



News Release  
Immediate

## **The Wealth of Maple Products from Quebec: Gastronomic, Economic and ... Environmental!**

Innovative new Study reveals Ecosystem Goods and Services  
Generated by Quebec Sugar Bush

**Longueuil, February 2, 2016** – Commonly regarded as the source of delicious maple products, the Quebec sugar bush is now seen in a new light: as a generator of ecosystem goods and services that are regarded as enormous collective wealth, indeed of inestimable value. This is the conclusion of a study by Groupe AGÉCO (revealed today by Maple Products from Quebec) that identifies no fewer than 12 ecosystem services emanating from Quebec’s maple forests. This public heritage and priceless environmental capital provides ecosystem services to an estimated annual monetary value of \$1 Billion. If the maple resources not presently being exploited are taken into account, that value rises to at least \$2.7 Billion per year.

The study stipulates that the ecosystem services produced by our maple stand are “useful and essential to human well-being and do not, in many cases, have any man-made substitute.”<sup>1</sup> “If you consider that maple trees now in production are protected by Quebec’s *Loi sur la protection du territoire et des activités agricoles* and those still untapped are sure to offer economic benefits, government protection of the sugar bush is surely justified. The more you buy Maple Products from Quebec, the more you contribute to the protection of Quebec’s maple forests and the ecosystem services they provide to the benefit of us all,” said Serge Beaulieu, President of the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers (FPAQ).

Entitled [\*Evaluation of Ecosystem Goods and Services related to the Quebec Sugar Bush\*](#), the study presents a better understanding of the natural capital – present and future – represented by Quebec’s maple stand. “The evaluation of ecosystem goods and services is an innovative new approach that’s being adopted more and more around the world. The methodologies we used are recognized by the international scientific community. They attribute a monetary value to services rendered by nature itself, value which is often taken for granted,” said Groupe AGÉCO associate and study-co-author Jean-Pierre Revéret. “The FPAQ has become a pioneer in its usage here in Quebec by applying it to the maple products sector.”

### **From the Environment to Culture, a Look at the Benefits generated by the Quebec Sugar Bush**

According to the results of this study, maple forests provide 12 ecosystem services that contribute to the well-being of communities and for which the value (of nine of them) from Quebec’s maple stand can be calculated. These are listed under three broad categories, according to recognized international approaches:

- **Regulating services systems**, which refers to material services that affect the ability of ecosystems to maintain conditions conducive to human life, both locally and globally. Of these are included the notable examples of water filtration through the soil, and erosion and climate control. In this regard alone, the Quebec sugar bush currently in production sequesters the equivalent of 1.2% of Quebec’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (2012 level), that is, capturing the carbon released by some 290,000

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<sup>1</sup> Le capital écologique du Grand Montréal : une évaluation économique de la biodiversité et des écosystèmes de la Ceinture verte, report prepared by Groupe AGÉCO for the David Suzuki Foundation and Nature-Action Québec, February 2013, page 5.

vehicles or 9% of the Quebec auto fleet per year. If you added in the as-yet untapped maple trees standing, the carbon sequestration by maple numbers balloon to 770,000 vehicles or 25% of the Quebec fleet, representing 3.3% of GHG. The total economic value of this service category provided by the active Quebec sugar bush is estimated at \$748 Million, and \$1.9 Billion when you factor in the maple stands not in production.

- **Provisioning services**, which include direct services and materials provided by the maple forest to individuals. Obvious to this category is food production (maple products, mushrooms, berries and edible plants) as well as medicinal products (such as ginseng) and ornamentals (like flowers, wood and fibres). The economic value of this category represents \$203 Million per year for the maple forest currently in production, and \$520 Million per year when non-exploited resources are added to the equation.
- **Cultural services**, which bestow non-material benefits. These intangibles have their important roles in Quebec culture such as recreation (leisure and tourism associated to ecosystems), aesthetic and cultural values related to education, heritage and culture in general. The annual economic value of this category is estimated at \$127 Million for the sugar bush under exploitation, and \$326 Million when the entire maple forest is included.

### **Raising Consumer Awareness of the Need to Conserve the Maple Forest**

Many people choose maple for its wonderful taste, nutritional value and sweetening capacity. The trend toward authentic and eco-friendly products continues to grow. More than 3.3 million Quebec households consume maple products each year. In the major export markets of the USA and Japan, that number rises to 62 million. This strong demand will help conserve Quebec's maple stand, so it's important to sensitize consumers to the positive impact of their choices. ["If, in the near future, one person per household changes from refined sugar to maple syrup or maple sugar in her or his morning coffee, that would increase the demand for maple producers and potential new production across all of Quebec, even the cities! Large forested areas would have to be conserved for the well-being of future generations,"](#) proclaimed Geneviève C. Béland, FPAQ Director of Promotion, Innovation and Market Development.

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### **About Groupe AGÉCO**

The study was conducted by Groupe AGÉCO, a consulting firm specializing in corporate responsibility and economic studies, particularly in the food sector.

### **About the Evaluation of Ecosystem Goods and Services**

The identification of ecosystem services and the value of goods and services put forward in this project are based on an innovative approach taken from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA). It was initiated in 2001 by the United Nations and involved the work of more than 1350 experts from 50 countries (<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/>). This research was subsequently bolstered by other efforts among which we note the international initiative undertaken in 2007 by the G8 environment ministers, The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) (<http://www.teebweb.org/>). Since then, the approach has been applied increasingly by entities such as municipalities, governments, NGOs, and businesses in order to include the value of ecosystem services in decision-making for a more informed management of natural capital.

## About FPAQ and Maple Products from Quebec

Since 1966, FPAQ has pursued its mission of defending and promoting the economic, social and moral interests of 7,300 maple enterprises in Quebec, men and women working together to establish standards of quality and see to the promotion and collective marketing of their products. Quebec is responsible for 90 percent of maple syrup production in Canada and approximately 71 percent of all maple production in the entire world. Together, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia account for 10 percent of Canadian production.

FPAQ proudly promotes the Maple Products from Quebec brand and coordinates the marketing and development of Canadian maple products to the world on behalf of the Canadian maple industry. To these ends, FPAQ leads and gives direction to an international innovation network for maple products from Canada.

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