

Socio-Economic

In the beginning of the third phase the Social Sciences Committee (SSC) developed a social science strategic framework. This strategic framework is intended to provide guidance and direction for the Lake Abitibi Model Forest's social science program. Five research topics: Gap Analysis, Social Analysis, Cultural Analysis, Financial and Economic Analysis, and Perception Analysis, containing a total of 15 specific research projects, were identified by the SSC. At the time of this writing all funded projects are in various stages of completion. Their status will be noted as they are listed. The social sciences committee has revised its strategic plan in December 2004 and introduced a sixth topic titled "Integration" with the 2005-06 work plan, recognizing the need to integrate social science into projects proposed by other LAMF committees.

Linking SEIM (Socio-Economic Impact Model) to Lake Abitibi Model Forest CDIM (Community Development Impact Model) and ACDIM (Aboriginal Community Impact Model)

Following the development of the Community Development Impact Model (CDIM) and the Aboriginal Community Impact Model (ACDIM) in Phase II, it was decided to develop a decision-making support system that would provide each community with expanded and more accurate capacities to estimate key socio-economic impact data based on anticipated changes in benefits derived from a host of economic activities such as forestry, mining and tourism events.

This project involves the linking of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Socio-Economic Impact Model (SEIM) with the LAMF CDIM. This model would touch on the municipal, health, education, industrial, retail, tourism and services sectors.

This tool would provide local decision makers with the ability to regularly request socio-economic and environmental impacts of options under consideration. In this project, individual CDIM data will be developed for the partnering communities separately and then tied together as an interacting cluster, in a format similar to the MNR's SEIM. This model will then be linked to SEIM, a model legislated for use in Ontario's management planning process.

The advantages of linking these systems are:

- Linking the Forest management Units to specific communities expands the utility and usefulness of SEIM results to the many stakeholders
- Linking the two systems will allow for expanding the social, economic and environmental perspectives covered in the CDIM and SEIM systems.
- The integration of the systems opens the possibility of identifying spatial linkages and interactions among communities.

Another advantage of linking the systems together is the possibility of linking any new community into the system. Meetings have been held with the partners and the

contractor developing the model and the company has started work on the mathematical structure of the cluster model. This system will be web driven and will integrate the interactions among the participating communities. The model will be open to the addition of other communities within the region.

Lake Abitibi Model Forest Regional Community Constellation Impact Model (RCCIM)

The LAMF Regional Community Constellation Impact Model (RCCIM) provides northern resource dependent communities with a greater understanding of the magnitude and workings of the socio-economic impacts of a broad spectrum of business activities in northeastern Ontario. Specifically, it does this by measuring the spatial and industrial impacts of resource management decisions in Ontario within the area of interest to the Lake Abitibi Model Forest. The model is made up of intricate computer algorithms that ultimately provide regional communities with increased capacity to measure socio-economic impacts associated with the complex pattern of land use within the industrial forest. Resource-based economic sectors analyzed in the model include the forest, mining, hunting, fishing and commercial tourism sectors. The model allows for the analysis of economic impacts of an event or initiative on the entire regional, and on each individual community (or groups of communities) linked to the model.

The software for the model itself is internet-based and is physically located on a dedicated server at the LAMF office in Cochrane. The software is password protected so that partners involved in the Model have secure and confidential access to the interface.

Each of our local communities has access to the model. Training has been provided, and the different communities can access each other's data and information, and can work together to build joint projects.

The RCCIM now allows analysis of economic activities and initiatives in nine communities including Timmins, Iroquois Falls, Cochrane, Moose Cree First Nation, Kapuskasing, Hearst, Mattice, Constance Lake First Nation and Hornepayne. Allowing integration and linking of these communities through the model opens the possibility of identifying spatial linkages and interactions relating to a multitude of goods and services

This model is now truly comprehensive in its capabilities. It can measure and predict the impact of all kinds of events such as a mill shutdown, or a new business venture, or the construction of a new super-hospital on the economies of all regional communities, not just one. This is a real advance in socioeconomic modeling capability. It is also very helpful in the development of forest management plans.

Making the Regional Community Constellation Impact Model operational, accessible and integrated among nine regional communities in the Lake Abitibi Model Forest has been a solid achievement. The RCCIM will provide communities and forest managers with a better understanding of the interactions and inter-dependencies of their economies, resulting in more informed decision making, and socially sustainable forest management.

New Projects in Progress:

Identifying Local and Indigenous Knowledge Traditions

Gap Analysis in the Research (Social Science and Natural Science) at the Lake Abitibi Model Forest

Economic and Social Profile of LAMF Area

Community Culture and Social Structure

Perception Analysis: Planners' and Managers' Perceptions about Social Science Scientists and their Research

Comprehensive Forest Sustainability Analysis of Ecological Forestry Practices in the Northeastern Boreal Forest of Ontario