



## Advancing the role of communications, education, and capacity building in the future of forestry: Communities of practice and community-based learning

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The evolution from tree- and stand-level prescriptions over a rotation to estate- and watershed-level plans over many generations requires individuals and teams to understand and apply scientific, indigenous, and experiential knowledge to address complex issues. The solution must achieve the business and landscape objectives and stand up to public scrutiny while being both practical and cost effective. Communication, education, and capacity building at a community level are critical to defining forestry solutions. Once a discipline only for professional foresters, forestry is now a community of practice represented by forestry

professionals. This community includes—but is not limited to—foresters, engineers, biologists, ecologists, technologists, indigenous knowledge keepers, hydrologists, geologists, and geomorphologists as well as economists and social scientists. Forestry professionals must be able to practically apply knowledge acquired through institutional training and education, as well as knowledge and skills acquired through practice and experience. They must be able to reach out to the knowledge sector when faced with unknowns. The knowledge sector must be able to ethically respond as a community of practice to the demands for new science and continuous community-based learning. This paper investigates the role of the knowledge sector in contributing to communications, education, and capacity building for forestry professionals as well as forest-based communities. The concept of ethical commercialization of knowledge and social capital is also introduced.

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