



The Clear Cut: Year in Review

Janet Sumner

Welcome to the Clear Cut.

[Music]

Janet Sumner

Hi, I'm Janet Sumner, Executive Director at Wildlands League.

Kaya Adleman

And I'm Kaya Adleman, Carbon Manager at Wildlands League.

Janet Sumner

Wildlands League is a Canadian conservation organization, working on protecting the natural world.

Kaya Adleman

[*The Clear Cut*](#) is bringing to you the much-needed conversation on Canadian Forest Management, and how we can better protect one of Canada's most important ecosystems as our forests are reaching a tipping point.

Janet Sumner

Good morning, Kaya.

Kaya Adleman



Good morning. And this will be live at the end of the year. So, I hope you've been enjoying the holidays.

Janet Sumner

Yes. Well, yes, it will definitely be live by then, because we won't be coming back to record, We're both going on holiday this week for various year end celebrations.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, I guess I'll correct myself. I hope you *will* enjoy the holidays when, will have enjoyed, been enjoying the holidays when this goes live.

Janet Sumner

Yeah. Yeah. And however you celebrate. I mean, it's a time to, I mean, I always see the new year as a time to reflect and I usually start gearing up maybe a week or two weeks as I described to my niece, if I'm going to make any changes, I try to start planting those about two weeks before so that I kind of run into the new year rather than just starting dead on the new year. That's my secret for any lasting success. So yeah. Do you have any recommendations for your new year, Kaya?

Kaya Adleman

Like resolutions?

Janet Sumner

Yeah.

Kaya Adleman

Or things to aim for?

Janet Sumner

Or whatever you call them. Some people don't want to call them resolutions.



Kaya Adleman

I think I would like to. I've been kind of back and forth into running a bit. Every year around American Thanksgiving they have this 8K run in my town, or in my their surrounding communities, host a Thanksgiving run. And I ran it once when I was in high school and I would like to do it again next year and be more consistent with my running schedule because I actually do really enjoy running, but sometimes especially living in a colder climate, it's hard to run outside in the winter when there's snow and ice on the ground. But maybe becoming more consistent or I see some people also invest in running shoes that have a lot of traction on the bottom for the outdoors. So that might be something to look into. And then every year I also have the New Year's resolution or New Year's goal to floss my teeth more. And I never I never follow through on that. And I always get yelled at by my dentist every six months, but I'm going to try to stick to it again. And hopefully it'll actually take shape this year.

Janet Sumner

Two really, really good habits. And bless you for doing that on the running. I actually do want to do a little bit more running this year, but not doing it outside. I'm going to the gym for that. But I started doing some weightlifting and so I'm, I'm actually hoping to keep that up. And the running part is so that I can actually do more or be a better soccer referee. I started doing a working at doing some games as a soccer referee a couple of years ago, and I'd like to just sort of improve and learn more about that, and kind of round out my Saturdays with that. So that's my goal for the new year. And yeah, I've already, as I said, I've already started on both of those because I, I like starting the new year with those kind of already moving. It's kind of like get the momentum and then just keep going, you know. And of course I have some resolutions for work. We want to branch out into, or maybe make bigger some of the areas that we already work in. Working out a little bit more, hopefully on the Great Lakes. That would be one of the areas. And then we've got some things that we want to do on forestry for sure. You know, kind of thinking about the podcast, definitely wanting to do a few more things about the podcast and maybe we'll talk about those a little bit later, because I do, we do, have you and I both talked about some of the goals for the podcast and where we're going. It's more, more the topics that we want to cover and where we want to get into. So, so we'll maybe do that. But yeah, work is always very exciting.

Kaya Adleman

Yes.

Janet Sumner



And I'm really looking forward to some good things this coming year.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, I think for me, I just want to add this in here. Work related. I think one of, I think one of our joint goals for the podcast is to expand our community of listeners that we've kind of cultivated this year. And so this is my plug. If you want to help us achieve that, then, you know, share the podcast to your friends, recommend it to someone who you think would like to become a part of our listener group. Yeah, and hopefully we can keep growing.

Janet Sumner

Yeah. What do you geek out on? I mean, we both look at the stats as they come in and we get fascinated by well, but personally I get fascinated by the fact that we're now on five continents. Okay, Antarctica, I get it. We can't reach, you know, or maybe there's a slight chance of reaching Antarctica, but...and we still haven't had we haven't had Africa. That's the only continent that we're not on. But I gave a big round of applause just here at home when I saw that we had somebody in Australia and I was kind of, yay, sort of. So I sort of geek out on how many different places. What's, what's your stat or fact that makes you kind of do a little jump for joy or happy to answer when you see the stats?

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, I actually, I also really enjoy looking at the locations and I do it also somewhat of a fact checker or just making sure the people like my parents are also listening. So I'll always look for Montclair, New Jersey. Is that on there? Have they listened yet? So, I do check that, but I also think it's kind of cool to see, I don't know, like the percentage of what the most popular episode is. And on some of the streaming platforms, you can even see for how long people have tuned in for, if there is a drop off. And I think that's really helpful for me to kind of gauge what people are interested in, what people are liking and listening to. And I think that kind of statistic will just help us continue to put out the best possible content and the stories that people want to hear the most. So...

Janet Sumner

Yeah. I mean, right now we've been covering stories because we find them fascinating and we know people that we can talk to and get on the show. We have had a couple of recommendations, which is interesting and so we're going to try to follow up on those. Of course, it's time and it's money. And so, again, if you can help us with the podcast, that would be really great. But getting out there and talking



to a few more people and we have some goals around that, and maybe we'll do what we're supposed to do on this, on this podcast, and then we'll talk about what some of those goals are.

[Music]

Janet Sumner

Today's episode, what we're here to do is do a recap because we find we get into the conversations with our various guests and some of them are quite intense. I mean, we've done some great episodes, like the ones with The Honorable Harvest with David Flood and the conversations with Harvey, you know, being the bull in the Nature China shop, that kind of thing. They're really delectable conversations that you can just really want to make a full meal of. And so, we enjoy that very much. But every once in a while, we need to kind of stand back and say, okay, what have we been hearing? Let's gather our thoughts. Let's think about this and do a bit of a recap both for us and hopefully, hopefully for our audience. At least that's what the statistics are saying, that the audience members are liking it. And one of the reasons that we want to do that is because it, sometimes you don't hear things the first time around. Sometimes it becomes more clear the second time around or as we focus in on those. And so this is our recap. This is our reflection episode.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, I think that's always good to have.

Janet Sumner

Okay, well, let's dive in. You've got some places that you want to take us. And just so everybody knows, Kaya's the mastermind behind putting this together. I sit in the chair and have a conversation with Kaya and then she comes back and it's like 'Oh!, look, she's done all this work and out of the music and made it all sing'. And today she's putting a script up, not a script, but a selection of parts of other episodes that we've done. And so, we're going to reflect on some of those clear, moments of clarity that Kaya has found.

Kaya Adleman



Yeah. I don't think you would want, to hear me at least, read or rehearse script because I'm not a very good actress.

Janet Sumner

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Kaya Adleman

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Kaya Adleman

All right. So, one of my favorite moments of the past couple of episodes that we've done with David Flood, who is an Indigenous forester, and he is the head of Wahkohtowin Development, which is kind of a social enterprise, Indigenous-led that kind of works on land management resource issues in Ontario. And Janet, you just mentioned the Honorable Harvest. So, and I really love this moment from David where he talks about harvesting or managing the forest honorably, just as in traditional Indigenous ways. When they harvest animals, you know, for food, for medicine, they really maximize what they can use and they don't just pick and choose the parts of the animal that they like and waste the rest. And relating that to forestry, it's about utilizing the forest in a way that's sustainable and not wasting anything. Not just throwing away pulp chips or things that could be used in a way that we could leave other things be.

David Flood

But can we actually, as we would say when we harvest the moose, maximize the proper utilization of the animals throughout its purpose. The bone has marrow, right? The gut is a food. The skin can turn into hides, right? Don't forget to eat the nose and the tongue. You know, there's tallow that can be made from the animal that becomes long lasting into mixing our medicines. And so similarly with the, you know, the honorable harvest and on the forest land base. Right?



Janet Sumner

So, what I liked about this quote or this section of what David was talking about is that it came up because he was discussing the fact that they don't have a destination for the hardwood that they have on the forest. So they go in and they cut and they're taking the softwood, and he recognizes that when you're in the forest and you're taking from the forest or you're harvesting in the forest, it would be better off if you could have a usage of all the parts of the forest. And so that would maximize it and thereby potentially reduce your footprint because you wouldn't have to be going over such a large geographic area. And I mean, I don't know if that's ultimately going to be better, but certainly I know that getting to a lighter footprint, and Francois Dufresne talked about this in his episode as well, is that this idea that I think he said it as it's important to think about what can the forest provide and then build an economy around that.

Francois Dufresne

So instead of pushing forest management into commodities with one or two or three species that are coniferous like spruce and fir, we can actually look at what the forest can provide or sustain naturally and more responsibly for future generation by actually adapting our economic opportunities with those values.

Janet Sumner

And so, I've always thought that that was actually pretty important. And that's similar to, it's almost like the two worldviews are both saying the same thing. Two different people, obviously. Right? But Francois and David are both saying the same thing, that it's like, look at the forest and figure out what's the economic opportunities and what can it provide rather than just trying to maximize the few products that you need for your particular mill. And what are the other products that you could be harvesting that would provide economic benefit? And then how do you bring all that together in a way that it's honorable. And so, I like where he's going with that.

Kaya Adleman

And two things to add to that. The first is David also talks about the honorable harvest as there's this rule of threes.

David Flood

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And back to the construct of generally living, living inherently by the notion of thirds. So one thing I was told by an elder was, you know, you go up to a blueberry bush as an example, and there's like tons of blueberries, right? So you're really excited about that. Or maybe there's very few blueberries. But the point is, when you go and harvest off that plant, you take a third for yourself, you leave a third for your relations, and then you leave a third for maintenance of that biodiversity that's needed to go forward.

Janet Sumner

And I loved that because he started out with, let's say you get there and there's a whole bunch of blueberries. But then he said, well, what happens if you get there and there's not that many blueberries? You still have to go by a third. You still have to leave a third there. And yes, you share with all your relations and the creatures that are there that also need the blueberries. Right? So it's such a thoughtful approach. A third, a third, a third. Right? So yeah, I really liked that piece of wisdom as well from David. That was good.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah and it drives into this, both the what Francois is talking about and what David is talking about and what we've heard time and time again throughout the different episodes and guests who have come on the podcast, is this idea to look at forests as a holistic, whole system instead of just something that you can be harvesting fiber from.

[Music]

Janet Sumner

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Kaya Adleman

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Janet Sumner

Yeah, I mean this harkens back to, it starts with the very frame that we started out at the beginning when we talked to Dr. Wood and also Dave Pearce, who's in our shop. And they both talked about we kind of, started down this path of doing harvesting and doing forestry and we said, well, you can see trees as far as the eye can see. And so therefore we're going to figure out how big a mill we want to build and then we're going to feed it. And now we're kind of, sort of in this catch 22 because we built these mills to take on a certain amount and they are, but is it the right economic model? And it's probably no surprise to anybody else's, listen to the podcast, but, I've been thinking for a long time, do we need to actually transition some of our economic models around forestry? So we've got long term economic health for forest dependent communities and jobs, etc. because if we don't and we start to, you know, deplete what we have for these mills, both the forest is suffering right now, but also the fact that it's not going to be a gravy train that you can ride forever.

Kaya Aldeman

One of the other points that Francois mentions is he's talking about kind of the implications or the consequences of the way that we're currently doing forestry and we've also talked about how there's this distinction between deforestation and forest degradation.

Francois Dufresne

Deforestation is not necessarily a problem, but the forest degradation is certainly an issue. We, fragmentation of our forests because we do push for high volume and high area impact across the boreal and degradation will become an issue and it already is an issue through fragmentation and the massive network of forest roads, which has very clear consequences today with our forests becoming drier, more subject to fires, we've sort we've seen that this year

Kaya Adleman

Canada claims to have near 0% deforestation because the forestry that is happening in Canada is not considered a land use change because the trees are being harvested are already on a designated forest management unit and they're not being converted, cutting down to be converted into another use like an agricultural plot or they're not being cut down to build a shopping mall. So that's kind of this loophole that's come up time and time again to distract from seeing the implications of our forest management practices actually on the ground. And so, Francois makes this distinction between deforestation and



forest degradation, which he says is absolutely an issue in Canada, because the way that we're doing forestry leaves logging roads on the landscape that have implications for how the forest grows back there. The forestry that we're doing is making forests less resilient to major wildfires, which we've seen a lot of this summer. So, he definitely is raising this point as someone who works with the forest industry, which is actually really interesting. The activities, the anthropogenic activities that are occurring on our managed forest landscape are definitely having a real impact on biodiversity, the ecosystems and also the climate.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, I think...So I'm just going to say outright, I actually think Canada has deforestation and, and not to play any games with international definitions of deforestation, but I think most Canadians would think, okay, if you have an area that used to have a forest on it and it doesn't have a forest on it now, I would think that's deforestation to most people. But the international rules say if you cut it all down and it will grow back in 60 or 70 years or we'll have trees there, then it's not been deforested. So, in my mind, we're on a kind of a clock that's ticking. Both for biodiversity and for climate change. I mean, we've got climate change goals that we're going to, that the world has said, you know, many countries around the world. The COP has just finished. We know that we have to hit our climate targets. And if we don't do it well, we are already seeing some of the if we don't. We're seeing wildfires. We're seeing droughts. All of that has been predicted through the climate models. And it only gets worse as the carbon emissions keep going up and the atmosphere keeps warming. So, we really have to hit these targets. That means that 2050 timeline is really important. So, from my perspective, when we go in and we clearcut an area and that area will not be regrown. Generally speaking, in Canada, it's a much slower growing cycle. So you're looking at an area that has been clearcut, not coming back to its full stand height, if you will. I wouldn't even say it's full rich biodiversity richness because it doesn't. You've turned it into a managed forest. So if you cut it today that carbon won't be fully regrown by 2050, number one. Number two, you've altered an intact, potentially an intact system unless you're going in and harvesting a second growth, but you're going into those intact, especially if you're expanding into new intact areas, you're converting that into a clearcut and then it's not regrown by 2050 and you've impacted the biodiversity. And we've got a commitment also to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to bend the curve by 2030. So, you will have actually increased the impact to biodiversity. And when will that start to come back? When will that start to change? And I think that could be argued quite reasonably that it's going to be well past the 2050 timeline. So on both of those things, I think we can, you know, respect that there are international definitions. We have to go by those. So technically we don't have deforestation, but I for one believe that we should really start, you know, telling the truth, speaking about what is actually happening. If you cut trees today, they're not, certainly in Ontario and Quebec and many other parts of the country, British Columbia, those trees are not coming back into their full height and strength in a 60, 70, 80-year time frame. And I know one of the episodes I want to do in the future, is there's just been

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some articles that came out about huge conversions that are happening in New Brunswick forests and then thousands of hectares being converted into great big berry areas. And that's, to my point about why we may not see that is that the experts go in and they, you know, companies are required to, and the provinces require this, that we go back and we check on the forest, you know, maybe at ten years at the what's called the free to grow benchmark. And the assumption is those areas are going to come back. Yeah, it's berry bushes right now but they'll come back. And nobody's going back and checking. And that's a problem from two perspectives. It's a problem from the fiber perspective because that fiber is not going to be there. So, your calculations are going to be off. It also means that you're changing the forest and you've got now maybe more open areas or you have you have more edge effect, what you know, that's called. And so you just have a lot of things that have changed. And I would say it's similar that when you see it turned into a mixed hardwood forest, like the conifer dominant boreal becomes a mixed hardwood, and we've seen cases of that and we're not seeing a full regeneration to the forest type that was there. And I think David also mentions this.

David Flood

We can have a green forest. Just go down south. They're still operating forestry down south of us. It's at a different scale and it's different product lines, you know, and there's, it interacts with urban sprawl, but there's a lot of the green, but it's not it's not the same as is what we've asked ourselves to commit to. And that is a healthy ecosystem.

Janet Sumner

You look at forests down south and they're still green, so they're forest, but they're not coming back to the forest type that you had necessarily, or the full range of biodiversity that you had. So, it's definitely now a managed system and it's not as robust or as healthy as it once was.

[Music]

Janet Sumner

And what we've also seen is it's not just mixed hardwoods but turning it into grasslands. But as somebody going back and checking on that, are we monitoring that? Are we seeing any of that? And I don't know enough about British Columbia Forestry, but I would highly suspect that if you're going in and taking some of the intact old growth, that you're not going to get those €500 seeders back in, you know, 20, 30 years. Right? You're going to be looking at changes to the forest there as well. And so part



of our challenges is that we do have monitoring to some extent, but it's, if you only go back at ten years to make sure that there was regrowth happening. Yeah. And I don't know that provinces have a ton of money to be measuring, well, how did all of this change? And without the knowledge and without that transparency, we can't be, and that's why we want to do this podcast, because we actually want to start talking about some of these issues and say, well, let's have that conversation. Let's talk about and bring people forward. And as I said, that logging scars work that we did, it's several years old now but we continue to get reports back from people who are forestry professionals who had never gone back to check on that. I mean, the work that we did, we actually talked to two auditors about it beforehand and they said, yeah, well, you know, we're usually called back in to audit the efficacy of our regrowth plan. We didn't realize that 30 years on these trees weren't there or it had changed to a mixed hardwood or whatever. And that means that, that's a big impact for forestry companies, if they're trying to get certain types of trees and you've gone from conifer dominant to mixed hardwood. You've changed the composition.

Kaya Adleman

I like that you brought up one of the other issues, whether or not people are going back in and monitoring the regrowth of the forest. And I think this might be a good segue into the next section where David Flood talks about The Guardian Program and The Guardians at Wahkohtowin, which, if you may remember, it's kind of an Indigenous youth movement or youth program that helps reconnect Indigenous youth back to their traditional territories.

David Flood

If waterways was like the example of like lifeblood, you know, Mother Earth and lifeblood, you know, and the ecosystems were part of, you know, musculoskeletal, you know, like, you know, making up. Then what are we on the landscape? Like are we white blood cells? Are we red blood cells? Are we actually cancer? You know? What are we? What could we be? Right? The Guardians from a boots on the ground perspective, I would argue, could be seen as white blood cells.

Kaya Adleman

One of the aspects of that program is going back and monitoring the land. And he makes this like really lovely metaphor for what the Guardian program is, and he calls them the white blood cells because it's about coexisting with the natural environment and having that role to play as kind of a protector of the natural environment.



Janet Sumner

Yeah, that's one of the things that I loved about the conversation with David, and I think we started out and maybe we can grab a clip of this as well with Anastasia just describing the legal frameworks that backstop all of this forestry or land use in Canada.

Anastasia Lintner

And it became the Constitution of Canada when it was patriated, it in 1982. And that's when we got our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And that is also when there were negotiations with Indigenous Peoples around what would happen in the rights associated with recognizing their existing Aboriginal treaty rights and Section 35. So there are a number of things that were meant to happen in terms of constitutional conferences and discussions with Indigenous people that happened, but didn't sort of fulfill even its promise of changing how things worked.

Janet Sumner

There is legal frameworks that exist and, and then David continues on with the conversation and talks about how all of that is preventing the people who have lived here from time immemorial from engaging in all of the different processes. And what David said and what really hits me and reminds me and I, I'm very, very grateful for the reminder is that...

David Flood

It's not an us and them. The treaty was always meant to be we. And we as far as Indigenous People and the way we live, the societies, you know, we've lived up to our bargain and shared more than enough. I always contemplate and try and understand, like how, why, why, how could through time, our people, you know, lead the development of Canada through the fur trade and then have a fundamental collapse in relationship where we became seen as less than. And we have a living treaty in our courts, our Superior Courts have ruled you are all in the same sandbox. Please. Contemporize your relationship and move forward. What happened to the treaty? What happened to coexistence?

Janet Sumner

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We're all treaty people. I mean, these treaties weren't something that were just given to the First Nations they were signed on to if, if they were signed. But the two treaties that you had have 2, 2 parties, you know, you can't just have a one-sided treaty. It's got to have two parties. And these were a treaty between two people and it was the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. And we have to remember that we are one side of that treaty and we have to think about what does that mean? And then he talks about working in a way of, with all nature and with us in coexistence. And so the Indigenous Guardians program is, and I've been privy to see this across Canada, it has all different ways of being whatever that nation feels, how they want to create it. But it is about getting back to the land and reconnecting with the land. And I think it originally was designed to get youth out on the land as you mentioned, but I think David also mentions that there are some people who are coming and working for the Guardians programs that are not necessarily youth, but they're maybe coming back to their community and getting reconnected. And that is absolutely a fantastic idea to have more guardians programs out there. Because imagine if you're if you are going to be harvesting in the forest, if you're going to be logging, wouldn't be great to have ongoing monitoring that was being done by people who live there, can see what's happening, can give you feedback, can help all of Canada understand what is happening to the forest? Have we converted it? What's, what are the challenges? And maybe what are some of the interventions? Like I know one of the programs that that we had done previously, and that First Nations had done for many, many, many years, was prescribed burns. Now, that might sound a little bit scary to people, but what we've actually been doing is we've been suppressing fire in the forest and we did that so that we would have more to harvest. But now it's coming back to bite us because when we suppressed that fire, it actually created more firewood. So, when these fires do happen, which they do in a boreal system, there's more fuel. And I think both Francois and Dave, I believe Dave talks about this in his episode. And so does Peter. But that means we need to actually start looking at that. And wouldn't it be great if we had Indigenous guardians on the land...

Kaya Adleman

And knowledge holders, right?

Janet Sumner

Yeah. Yeah. And start telling us, like what's actually happening. That would be great.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah.



Janet Sumner

It would be huge.

Kaya Adleman

And it's also, I'd say it's also an important step to building a pathway towards reconciliation and yeah, all that good stuff.

[Music]

Kaya Adleman

And I think just another thing that I think stands out to me as kind of a common theme amongst the different episodes is we are talking about, or you were talking about how there's these legal frameworks that are preventing this pathway to coexistence and are actually ruining the relationship between both treaty partners. And it's interesting because there's also like snippets or there's also kind of these overarching guidelines of, that say, yes, like in the treaty, like we must live in coexistence with Indigenous People or in the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, there's like these really grand like statements about preserving the biodiversity, preserving Indigenous relationships with the land, etc., etc.. And so, there's also there's, there's the ingredients that are there, right? But we're just not taking advantage of them. We're picking and choosing or there's definitely picking and choosing for what's in the best interest of some groups as opposed to others. And I think that also really ties into kind of a central theme of what Harvey Locke talks about in relation to all of the international climate frameworks that exist.

Harvey Locke

And we can't solve the climate problem if we don't think about the carbon cycle and the climate system. Why do I say that with complete confidence? Because that's what the convention actually says if you read it. You can go and read this in the convention and the convention talks about its goals, about what you're trying to do. It talks about keeping ecosystems resilient. That's actually the goal of the climate convention. And then what you hear people saying now is, oh no, this is just about exclusively reducing fossil fuel emissions. Well, it's absolutely about that. And it's about how the earth works. Cause it has to be.



Kaya Adleman

They talk about generating climate policy that talks about a climate system, but for some reason, international climate policies tend to focus on smokestack emissions, fossil fuel emissions, as opposed to protecting nature and the emissions that nature can create when it's destroyed, or protecting nature for its ability to be an asset in the fight against climate change and the preservation of biodiversity.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, there's a certain inertia to the status quo, to the business as usual. And so, I think that that keeps us from maybe making the changes and maybe change happens incrementally, etc., but we can actually start to choose better as well. And so definitely choosing Guardians programs would be choosing better. It would be consistent with the treaty, it would be about coexistence, it would be about reconciliation, it would be all of those things. And it would make us better in terms of figuring out what's going on with our forests and having more consistent feedback in terms of our choices and what we did in our forests. And you're right to make that leap to climate, the climate nature nexus, which Harvey talks about, which I, I love. And as you know, if you've listened to that episode with Harvey and I, we both really jam on that and, and it's something that we deeply feel in our bones that this the climate, climate and nature are the same topic, are the same issue and one feeds the other and one damages the other. And we need to be thinking about it as a full cycle because it's a carbon cycle. And so, I like how Harvey talks about that and he's obviously I mean, he's a trained lawyer and so he goes to the policy framework and he tries to look at that and say, well, what's driving this? And does it need to be driving this? And so I can speak from my experience, which was I was on, you know, I was working on climate change when the Kyoto Accord was signed. And I know that when the discussions were happening around other emissions from forests or things like that, it was it was kind of seen as our target from the NGOs was really, really, really about addressing the emissions that were coming from smokestacks and tailpipes. That was full on the campaign and the target. And so now we have the result of that, which is climate accords that are, that were actually written and incorporated the science, which included the full carbon cycle. But the focus for the entire world has been about that portion of the carbon cycle, which is about the emissions from smokestacks and tailpipes and the combustion of fossil fuels, frankly. And we haven't focused as much on the full carbon cycle, and that means we're not fully appreciating how we are damaging the climate. And even in terms of deploying some of the solutions, we haven't, we haven't got all that right.

Kaya Adleman

We're not taking, as you would say, a holistic approach to, to the solutions, which is probably what David and Harvey would be in line with. And then there's also the very big policy implications for just



kind of taking a pick and choose approach as well. And I'm going to be I'm going to make another leap to my next quote here from our Flawed Forest Accounting episode with NRDC and Nature Canada, where Graham Saul talks about in the context of Canada's misrepresentation of what emissions from the logging carbon emissions are from the logging sector.

Graham Saul

But the policy implications are enormous because the, the logging industry has been allowed to basically sit outside of the regulatory process that the federal government has been developing. So we've been developing this entire set of suite of policies that are designed to create the right incentives for industry, you know? Carbon fees that are designed to penalize high emitting activities and promote cleaner activities. Regulatory approaches like clean fuel standards and other things that are designed to encourage cleaner fuels and penalize dirtier, more high emitting fuels. And the logging industry, and the impact of the logging industry, has basically sat outside that conversation and been given a free pass.

Kaya Adleman

There's enormous policy implications to that as well, because we're basically allowing these different industries or these different parts of the problem to sit outside of the regulatory framework. And so, we're generating these climate policies, we're creating all of these initiatives for climate, but we're ignoring nature and we're ignoring policies that could also be including the protection of nature and the acknowledgment that nature and forests help absorb carbon and greenhouse gases and that destroying them emits stored greenhouse gases.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, I think, I think that's a really important piece. Is that the way Canada's carbon accounting for forestry is structured is instead of looking at forestry as an industrial sector, we look at forests. And so then forestry operates within that realm and they aren't treated like any other industry because there's this big, and both Harvey mentioned this and Graham and Jennifer and Michael from the Flawed Forest Carbon Accounting, and that is that when we look at the carbon accounting, what we do is we say, okay, if there is, you know, forestry that goes on and we're going to count the, count some of what you do as a as a reduction in carbon, but you get to count on the plus side all of the regrowth from forest fires or from any loss or any that happens in Canada, whether you had anything to do with it or not.

[Music]



Janet Sumner

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Kaya Adleman

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[Music]

Janet Sumner

And that just doesn't sit right with me. I can't imagine it sits right with many other industrial sectors who are responsible for this. And I think what it does is it limits the ability of companies to do more and do better. So, for example, companies, if you have a forest management unit, why can we not say, okay, this is how much forest you're starting with, this is what exists there, we're going to measure this. Again, it gets back to the monitoring thing. Imagine, if you will, if we could actually figure out how much carbon was on that forest, what was being lost, maybe naturally or regrown naturally. And then what's your delta? How have you improved it? How have you made it better? And if you took carbon off the forest, if you, if you harvest it, then it is some of that stored in a long-lived wood product like a house? And then can you count that as a stored carbon source and still have to account for what you've depleted. Like what's your what your drawdown and then get and then you do get benefit or you get to count the carbon that you grow back. And very simply then you can say, well, you as a company are responsible for these emissions and like every other company, you have to pay your fair, fair share on that and you don't get to count all of the regrowth across Canada against that. And so, and it's not the forestry companies that have put this out there. I think they are the beneficiaries to, I wouldn't even say they're the beneficiaries. I think it mutes their ability to take action, mutes their ability to benefit from some of the actions. I've personally had conversations with forestry companies who'd like to do a lot more, but it's like, well, if I do it, it doesn't, doesn't affect how I'm treated. It doesn't change anything. There's no benefit to it other than that, maybe it might be a nice idea. But usually it's somebody in a company who might even be at a vice president level and they can't convince their CEO to do it because it's financially not going to be beneficial. So.



Kaya Adleman

Right.

Janet Sumner

It limits the aspirations of companies and of people who want to do good things.

[Music]

Janet Sumner

So, I just wanted to bring to our listeners attention that there was a release that came out over the holidays that was signed on to by the David Suzuki Foundation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Nature Canada, Nature Quebec, Stand Earth, Wildlands League and WWF Canada. And that was around the need to define forest degradation. One of the reasons that this is coming up now is because Canada and many other countries signed on to the Glasgow Declaration

Kaya Adleman

Efforts to, its supporting efforts to halt and reduce forest loss and degradation.

Janet Sumner

Mmm hmm. So there's a global need to define degradation so that countries can be held accountable against it, or companies, and that's happening because many countries around the world now see that forests are being degraded. Even if you don't have deforestation, i.e. converting a forest into a city or a farm, but you do have degradation of the forest. Maybe it's the roads and landings from logging, maybe it's seismic lines, maybe it's mining, maybe it's building hydro development through a forest. It could be all different ways that we do degradation, but there is a recognition that we need to start measuring that and looking at it and limiting how much degradation happens. At least for acknowledging it. So, there is a movement within the European Union to start saying, okay, well, we're not going to take timber from forests that have deforestation or degradation and that then starts to set the wheels moving for other countries to say, okay, how do we start to define our view of degradation? What does



that look like? And many of these groups have signed on to this, have been part of a process or been listening in or waiting for Canada's definition to come out. And in the absence of a definition from Canada, the groups decided to get together and put together what they believe is or should be Canada's definition or what we believe is a fair definition, a scientifically derived definition for degradation. So that's come out and you can find that on any of those websites that I just mentioned. David Suzuki Foundation, Natural Resources Council, Nature Canada, Natural Quebec, Stand Earth, our own Wildlands League and WWF Canada.

Kaya Adleman

There's a few news publications other written about it as well, and I'll link them in the show notes.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, no, that's great. That's great, Kaya. So, and this is all from a science, Western science perspective, because we believe that the, it should include, the two-eyed seeing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous. And so, we ask Canada to, to do that work and get the Indigenous input on this. But from our perspective, when you walk into a forest and you start harvesting in that forest and this is very much related to the work here on The Clear Cut, that by going into an intact or primary natural forest and doing an industrial activity like logging, you have degraded the forest. And it should be treated as such until you can prove that it is no longer degraded. So, we're not going to argue about whether or not you can do regrowth or regeneration or any of those things or even how much is regenerated. We want to reverse the onus that it is, you started with natural ecosystem, you've done an industrial activity in there that is degradation now proof that it has regenerated, or it is no longer degraded. And I think that's the essence of it. Now we acknowledge that there's degradation that occur, occurs in second growth forests. We acknowledge all of that and we've got a number of indicators and parameters and definitions in there. Some of the indicators are whether or not there are declining populations of indicator species, including forest dwelling species, at risk changes to the forest age class compared to pre-industrial condition, changes to the species composition compared to that pre-industrial condition fragmentation reduction in the provision, ecosystem services, etc. a change in ecological integrity or a forest productivity, loss of existing carbon stocks or carbon storage capacity. So, those are some of the things that we believe, the work that we've done with this coalition or collaboration of environmental groups who've been working a long time on forests and forestry. And so we're putting that out there and saying Canada, this is what we think you should be measuring against and it should be measured against, done so that so that we can address the global climate biodiversity crisis. And Canada has committed to help reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation on land and degradation by 2030. And so, the impact of forest degradation is actually already having and it's having an impact on climate stability,



biodiversity and it needs to be addressed. So this is what came out over the holidays and I invite our listeners to take a look at that, read up on it and hopefully stay tuned as the groups move forward and try to have Canada come out with a definition that looks like that and then start to think about what are all the policy implications of that and, and how can we start to manage towards that.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, like I said before, if you want to learn more about all of that work, there will be plenty of links and resources in our show notes and I'm excited to see what comes out of this here.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, and I think one of the things for me is that we can often sit and wait for governments, but I like this because as is nonprofit organizations, we don't always work together and it's really nice to be working with other colleagues that I have worked with for many, many years and, and come together and say, yeah, we all agree on this. This is how you should approach it. And so, so yeah, I'm, I'm excited that we came out with something that we could all agree on and that we believe that Canada should be measuring against and the world should be measuring Canada against. That's the other important thing. It's not just that Canada should measure this, but that the world should be measuring Canada against it.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, and it kind of ties back in to what Francois was saying in his episode about in considering the demand for what kinds of fiber products consumers are looking for and wanting is changing and a definition of degradation that is scientifically backed and acknowledges the role forests play in both the climate realm and the biodiversity realm will only help make those products more competitive in the marketplace.

Janet Sumner

And I really would stress that we need to have Indigenous knowledge.

Kaya Adleman

Yes.



Janet Sumner

...integrated into this. I mean, one of the things like, for example, one of the big things that we probably didn't talk about very much and I think our indicators would ask us to look at this and ultimately would need to. But the regeneration right now in many parts of Canada requires the use of glyphosate or pesticides and herbicides to be sprayed. And David, in our episode, I forget which one it was, but because we had three episodes with David, but he talks about the fact that we are going in and clear cutting and then relying on herbicides to suppress certain growth to allow the forest to come back and get that regeneration. But what it's doing is it's also wiping out other species, or not wiping the species out, but certainly damaging the species that are there when you do a great big blanket spraying. And there are many communities that have been opposed to the spraying of glyphosate because it is also getting into their watersheds and their water sources. So, that would be one of the things that we haven't included very specifically, but might be something that an Indigenous nation would say, well no, this is an impact that I feel on the ground and I want that upfront and center. And so, I think that would be really important to be including Indigenous knowledge so that we make this definition better.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, and I guess we as consumers, you as listeners, as consumers, I guess something that we could all be thinking about going forward, especially into the new year is, this paper that I'm purchasing, this furniture that I'm buying, is the fiber that was used to make this is it sourced from a company that values, you know, Indigenous knowledge, that values not degrading forests. So yeah, I guess, yeah.

Janet Sumner

And right now the best barometer of that is FSC for stewardship certification and I'm not going to tell you that it's perfect because there are challenges with FSC. Oftentimes it's wedged between a rock and a hard place with what's required at the provincial government place. But FSC certainly requires the inclusion of free, prior and informed consent and requires that you plant for species like caribou, which are, help you decide whether or not you're doing a good job in the forest. So it's a better standard than everything else, and it's the best benchmark we have right now.

[Music]

Kaya Adleman



All right. I think that concludes our final episode of the year. So, if you have an idea for a story on Canadian forestry or anything related to it or have any questions like, definitely feel free to contact us. My email is on, it's on the website.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, please, please tell us what you want to hear about because we're innately inquisitive people and we would love to invite folks in for that conversation. And even if you think we haven't covered something or done a good job or you disagree, we'd be happy to take it up and have a conversation about that and do another interview and maybe get corrected. And I know sometimes when we're rushing through a topic, we might give it short shrift or we don't, we don't get into the detail or explain it enough. Kind of like the how I felt about the additionality leakage conversation that we had in a previous podcast. So. So yeah, and we want to hear from you, good or bad. Please let us know. We can only improve.

Kaya Adleman

Please.

Janet Sumner

Yeah, please do. And if you want to hear about all these episodes and you want to hear more of this, it all takes funding. And so right now we're relying on the kindness of strangers. Please, please send us in any support that you can. Share the podcast. Let us know the topics.

Kaya Adleman

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Janet Sumner

Yeah, give us a review. Yeah, totally. But yeah, and maybe I'll just finish off with what a pleasure it's been to work with you on this, Kaya. I know that we that I always show up late for our meetings, and you're very, very patient with me, and you always send me little reminders. Hey, you know, are we recording today, and I go, yeah, yeah, I'll just get my headset on and get on the on the zoom call. So, so



thanks so much for your patience and your hard work. Every single time we have a guest on here Kaya has already done all of the research. I have what the old fashioned term is called the Rolodex that I can pick up the phone and say, 'Hey, Harvey you want to have a conversation?' 'Hey, Francois, I want to have...' So I have the ability to reach out and get those conversations and Kaya has the ability to show up and say, 'Hey, I looked at your website and I noticed this. And what about that?' She's amazing to work with. So thank you so much, Kaya for being such a great cohost and really bringing your all to this. So thank you so much.

Kaya Aldeman

Thank you. Thank you so much. And the gratitude goes both ways. I don't think this podcast would be anything if it weren't for you. I really thank you for the opportunity in trusting me with this process. I think I've said that before, but I mean, we wouldn't have like Harvey Locke on our podcast if it weren't for you and you give a wealth of information and knowledge and also a wealth of experience. Like I don't know if you like, Janet is like kind of like a micro celebrity. Like, you know, look, she is, she's on, you've even been on like a few other podcasts. Like people call you up to ask you for advice on things. So, the fact that, you know, she's, she's in your ear like every week, that's pretty cool because she's been working on this for a long time, too. And it's you have you have really good questions as well. I'm always very, wow.

Janet Sumner

Yeah. We like being on the podcast together and we're having a good time and we hope you are. And I wish you all the best of the holiday season if you're listening right now and great new year as, as we approach 2024. And maybe you're into this in 2024, but yeah, let's keep the planet going.

Kaya Adleman

Yeah, likewise. Thanks for listening. Wishing you a good holiday season to all of our listeners. Looking forward to 2024. I guess, I guess we'll be in your ears next year.

[Music]

Janet Sumner



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Janet Sumner

That's @wildlandsleague on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook or LinkedIn, of course.

Kaya Adleman

See you next time.