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ARBOREA II: Genomics for Molecular Breeding in Softwood Trees

Integrated GE³LS Research

An analysis of socio-economic impacts and environmental issues associated with the use of genomics research to enhance breeding of softwood trees

GE³LS Project Leaders

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Summary

By identifying genetic markers associated with superior growth and wood quality, and selecting for these enhanced qualities in tree breeding, forest producers could see an increased yield of white spruce plantations. In turn, this would likely reduce pressure on natural forests and could help to concentrate reforestation efforts on a reduced land base and get quicker results. The goal of this integrated GE³LS project is to assess the socio-economic impacts of applying new genomics knowledge to the forestry sector. GE³LS researchers will assess the profitability of the forest network and the economic benefits of plantation forestry with the outputs of genomics.

Given the realistic potential for benefits to the industry, what are the broader social, economic and environmental issues to consider? Will the public be accepting of these novel technologies and their application to Canadian forestry? This GE³LS project will seek to understand the perception people have of the use of genomics in forestry, based on initial spontaneous assumptions and more informed understanding of the environmental issues.

The goal is to gain a better understanding of the issues related to forest genomics from the point of view of the public and of stakeholders, and to assess their level of influence on the socio-political system.

<http://www.genomequebec.com/GQGenomiqueSociete/projets/arborea2En.asp?l=e>