

Canadian Institute of Forestry/Institut forestier du Canada  
“Voice of Forest Practitioners”

## *Policy Paper*

# *Guiding the Conduct of Members of the CIF/IFC*

---

### **Introduction**

People join the Canadian Institute of Forestry/Institut forestier du Canada (CIF/IFC) for a wide variety of reasons. The CIF/IFC is a volunteer organization and members join, because they know it is a worthwhile organization that does useful things. Members, share a common set of values and a commitment to forest sustainability. In fact, most members are actively involved in some aspect of forest resource management and believe strongly in what they do and how they do it. Most became involved in forestry because they love being outdoors and because they respect and enjoy the forest environment. It is a great place to work and play. It provides employment but it also offers fresh air, recreation and peace.

CIF/IFC members are already guided in their behaviour by who they are, by what they have learned in school and by what they have learned on the job. In offering guidance to members in the form of a Code of Ethics, the CIF/IFC hopes to assist newer members who may lack experience and exposure to questions of ethics. The Code of Ethics also protects the public from members who do not share the concern and higher goals of members. The Code of Ethics however, is mainly there as a source of inspiration and guidance for the vast majority of members. These are the members who constantly seek to conduct themselves with the highest regard for the stewardship of the forest resource, the most favourable conduct towards the public and other members, and who constantly seek to be the best in all aspects of their working lives.

### **The Basis for the CIF/IFC Code of Ethics**

The CIF/IFC has a mission to advance the stewardship of Canada’s forest resources, to promote competence among those practicing forestry and to foster public awareness of forestry issues. Further to this mission, the values and beliefs of the CIF/IFC provide an additional basis for guiding the behaviour of members. Those values and beliefs suggest the following:

Members should have an intimate knowledge and understanding of Canada’s forests.

The stewardship practiced by members must be based on an understanding of ecological principles to ensure that the criteria of ecological integrity and function are maintained.



Members understand that a wide range of forest management alternatives is possible.

Members understand that the use of our forests should be based on informed public dialogue.

The Code of Ethics addresses those key elements of the Mission and Values and Beliefs of the Institute in four main sections:

Responsibility to the public good. This includes good forest stewardship, inspiring the public's confidence and understanding of forestry and ensuring public safety;

Responsibility to the profession. This includes improving the practice of forestry and ensuring the competency of members;

Responsibility to the employer or client. This includes consistent, professional and faithful service, understanding the consequences of one's actions, maintaining confidentiality and avoiding conflicts of interest; and

Responsibility to other members and professionals. This includes fairness, providing support and avoiding and correcting questionable practice.

### **Factors Affecting CIF/IFC Members in the Practice of Forestry**

CIF/IFC members represent a unique and, at the same time, a broad spectrum of expertise and interests in the practice of forestry. As mentioned, membership is voluntary and includes woodlot owners, academics, scientists, politicians, forest technicians and technologists, foresters and even those who are not trained or directly involved in forest management but have an interest in forestry. To describe this wide range of people and expertise, the term "forest practitioner" is meant to capture as broad a definition as possible.

Since the CIF/IFC is a national organization, issues, legislation and policy at the local, provincial, national and international levels affect its members. Such factors include the ethical requirements of provincial professional and technical associations along with the legal requirements of the various Acts, Regulations and Policies of the jurisdiction in which CIF/IFC members work. International organizations, conventions and other arrangements, to which Canada is a signatory, also have the potential to affect the way CIF/IFC members practice forestry both in Canada and abroad.

Given this unique membership and set of factors, the creation of the CIF/IFC Code of Ethics required the consideration of existing Codes of Ethics at the provincial, national



and international levels. To this end, Codes of Ethics and Practice from several organizations were reviewed and information from them was used to create the CIF/IFC Code of Ethics. The organizations included: The Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters; The Alberta Registered Professional Foresters Association; The Ontario Professional Foresters Association; The Quebec Order of Forest Engineers; The Association of Registered Professional Foresters of New Brunswick; and The Society of American Foresters.

The CIF/IFC Code of Ethics also recognizes that CIF/IFC members mainly carry out their duties within various provincial jurisdictions and that they must be aware of and should abide by the Codes of Ethics and Practice as set out by provincial professional and technical bodies. This means that those CIF/IFC members, who are also governed by the Codes of Ethics of their own professional and technical associations, have at least two sets of Codes of Ethics to guide their behaviour.

Given the voluntary nature of CIF/IFC membership, disciplinary action against members found to be in violation of the Code of Ethics may present some challenges. However, CIF/IFC members are expected to take great pride in our forest resources and their stewardship. As such, in their approach to the practice of forestry they will strive to ensure the highest possible standards are maintained and encouraged. All CIF/IFC members therefore, will adhere to the Code of Ethics and will take the necessary steps to ensure proper conduct in themselves and others.

### **The CIF/IFC**

The Canadian Institute of Forestry / Institut forestier du Canada (CIF/IFC) is a national voice of forest practitioners. The CIF/IFC, formed in 1908, represents members who are foresters, forest technologists and technicians, educators, scientists and others with a professional interest in forestry. The Institute's mission is "*to provide national leadership in forestry, promote competence among forestry professionals, and foster public awareness of Canadian and international forestry issues.*"

*We are people with a professional interest in forestry, working in government, industry, academic and consulting fields. Our members use their education, training, and experience to help manage the forests of Canada and to make the Canadian public aware of forestry.*

April 2001

*This CIF/IFC Information paper was prepared by CIF/IFC members through the CIF/IFC Standing Committee on Policy Development. The CIF/IFC gratefully acknowledges the support of the Forest and Science Technology Board and comments of external reviewers in preparing this paper.*