the 2011 summit, 30 decisions were adopted for the development and protection of Québec’s private forests. These decisions led to consensus on the following elements:
- The State will maintain its direct and indirect financial assistance.
- The forest industry will continue to make a financial contribution to development for each processed cubic metre of timber from the private forests.
- Stewardship of the renewed partnership will be adjusted to suit the present context and to be more effective.
- The Ministère will join forces with woodlot owners who are willing to commit more time and money, thereby producing a multiplier effect on public investments.
- The Ministère has chosen to recognize the forestry group business model. As a result, field work will be more effective, woodlot owners will be more committed, the State will be guaranteed a better return on its investments, State investments will have a lever effect on other activities in the forest sector, and the entire community will benefit from the multi-sector expertise developed by the groups.
- Given that the Ministère has invested significant amounts of money in recent decades, the agencies will introduce an investment protection policy.
- The Ministère will adjust its programs to reflect new public concerns regarding the forest as a whole, and not just timber production.

This renewed partnership helps to maximize the spin-offs from every dollar invested in the private forests, and lays down a more solid foundation that allows the private forests to continue to be a major source of supply for the forest industry.

The private forests: Some figures:
- Total number of woodlot owners: 129,850
- Total number of certified forest producers: 36,405 (only certified forest producers have access to the Government’s support programs)
- Total productive area: 6,666,800 ha (66,700 km²)
- Registered forest area: 3,003,290 ha (30,000 km²) (these forests belong to certified forest producers, and the programs are implemented on these properties)
- The private forests are located near the wood processing mills and provide between 20% and 23% of all roundwood supplies.
- Proximity to a loyal but ageing labour pool that must now be renewed.
- A network of professional and technical expertise developed over the years to support woodlot owners.
- The private forests are the most productive because they are mainly situated in southern Québec.
- The private forests serve as a showcase for forestry practices, since they are located in inhabited areas, close to the population.

For further information on the private forests, please visit the following website:
[mrn.gouv.qc.ca/forets/privees/index.jsp](mrn.gouv.qc.ca/forets/privees/index.jsp).

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