



FREE TO
GROW
IN FORESTRY

FORESTERIE EN
CROISSANCE
LIBRE

DECLARATION OF INTENT

This Declaration aims to rally the executive leaders in Canada's Free to Grow in Forestry Initiative to advance diversity and inclusion within the workplace. It outlines a specific set of actions they intend to take to cultivate a trusting environment where all ideas are welcomed, and employees feel comfortable and empowered to have an open dialogue about diversity and inclusion.

Declaration Intentions

All of the supporting companies/organizations have committed to implementing the following actions within their workplaces. Where they have already implemented one or several of these intentions, they commit to sharing best practices with other companies/organizations.

As leaders of some of North America's largest corporations and associated organizations such as Government Departments or industry associations, as well as smaller family-operated businesses, we collectively manage thousands of employees and play a critical role in ensuring that inclusion is core to our workplace culture and that our businesses and organizations are representative of the communities we serve. Moreover, we know that diversity improves corporate performance, drives growth, enhances employee engagement and is, therefore, good for the economy.

Simply put, organizations and businesses with diverse teams perform better.

We recognize that diversity and inclusion present multifaceted challenges and that we need to focus on these subjects holistically to better engage and support all underrepresented groups within the forest sector. To do this, we believe we also need to address honestly and head-on the concerns and needs of our diverse employees and increase equity for all, including women, visible minorities, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQIA2S, people with disabilities and veterans. Collectively as leaders, we agree that we must do more. This means committing to six goals we believe will catalyze further conversations and actions around workplace diversity and inclusion, allow us to take full advantage of the cultural richness and skills of all, and foster collaboration among our companies and organizations:

1. **We will strive to make our workplaces safe spaces to have complex, and sometimes difficult, conversations about diversity and inclusion:** We will create, promote and maintain environments/ platforms/ and/or forums where our people feel comfortable reaching out to their colleagues to gain greater awareness of each other's experiences and perspectives. By encouraging ongoing dialogue and not tolerating any incongruence with values of openness, we are building trust, encouraging compassion and open-mindedness, and reinforcing our commitment to a culture of inclusivity.



FREE TO
GROW
IN FORESTRY

FORESTERIE EN
CROISSANCE
LIBRE

2. **We will implement and expand training and education on diversity and inclusion:** Experts tell us that we all have unconscious biases – that is human nature. Whether it is unconscious bias education or guiding the organization to practical tools on how to overcome resistance; how to be an inclusive leader or how to be an effective ally, individuals will begin improving their skills and confidence on how to effectively shift the workplace culture toward a more welcoming environment. We will conduct training within our companies or organizations in the form that best fits our specific culture and business. By helping employees recognize and minimize their blind spots and empowering them with skills and knowledge, we aim to facilitate more open and honest conversations.
3. **We will share our experiences on best practices and lessons learned:** Some of the members of the group have established programs and initiatives around diversity and inclusion while others are still developing their strategies and working through what is best for them. Through the Free to Grow in Forestry initiative we will commit to helping other companies and organizations evolve and enhance their current diversity strategies and encourage them to, in turn, share their successes and challenges with others in this group, and beyond where possible.
4. **We will create and share strategic diversity and inclusion plans with our individual organizations or company boards of directors.** We will work with our board of directors (or equivalent governing bodies) through the development and evaluation of concrete, strategic action plans to prioritize and drive accountability around diversity and inclusion. Given the shared responsibility for driving strategies that help companies or organizations thrive, senior leadership, boards and CEOs play an important role in driving action to cultivate inclusive cultures and talent. Engaging the highest level of the company or organization ensures accountability for actions taken.
5. **We also commit to create or begin creating accountability mechanisms within our companies or organizations to track our own progress and to share regular updates in order to catalog effective programs and measurement practices.** We believe that by sharing with and learning from each other, we can strengthen our existing programs and commitments to better serve our employees and society.
6. **We commit to working collaboratively across the forest sector and recognize we are a social ecosystem of leaders who understand that what happens in one part of the forest sector affects the image of entering the sector overall, and that this can influence potential employees.**

We recognize that these six goals are not the complete answer, but we believe they are important, concrete steps toward building more diverse and inclusive workplaces. We hope our list of supporting companies and organizations will grow, and we invite other leaders across Canada's forest sector, partner government departments and non-government agencies, industry associations and supporting companies along the supply chain, to join us.

Finally, we recognize that by working together toward diversity and inclusion within our workplaces, industries, and broader business community, we can cultivate meaningful change for our sector and society.



FREE TO
GROW
IN FORESTRY

FORESTERIE EN
CROISSANCE
LIBRE

Participating Organizations

Western Canada



Alberta
Forest
Products
Association



BC **Forest Safety**



B.C. FIRST NATIONS
FORESTRY COUNCIL



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



Group



INTERFOR

Building Value.



Interior Logging
Association



international



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Trusted to grow.



silvacom™



THE TRUCK LOGGERS
ASSOCIATION

Our strength is in our roots.



West Fraser



Weyerhaeuser



WFCA





FREE TO
GROW
IN FORESTRY

FORESTERIE EN
CROISSANCE
LIBRE

Participating Organizations

Eastern Canada



Supporting Partners

