



SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Biomass Conversion Centre

MRC Pontiac

June 2016

IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO STIMULATE THE PONTIAC ECONOMY

THE PONTIAC MUST REINVENT ITSELF



As in other Québec regions living off forest resources, the Pontiac was hard hit by the industry crisis. Inevitably, it was :

- **jobs** and the **economic activity** of the region that paid the price for this forestry crisis.

Aware of the threat to the Pontiac's economic future, MRC management and Council exercised their responsibility to promote economic renewal in the Pontiac.

Mission

WORK ON THE TERRITORY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ESTABLISH
THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO FOSTER:

- ♦ The **competitiveness** of its industries;
- ♦ **Sustainable** initiatives for the benefit of its citizens.

ONE VISION, ONE STRATEGY

In 2009, the MRC Pontiac began a strategic planning process, in collaboration with the Pontiac *Société d'aide au développement des communautés* (SADC), the *Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et des Exportations* (MDEIE), as well as Economic Development Canada (DEC), to redefine the region's socioeconomic future and identify the orientations needed to relaunch its economy. The ***Vision Pontiac 2020 Strategic Plan*** was the result of this initiative.



From ***Vision Pontiac 2020*** arose a strategic development and action plan aimed at helping the Pontiac develop its five main economic sectors:

- ◆ Tourism
- ◆ Commerce and industry
- ◆ Forests and environment
- ◆ Culture and social community
- ◆ Agriculture and agribusiness

The objectives of this strategy are:

- **Job creation;**
- Direct and indirect **economic benefits;**
- Implementing innovative and sustainable initiatives that will **position the MRC** as a leader and enhance the **competitiveness** and **profitability** of its industries.

FOREST AND DEVELOPMENT, A «NATURAL» PAIRING IN THE PONTIAC

Industry and forestry development remain priorities because of their extraordinary potential in the short, medium and long-term:

*«In 2020, the forest and natural environment sector will remain one of the major pillars of our economy through the innovation and diversification of its uses. The MRC Pontiac will stand out for the variety and quality of its natural resources, and its skilled and qualified workforce. » – Excerpt from the ***Vision Pontiac 2020 Strategic Plan****

Having played a prominent role in the Pontiac economy and having been part of the region's socioeconomic landscape for centuries, MRC leaders instinctively recognized this development opportunity as a way to implement the Pontiac's strategy for:

- **Increasing** the region's competitiveness;
- **Aligning** the use of forest resources to the principles of sustainable development and government guidelines;
- **Promoting** the forest and its skilled workforce.

THE BIOMASS CONVERSION CENTRE: AN OPPORTUNITY... A FIRST KEY PROJECT FOR THE FUTURE

THE FORESTRY BIOMASS CONVERSION CENTRE (CVB) IS AT ONCE:

- ♦ An answer to the orientations of the Government, and the needs and expectations of local stakeholders;
- ♦ A clear expression of the objectives of the *Vision Pontiac 2020* development strategy.

This multifaceted project is an integrated network of **five (5) production units** that make full use of the forestry biomass, such as **pulpwood** (which is used for pulp and paper production) to:

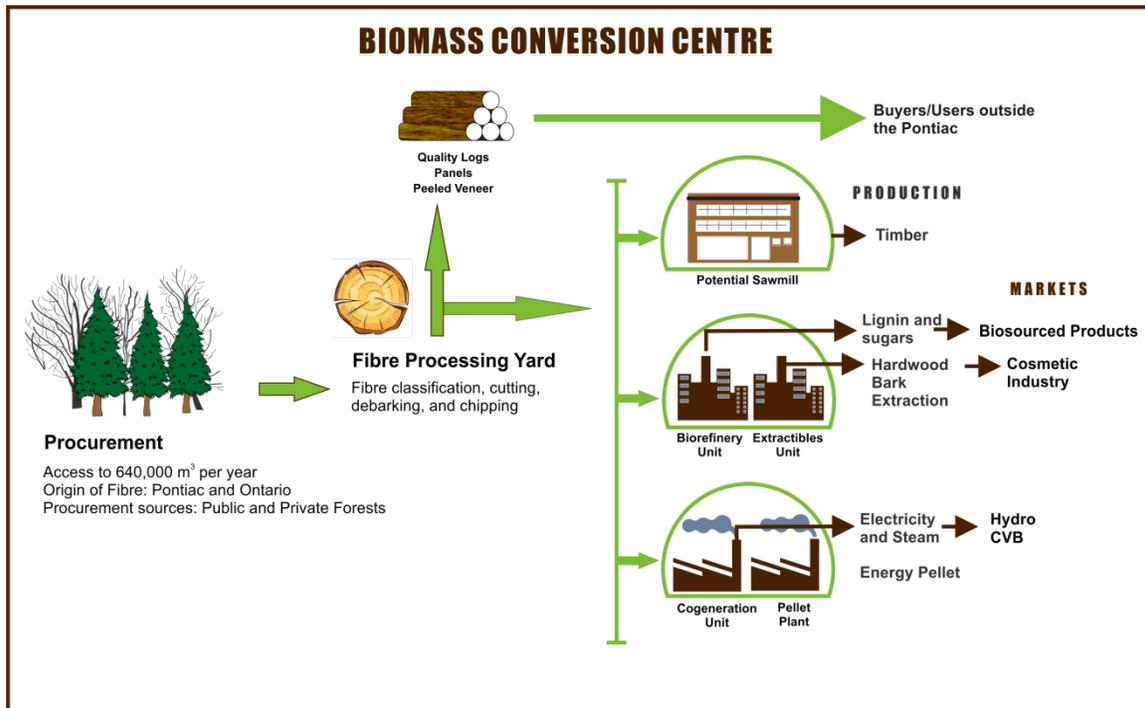
- **Extract « green » bioproducts** used to manufacture everyday consumer products (textile, paint, food, cosmetics, etc.) and where market opportunities are growing because of their added value;
- **Produce electricity and steam** necessary for the CVB to be energy self-sufficient;
- **Manufacture energy wood pellets** for household and industrial use.



THE CVB's five (5) units of production:

- A **fibre processing yard** to prepare the logs based on quality and intended use.
- A **cogeneration unit** to produce the energy required to operate the CVB;
- A **biorefinery unit** with high-value added commercial opportunities subjected to growing demand;
- A **bark extraction unit** to extract fibre used in the manufacturing of value-added products;
- An energy **pellet production unit**.

The **first unit of production** to be implemented is the **biorefinery**, which will produce glucose (C-6) and xylose (C-5) type sugars and lignin.



THE CVB, A PROJECT THAT'S COME A LONG WAY!

The following steps have been taken to confirm the feasibility of the CVB and assess its potential:

- ◆ Identified the bio-compounds to extract;
- ◆ Assessed the processing technologies likely to be integrated into the CVB;
- ◆ Identified market opportunities;
- ◆ Initiated talks with potential buyers of bio-compounds;
- ◆ Completed the CVB development plan;
- ◆ Scouted sites for the implementation of the CVB;
- ◆ Established an executive committee to manage and advance the project;
- ◆ Prospected potential investors and promoters.

The next short-term steps:

- ◆ Select the technology;
- ◆ Continue talks and reach agreements with investors and promoters.

AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST INDUSTRY: THE CVB MEETS THESE EXPECTATIONS

In a joint statement on March 24, 2016, Minister Laurent Lessard confirmed that the *Forum innovation Bois* would be held on October 31, 2016. Leading forest industry stakeholders will come together at this event to:

- Define a shared vision for the future of the forest industry;
- Identify solutions to ensure the sustainability of the forest industry in Quebec;
- Find ways of transforming and modernizing the industry through **innovation**.

INNOVATION: A TARGET ♦ A CHALLENGE ♦ AN ESSENTIAL CONCEPT

“It is imperative that we focus on innovation to relaunch the forestry sector.” — Laurent Lessard, Minister, Forests, Fauna and Parks.

Improving production will no longer be enough! In addition to thinking about the industry based on the principles of sustainable development, *“meaning to develop to meet current needs without compromising the next generation’s ability to meet its own needs,”* we will have to do more with less, find new markets, maximise the resource, skills, and needs. Among possible approaches that will be studied at the Forum, there are:



- Developing new uses for sawing by-products;
- Using wood compounds to create bioproducts;
- Developing the bioenergy sector to lower greenhouse gases, an initiative identified in the *2030 Energy Policy*.

THE MRC PONTIAC’S STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

As mentioned, the MRC has a role to play in its region’s economic development. It is responsible for identifying, planning and making it easier to implement a development strategy that will make the region competitive again and generate sustainable economic benefits for its citizens.

The MRC Pontiac believes in the CVB’s potential and takes on with conviction the role of facilitator to:

1. Increase **awareness** of the project;
2. Attract **investors** and **promoters** who will ensure its deployment and implementation.

These steps are **ESSENTIAL** to obtaining local, regional, industrial, economic and political support, and for carrying out the project.

The MRC’s short- and medium-term action plan contains:

1. A **media relations campaign** to assert the project's potential and the proactiveness of the MRC, as well as demonstrate that a project such as the CVB presents solid future prospects locally, but equally so on a larger scale;
2. An **awareness tour** with stakeholders and decision makers to garner the necessary support to open the doors to the CVB.

The MRC Pontiac is determined to put the CVB in place and to finally begin deploying its *Vision Pontiac 2020 Strategic Plan*, restart its economy, and reinvigorate the region in order to retain and attract citizens. The CVB project will not only serve the interests of the Pontiac, but its usefulness and impact will reverberate across the Outaouais, the forest industry, and ultimately Québec.