

Forest sector contributions to climate change mitigation: opportunities from Canada to California

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North America's forest sector is expected to contribute to mitigating climate change by reducing sources or increasing sinks of atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHG). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has emphasized that assessments of the mitigation potential in the forest sector should be based on estimates of carbon stock changes and the resulting GHG emissions in forest ecosystems, in the harvested wood product (HWP) sector and of the avoided emissions that result from the substitution of emissions-intensive products such as steel and concrete with HWPs. Integrated assessments conducted in Canada that follow these principles indicate a significant and increasing potential for climate change mitigation in the forest sector, provided that mitigation activities are implemented soon. The analyses also demonstrate the need to avoid simplifying accounting assumptions such as instant oxidation of HWP or carbon neutrality of bioenergy when designing climate effective mitigation portfolios. Kurz's research also finds that the climate mitigation benefits increase through cascading use of wood products derived from sustainably managed forests and used to maximize the avoided emissions and longevity of the HWP. Current research also focuses on the interaction between climate change impacts on forest ecosystems and regionally-differentiated forest sector mitigation portfolios that are designed to anticipate climate change impacts, and meet both adaptation and mitigation objectives.

Dr. Werner Kurz is a Senior Research Scientist at the Canadian Forest Service (Natural Resources Canada) in Victoria, British Columbia. He leads the development of Canada's National Forest Carbon Monitoring, Accounting and Reporting System and the Forest Carbon Management Project of the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions. His research focuses on carbon dynamics in forests and harvested wood products and the opportunities of the forest sector to contribute to climate change mitigation. Dr. Kurz co-authored six reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). He serves as adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and at Simon Fraser University. He obtained his PhD in Forest Ecology from UBC and an honorary doctorate from the Swedish Land University. This talk is hosted by the of the University of California, Berkeley Center for Forestry as part of the William

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