
Cortex Consultants Inc.

Services to Support Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) & Certification

Ensuring that your organization's management and operational planning systems properly support the due diligence requirements of B.C.'s regulatory environment and third-party certification commitments is integral to practicing good forest stewardship in British Columbia. The challenges when applying stewardship principles and measuring success in meeting sustainability criteria are often at their greatest when resource extraction activities and red-or blue-listed ecosystems or habitats of endangered forest-dependent species overlap.

Staff at Cortex Consultants Inc. are experienced in conducting:

- Status assessments of ecological values and biodiversity on a variety of tenure types (private lands, tree farm licences, timber supply areas).
- Identification of locations known to, or likely to contain species and/or communities at risk, using stand-level inventories, accessible spatial data, or inference from overlays of stand attributes with other ecological data.
- Spatial modelling of habitat characteristics and population dynamics of species of conservation concern in conjunction with forest growth & yield management models.
- Combining current and future estimated indicators of economic, social and environmental values involved in resource management assessments to inform planners of the potential costs and benefits of alternative actions.



Rigorous and comprehensive understanding of the pertinent ecological dynamics and species at risk drives our approach to SFM.

Our approach to sustainable forest management (SFM) assignments is driven by our comprehensive understanding and study of the pertinent ecological dynamics. We undertake rigorous analyses of data and strategic policies based on application of scientific principles driving ecological systems, current decision support technology, and understanding of the criteria and indicators supporting evaluation and monitoring of forest development plans.

Cortex staff are experts in using a variety of GIS, database, simulation and decision support tools in their work. These include [SELES](#) (Spatially Explicit Landscape Event Simulator), [Netica](#)[™], [Remsoft Spatial Planning System](#)[™], [Arc/INFO](#)[™], [SYSTAT](#)[™], as well as a number of programming languages.

SFM Planning Support Services

Successful Sustainable Forestry Management (SFM) planning for forest lands is complex. SFM involves complying with multiple sets of regulations and standards. Successful and forward-looking SFM requires that companies' fulfill several inter-related management objectives for planning on their tenures. It also requires a commitment to and communication of social responsibility.

Cortex can provide expertise in the following areas:

- assisting in the establishment of performance measures and indicators under a specific SFM model, or under a more general hierarchy of principles and criteria for SFM;
- evaluating policies and regulations that apply locally and regionally;
- conducting status analyses of SFM performance measures and indicators on each management unit, or at the regional level;
- assisting licensees with their SFM plans at strategic and operational levels to be consistent with the certification indicators they have committed to;
- forecasting indicators of forest, ecological, and economic condition under alternative management scenarios;
- implementation of on-going planning protocols and tools for SFM;
- design of communication tools; and
- managing consultation processes.

Cortex's suite of analytical tools can be designed to use various constraint hierarchies, inventory data, and policy directions as "scenarios", and project them forward in time. Projections can be calibrated to a known set of standards. Results can be extracted to compare and contrast the various economic and environmental indicators.

Certification Support Services

Cortex can assist companies with both the technical expertise and process management expertise to support performance audits, re-certification applications, or upgrades to certification standards.

Particular services we offer clients are:

- Spatial analyses for assessing ecosystem representation and identifying species and ecosystems at risk.
- Spatial and temporal projections of forest state indicators.
- Evaluation of performance measures and indicators to which you are committed to achieving and are accountable for.

We can assist with assessment of objectives & indicators as required by different certification standards (SFI, CSA Z809-02)

Our services support your certification audits, reregistration, & recertification to new standards

- Pre-audit due diligence checks.
- Risk discovery.
- Evaluations of on-going species monitoring and habitat assessment programs.
- Risk assessments of stand structure, ecosystem representation, and Higher Level Planning landscape strategies on forest lands in the context of current regional plans.
- Organizing training and education in best management practices for field staff.

Cortex 's expertise, suite of analytical tools, and analytical approach can be targeted in several ways to assist your planning and operational foresters fulfill their information requirements for certification activities. We can undertake ecological status assessments at all ecological scales (i.e. ranging from whole tenures, selected sub-sets containing critical values, or individual ecosystems or habitats of concern). We can combine these with spatial projection of development plans forward in time, to evaluate the ability of different corporate "scenarios" to continue to meet certification commitments. Results can be extracted to compare and contrast the various economic and environmental indicators to estimate economic and ecosystem services being provided by your land base.

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