GROWING DEEP ROOTS:
LEARNING FROM THE ESSIPIT'S CULTURALLY ADAPTED MODEL OF ABORIGINAL FORESTRY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
(Forestry)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

September 2014

ABSTRACT

Aboriginal peoples are seeking sustainable ways to steward and develop forests. Sustainable forestry is central to Aboriginal life and culture. Research indicates that the industrial forestry model has failed to address their socio-economic needs. To date, Aboriginal involvement in forestry is characterized by a limited economic role in forest development, limited influence over forest management, and an inability to integrate Aboriginal culture and values.

The case study of Essipit (Quebec, Canada) provides new insight on how Aboriginal communities can contribute to sustainable forestry. Growing deep roots means using a culturally adapted model of forestry that is consistent with Aboriginal culture and values, which is therefore more likely to support long-term social change and economic growth. To ensure reliability and validity, this research employed four data gathering techniques: observation, documentation, interviews and focus-groups. Results identify the entrepreneurship framework that led to the success of Aboriginal forest enterprises in Essipit, the level of authority held by Essipit over forest governance, and Essipit objectives for forest-based development. Therefore, this thesis provides a framework that aims to support Aboriginal forest development in theory and practice.

Despite constraints, such as timber access, capacity and institutions, Essipit was successful in engaging in forestry. Acquiring exclusive commercial rights to harvest wildlife became a key strategy that allowed Essipit to address social needs and create leverage for future forest-based activities. Essipit innovated in forest governance: they created a partnership with the forest company Boisaco and, thus, gained authority over forest management decisions at the operational level. Results indicate that the profitability motives of the forest industry are

insufficient, because Essipit has other objectives and priorities. The forest industry looks primarily at the tree, while Essipit looks at everything that surrounds and supports it.

This research emphasizes the importance of developing a model that will outlast changes in government or industry. A forestry model that has deep roots is integrated into the community and the culture. It can sustain these types of changes and keep growing. Without this understanding of Aboriginal experiences, knowledge and objectives, local initiatives and government policies will remain uninformed and, potentially, fail.

PREFACE

This research was initially approved by the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board in September 2011. The certificate number is H11-01813.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFS	Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy
AFE	Aboriginal forest enterprise
AAROM	Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program
AAC	Annual allowable cut
BC	British Columbia
CSA	Canadian Standard Association
C&I	Criteria and indicators
CRRNT	Regional Land and Natural Ressource Commission (or commission régionale des ressources naturelles et du territoire)
FMU	Forest management unit
FNFC	First Nation Forestry Council (BC)
FNQLSDI	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GIRT	Integrated land and resource management (gestion intégrée des ressources et du territoire)
HPAIED	Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development
LMDP	Land management and development partnership
MFO	Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources (Quebec)
NAFA	National Aboriginal Forestry Association
PRDIRT	Plans for integrated land and natural resource development (plans régionaux de développement intégré des ressources naturelles et du territoire)
PAFIO	Operational plan for integrated forest development (plans opérationnel d'aménagement forestier integré in French)
PAFIT	Tactical plan for integrated forest development (plans tactique d'aménagement forestier integré)
RFP	Resolute Forest Product

SMFE	Small and medium forest enterprise
UBC	University of British Columbia
VOIT	Values, objectives, indicators, targets

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research project is participatory in nature; I therefore wish to begin by recognizing my research partner, the Essipit Innu First Nation. This project would not have been possible without their trust, support, advice, participation and friendship. In particular, I wish to acknowledge Marc St-Onge, Marc Chaloult, Suzie Gagnon, Fabien Lanteigne, Jessie Moreau, Florence Parcoret and Pierre Tremblay.

I am very grateful for the support of my co-supervisors, Dr. Harry Nelson and Dr. Luc Bouthillier, as well as the members of my supervisory committee, Dr. Janette Bulkan and Dr. Stephen Wyatt. I would also like to thank Dr. Ronald Trosper who was involved in my committee during the early stages of my doctoral research. I am very grateful for the help of Dr Lisa Smith. I also wish to express my gratitude for the assistance and support of Andre Benoit of the Filière forestière des Premières Nations du Québec, Keith Atkinson of the B.C. First Nations Forestry Council, Harry Bombay, Janette Pronovost, Brad Young and Geoff Schimmel of the National Aboriginal Forestry Association, Stephen Cornell of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policies, Dave Nordquist from Adams Lake Indian Band, Solange Nadeau and Anna Bailie of the Canadian Forest Service, Hugo Jacqmain of the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Daniel Arbour.

I would also like to thank my family for their unconditional support, as well as all my friends and colleagues, with whom I have shared many wonderful moments. My good friends Étienne, Marianne, Veronique, Claude, Jean-Philippe, Julie and Phil who helped and hosted me on several occasions.

This research project was made possible through the financial support of the Essipit Innu First Nation, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Mitacs-accelerate program and the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia.

DEDICATION

Je dédie ma thèse à mes filles Naïmé et Clémentine,

à Annabelle qui m'a apporté son soutien et tant de bonheur,

ainsi qu'à la mémoire de mon père Claude.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada are well below the national average. Over the years, federal and provincial government have introduced many policies and programs with a view to alleviating social problems through economic development. Equally, many Aboriginal communities have expressed a desire to play a greater role in economic development through the creation of Aboriginal businesses. And yet, economic and social disparities persist both on and off reserve. The crisis facing Aboriginal communities is often highlighted in news media coverage, and yet, little is being done to address the fundamental lack of understanding about what Aboriginal peoples can do to successfully pursue development as a means of addressing social needs.

To fully understand paths to socioeconomic development for Aboriginal peoples, it is essential to recognize and acknowledge the relationship they have with the land and resources of their traditional territory. This relationship is at the root of their culture, and is thus a key element in understanding economic development as it pertains to Aboriginal communities. Once vibrant communities with a strong connection with the land and resources of their territories, the aftermath of colonization has meant that Aboriginal communities have been excluded from stewarding and benefiting from their traditional lands. As most Aboriginal populations are located in commercial forestry zones, they are often interested in exploring the role of forestry as a means to rebuild their communities. More recently, legal settlements, government policies and economic partnerships with the private sector, are opening a window of opportunity for Aboriginal communities to play a larger role in the development and management of forest resources within Canada.

While some Aboriginal communities are successfully pursuing economic development opportunities in forestry, many communities are struggling as a result of institutional constraints and a lack of capacity. In this sense, many communities are unable to think strategically about what they want to accomplish and how best to get there. Weak governance, resource limitations and irregular and short term funding opportunities have all been identified as common issues that hinder the success of Aboriginal initiatives. In order to improve the livelihood of Aboriginal communities and the sustainability of forest-based development, it is essential to understand the conditions that can contribute to growing deep roots in a culturally adapted model of forestry for Aboriginal peoples.

This project explores the challenges of Aboriginal forestry, drawing on the perspective of the Innu First Nation of Essipit (hereafter Essipit), located in the province of Quebec, Canada. Until now, Essipit essentially borrowed a community-oriented model to promote economic development. In the forestry sector, its activities included silviculture, road building and maintenance, value-added products, and outfitters[1]. However, silviculture has been set aside in the past few years due to problems, such as labour shortages; a situation that is very uncommon among Aboriginal communities. In Canada, most Aboriginal communities are characterized by unemployment (HRSDC 2013). In the short and medium term, new opportunities are coming to the forefront. In particular, the changing Quebec forest regime and internal developments within Essipit First Nation have made economic activities in the field of forest management possible.

[1] Essipit outfitters are businesses that provide accommodation and services relating to hunting, fishing and trapping activities. By signing a 9 year renewable lease with the Quebec Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks (Gouvernement du Québec 2009), each outfitter has exclusive rights to harvest wildlife on a defined territory. This means that only the clients of Essipit outfitters can practice hunting, fishing or trapping activities on the territory under lease.

In this chapter, we begin by explaining what is meant by Aboriginal forestry. We present the general theoretical framework that underpins this research. This chapter will not provide an in-depth theory on Aboriginal forestry, but rather present three key dimensions of Aboriginal forestry: entrepreneurship, governance and community development. Finally, we outline the research objectives and conclude by outlining the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Introducing Aboriginal forestry

In Canada, during the twentieth century, forest management and development was dominated by an industrial forestry model (Beckley 1998); other models were also in existence, such as co-management, community forest or non-industrial private forest, but they were marginal in comparison. Under the industrial model, provincial governments assign territorial units with long term timber rights to large forest companies. Forest resources management functions are controlled by governments or delegated to large forest companies. Decision-making in relation to regulating, harvesting, transport, wood processing and silviculture tends to draw on a scientific model of justification, that is quantitative, rational, reductionist, value-free, mechanistic, and systematic (Berkes 1993). The main objectives of the industrial forestry model are to harvest timber and generate profits. Thus, industrial forestry is not value free, but begins from a premise that economic values, such as profitability, are of greater importance than social or environmental values. Equally, this model assumes that providing large forest companies with a sufficient and constant flow of wood can provide permanent economic and social returns for communities connected to the forest (Nadeau *et al.* 2003).

Aboriginal forestry is increasingly recognized as different from the industrial forestry model. Wyatt (2004) compared the forestry paradigms of the Atikamekw and the forest industry and

found significant differences. The forest industry paradigm is based on scientific rationality and primarily focuses on wood resources. In contrast, the Atikamekw paradigm draws on local traditions, values and knowledge. Increasingly, the participation of Aboriginal peoples in forestry requires that they have greater authority to determine the use, management, and economic development of forest resources; such a model is marginal in Canadian forestry (Wyatt 2008). Under the industrial forestry model, Aboriginal realities (i.e. values, goals, concerns, and expectations) are perceived as unimportant. Yet, in Canada, the forestry industry is beginning to recognize the potential and importance of acknowledging Aboriginal peoples as key players in the future of forestry (FPSC 2011; Government of Canada 2012b).

An Aboriginal forestry model assumes that Aboriginal peoples understand and value forest lands and resources differently than industrial forestry (Wyatt 2004; Atleo 2008; Saint-Arnaud 2009; St-Georges 2009). For centuries, they have been using, managing and stewarding forests (Kimmerer and Lake 2001; Miller *et al.* 2010). They are holders of valuable knowledge inherited since time immemorial (Berkes 1993; Berkes *et al.* 2000; Long *et al.* 2008; Parrotta and Trosper 2012). Berkes (1993) identifies the following characteristics of Aboriginal knowledge systems: qualitative, intuitive, holistic, moral, spiritual and empirical. In terms of values, Aboriginal peoples tend to believe that humans are part of nature and are interconnected with all other forms of life. Equally, they believe in the sacredness of *all* things (CSSP1995; Berkes *et al.* 2009 O'Flaherty *et al.* 2009). In contrast, western science starts from a premise that humans are separate from nature.

These fundamental differences between belief systems have practical consequences for forestry. For example, information on the availability of wildlife would be considered to be environmental

indicators by non-indigenous groups. However, because many Aboriginal groups include wildlife in their diet, these same resources can also be considered to be economic indicators (Natcher 2008). For Aboriginal communities, standing forests may, in some circumstances, provide social benefits that outweigh the economic benefits of logged forests. Indeed, the literature indicates that non-monetary benefits are important for Aboriginal communities (Anderson 1997a; Wyatt 2008; St-Georges 2009). Thus, protected areas and non-timber forest products may represent greater economic opportunities for them even if the financial returns are lower. If these value differences are not addressed, conflicts can arise (CSSP1995; Anderson 1997a; NAFA-IOG2000; Berkes *et al.* 2009). Therefore, research must examine the challenges that arise when attempting to link two different worlds. Also, research is needed to identify Aboriginal values and objectives, in order to determine how existing forest models take account of Aboriginal values (Beaudoin *et al.* 2012) and the conditions required to create alternative approaches.

The term Aboriginal forestry, recognizes the growing participation of Aboriginal peoples in forestry (NAFA2003; Wilson and Graham 2005; NAFA2007). Several reasons explain why Aboriginal participation deserves such attention. First, the Canadian Constitution and jurisprudence from the Supreme Court of Canada recognize both the inherent rights of First Nations, including the right to "determine their own future and govern their own affairs" (Morse 1999) and, therefore, the right to determine the use of and economic development of forest resources. Understanding how these rights can be successfully exercised is not only important to Aboriginal peoples, but also for society more generally. Indeed, the participation of Aboriginal peoples is a prerequisite for sustainable forestry. The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM 2006) created Criteria and Indicators (C&I) of sustainable forest management in Canada,

including specific C&I for Aboriginal rights, traditional land use and knowledge. Provincial governments adopted these national C&I in their forest policies (BCFM 2004; Gouvernement du Québec 2014). Markets are also promoting the recognition and respect of Aboriginal rights and interests through forest certification (Teitelbaum and Wyatt 2013). Thus, it is essential to understand Aboriginal participation in order to assess the sustainability of forest management systems. Finally, Aboriginal peoples have a strong connection with forest lands. They offer resources (e.g. human resources) and different perspectives from the forest industry on how to best use what is available. Studying their participation in forestry can provide an understanding of alternative forest models. However, defining the differences between Aboriginal forestry and the industrial forestry model raises particular challenges for research. Current research fails to provide an explanation of what constitutes an adequate and effective model of Aboriginal forestry (Wyatt 2008; Booth and Skelton 2011; Fortier *et al.* 2012).

The scientific literature indicates that there are many ways to examine Aboriginal participation in forestry, such as forest land uses, co-management, traditional knowledge, economic participation and governance. In this research, we adopt an inclusive definition of Aboriginal forestry that encompasses management and development of forest lands and resources by Aboriginal peoples for the benefit of Aboriginal peoples. Yet, in this thesis, our aim is to identify the conditions that give rise to Aboriginal models of forestry and the factors that contribute to their success.

More specifically, this thesis will address three specific challenges facing Aboriginal communities that are identified in the scientific literature:

- How can we increase the economic role of Aboriginal communities in forestry (chapter 4)?

- How can we provide Aboriginal communities with greater authority over forest governance systems on their traditional territory (chapter 5);
- How can we integrate Aboriginal values in forestry models (chapter 6).

1.2 General theoretical framework

Existing scientific literature suggests employing three inter-related fields of research to analyse Aboriginal models of forestry: entrepreneurship, governance and community development. These three areas have been identified and employed by the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (HPAIED). The HPAIED has conducted research in the United States with Indigenous communities for over twenty-five years (Jorgensen 2007). The findings of the HPAIED indicate that successful Aboriginal community development means that entrepreneurial activities and the governance system match the objectives of the community. At a high level, governance establishes the rules of the economic game. It is well recognized that governance shapes the business environment and is central to the success of entrepreneurial processes (Kraay *et al.* 1999; Cornell and Kalt 2000; Donovan *et al.* 2006). Therefore, entrepreneurial processes are more likely to succeed when Aboriginal communities assume greater control over the system of governance. In the following section, we will present some key concepts relating to these three levels of analysis and explain how they relate to one another.

1.2.1 Entrepreneurship

There exist many ways of defining entrepreneurship (Gartner 1990; Bygrave and Hofer 1991; Gartner 2001; Julien 2007). However, Alsos (2007) highlights common ground between definitions, which is helpful for this research. The business formation perspective defines

entrepreneurship as the process through which businesses are created (Gartner 1990). The opportunity-based perspective views entrepreneurship as the process through which opportunities are discovered, evaluated, and exploited (Shane and Venkataraman 2000). This perspective goes beyond business start-ups, as opportunities can be pursued by existing firms. In addition, Alsos (2007) highlights the role played by portfolio entrepreneurs who are business owner-managers who discover new business opportunities and exploit them within existing or new business structures.

Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen 1991) and the Model of Entrepreneurial Event (Shapero and Sokol 1982), the opportunity-based perspective introduces the notion that opportunities are phenomena that are recognized and evaluated through cognitive (subjective) processes. Thus, entrepreneurial processes are the result of the combined effect of a number of other variables such as personal motivation, competencies and opportunities (Julien 2007). Furthermore, Dana and Anderson (2011) propose that opportunity recognition and evaluation are culturally influenced. For this reason, individuals do not value opportunities in the same way; nor do they identify the same opportunities. Aboriginal peoples live in particular socio-economic conditions, have particular objectives, knowledge, cultures, values, and capacity. Because of these unique circumstances, the literature suggests that Aboriginal entrepreneurs are likely to identify different opportunities (Dana 1995; Berkes and Adhikari 2005; Hindle and Lansdowne 2005; Lindsay 2005; Peredo and Anderson 2006; Dana and Anderson 2011).

However, by focusing on the entrepreneur, the mainstream entrepreneurship literature neglects key insights from theories on endogenous development which explains that an innovative milieu is a sufficient condition for enabling successful entrepreneurial activities (Julien 2007). Thus,

these theories give more emphasis to the environment (or milieu) of small and medium enterprises:

> "The milieu is both a place and the collective mechanism that explains and facilitates various social ties, allowing a collective entrepreneurial spirit to blossom and providing the basic resources, including information and tools needed to transform it in knowledge, to meet the challenges of the new economy" (Julien 2007, p.116).

An innovative milieu has various attributes. First, social, economic, and innovation networks can provide entrepreneurs with strategic information to identify new opportunities or reduce uncertainty and ambiguity around business opportunities (Singh 2000; Julien 2007). For example, Morten (1993) demonstrates that networking activities between entrepreneurs resulted in the creation of several businesses. Second, Johansson and Nilsson (1989) and Selsky and Smith (1994) reveal that community leaders have the ability to develop and maintain networks for the benefit of local entrepreneurs. Third, Porter (1990) explains that the existence of interconnected businesses in a concentrated geographic area, also called a cluster, has the potential to increase innovation and entrepreneurial activity. These theories explain that the success of entrepreneurs not only depends on individual entrepreneurs, but also on the level of cooperation and communication within a milieu, as well as why some milieus are more successful than others (Julien 2007).

In forest sciences, there is a need to reconsider theoretical foundations in order to guide the following: 1) research analysis on the opportunities, constraints and needs of Small and Medium Forest Enterprises (SMFEs) concerning their development and guide 2) the design of policies conducive to innovative milieu and entrepreneurial activities. Business theory (i.e. business formation perspective) is implicit within most research as the focus is placed on business arrangements rather than processes (Tomaselli 2011; Kosak 2007; Soirinsuo and Makinen 2009);

this is especially true in Aboriginal forestry research (Brubacher 1998; NAFA-IOG 2000; Hickey and Nelson 2005; Boyd and Trosper 2010). The work of Macqueen (2008) suggests a useful and simple starting point for examining the conditions for successful SMFEs. The three main components are:

- Accessible financial services
- Accessible business development services
- Supporting business environment

First, financial services provide credit, insurance, leases, savings and/or money transfers for business start-up or development. SMFEs around the world are facing limitations when accessing credit (Soirinsuo and Mäkinen 2009; LeBel *et al.* 2010; Tomaselli 2011). SMFEs can deal with private or public financial institutions, such as banks, brokerages, cooperative credit unions or government agencies, in order to access credit (Tomaselli 2011). However, financial access is an important barrier hindering the development of SMFEs because the forestry sector is based on the capital-intensive extraction of timber and represents a risky environment for financial institutions (Mäkinen and Selby 2006). Second, business development services refer to financial and non-financial services that an enterprise needs to create, manage and develop its business. For example, Beaudoin (2009) shows that the creation of a corporation for business development played an important role in supporting the success of SMFEs in the First Nation of Mashteuiatsh, notably by offering help with business plan, search for financing, and search for clients. Business development services can offer other kinds of services, for example: product design, technology access, training, customer service, business efficiency, and legislation compliance (Macqueen 2008). Furthermore, Macqueen (2013) indicates that it is possible to

support SMFEs at the regional and national level by linking "forest enterprises to each other (in business groups or federations), which can strengthen bargaining power within markets, reduce transaction costs and perceptions of risk to financial and business service providers, and increase influence over decision-makers who determine commercial forest rights." Third, the Business Environment (BE) is what Julien (2007) refers to as innovative milieu, which is a business environment conducive to entrepreneurial activities. Macqueen (2008, p.30) indicates that enabling such an environment requires the following basic elements: macro-economic stability; transparent and entrepreneurial-friendly policies and laws; transparency in the supply and demand of institutions that provide information and advocacy; provision of basic communication and transport infrastructure; access to information for improving entrepreneurial competitiveness. Therefore, good forest governance appears critical; particularly when we consider the relationship between forest governance and entrepreneurship processes. At the local level, functions of forest management determine the nature of forest-based opportunities and, more importantly, how and to whom they will be attributed. In addition, the Harvard project stipulates that effective and stable governing institutions are key characteristics of a succesful Aboriginal entrepreneurial milieu (Jorgensen 2007).

Yet, all the theories mentioned thus far treat the community as external to the entrepreneurial process. Increasingly, the field of entrepreneurship is developing frameworks for more collective forms of entrepreneurial activities. For example, Peredo and Chrisman (2006, p.310) present the concept of community-based entrepreneurship as "a community acting corporately as both entrepreneur and enterprise in pursuit of common good"; Tremblay (2011) demonstrates that opportunity identification can be the result of a collective process. Furthermore, Tremblay and Carrier (2006) explain that a collective process to mobilize and exchange knowledge can benefit

entrepreneurial activity. How can a collective process be beneficial? First, it diminishes the risks and uncertainties around entrepreneurial initiatives by identifying more resources to support the project. Second, it allows the identification of a greater number of opportunities. Finally, it can create a greater consensus over desirable opportunities, goals and strategies. Developing collective entrepreneurial frameworks is particularly important in the field of Aboriginal forestry, because Aboriginal enterprises in Canada are usually collectively owned, and often owned in partnerships with non-Aboriginal partners (Anderson 1997a). This research will advance knowledge in the field of Aboriginal forestry, as well as in the broader literature, by exploring Essipit's community model of Aboriginal forest enterprises and providing a clear example of how Aboriginal communities can act as both entrepreneur and enterprise to address the socioeconomic needs of their members.

1.2.2 Governance

Government is the formal organization of the state and its institutions that have the ability to make decisions and to enforce them in order to maintain public order and facilitate collective action (Stoker 1998). While governance is often contrasted or compared to the government, definitions in table 1 suggest that governance extends beyond a government. Table 1 presents four definitions that are helpful for this research.

Table 1: Definitions of governance

Sources	Definitions
Colfer and Pfund (2012, p.6)	Governance is "covering the ways and institutions through which individual citizens and groups express their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences.
Jorgenson (2007, p.41)	Governance is " a set of rules –institutions- that societies put in place to organize themselves and get done what need to get done, and the mechanisms they use to implement and enforce those rules.
Lajoie (2007, p.1)	Governance is all decision-making process that involves one or more people with recognized authority (or accepted as legitimate) and that relates to elements of common interests affecting at least one group of a particular community, or the majority of the members (free translation).
Cornell *et al.* (2004, p.3)	Governance is "establishing rules we can depend on to coordinate our actions and achieve our goals [...] making decisions and establishing policies and getting things done."

For these authors and others, the term governance recognizes fundamental changes in the act of governing. Rhodes (1996, p.652), for example, indicates that "governance signifies a change in the meaning of government, referring to a *new* process of governing; or a *changed* condition or ordered rule; or the *new* method by which society is governed." Stoker (1998, p.19) specifies that governance involves "a complex set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government" (Stoker 1998, p.19). In sum, governance defines the rules, institutions and processes, formal or not, by which a society exercises its rights and obligations, makes decisions, and expresses its values (Colfer 2005; Jorgensen 2007; Lajoie 2007; Hill *et al.* 2012). Governance is characterized by a wide spectrum of arrangements (or modes) that can vary from a formal, structured, hierarchical and state-controlled arrangement to a more informal and society-driven one (Howlett *et al.* 2009). While general consensus is that there is a shift away from governing via government, to governance, there is "much less agreement on the other dimensions which also comprise a new governance arrangement qualitatively different from hierarchical coordination" (Howlett *et al.* 2009; p.385). Thus, further exploration of the notion of governance is necessary to better understand the role of new actors in forest governance and the mechanisms that connect them (Chiasson and Leclerc 2013).

In Canada and Quebec, research in the field of forest resources management exploring the emergence of new modes of governance has been limited. Chiasson and Leclerc (2013, p.65) define forest governance as follows: “a modus operandi by which officials and institutions (formal or not) acquire and use authority in the management of the [forest] sector to support and improve the well-being and quality of life of stakeholders depending on it.” Similar to social sciences research, research in forest sciences noted a shift away from government (i.e. the industrial model of forestry) to governance (Howlett *et al*. 2009; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). First, the work of Cashore and Lawson (2003, p.2) highlights “the emergence of “non-state, market-driven governance systems that gain their authority not from traditional state sovereignty, but from the manipulation of markets and attention to customer preferences.” Their analysis in U.S Northeast and Canadian Maritimes reveal that forest certification alters the rules of the game and the influence of forest stakeholders, including the state, industrial forest companies and environmental groups. Cohen *et al.* (2012) also suggest that forest businesses are facing growing social and environmental demands from public, market and financial institutions and, thus, they are adopting corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects to meet these expectations (Cohen *et al.* 2012), they cite forest certification as an example.

Second, the work of Klooster (2000, p.5) provides an interesting example of shared-governance wherein the state shares authority and responsibilities with other forest stakeholders. Notzke (1995) specifies that co-management involves various management levels, as well as a wide spectrum of arrangements. However, the work of Klooster (2000, p.5) points toward a common issue in co-management agreements: “forest ownership clearly resides with communities, communities influence and implement logging plans, but the government sets the management framework.” Indeed, national and international research show the tendency of the state to retain

its authority (Shutter and Kant 2003; Forsyth 2006; Grammond 2009; Hajjar 2011; Mabee *et al.* 2013).

This issue might explain why forest users sometimes choose a third mode of governance, namely self-governance. Ostrom (1999) asserts forest users can devise their own rules for sustainable forest resources management. His work (p.9) proposes that forest users will engage in self-organised arrangements if they expect that new institutions will provide more benefits than costs (e.g. avoid social, economic or environmental losses). For example, self-organisation arrangements are more likely to occur when forest resources are scarce, the state of forests is well-known, and local users are dependent on the resources so they understand how their actions impact each other and the resources. Some community forests in Canada can be described as self-governance arrangements when these organisations own land rights and are not bound by provincial forest management frameworks (Teitelbaum *et al.* 2006).

Because provincial governments often delegate some authority and responsibilities to forest companies, it is important to recognize that corporate governance also plays a role in forest governance. For example, Chiasson and Leclerc (2013) illustrate how forestry cooperative models have played a significant role in regional development in Quebec, notably through their work in traditional forestry (cutting, landscaping, primary processing). In Quebec, forestry cooperatives have become an alternative to the industrial model of forestry, and thus, a means through which local users can give greater importance to social and community values. However, there is a need for more information on how corporate governance contributes to the bigger picture of forest governance.

The commonalities between these new modes of forest governance is that greater collaboration and interdependencies among a complex set of actors and institutions, that operate at multiple governance scales or through various arrangements, have changed the rules of forest governance (Chiasson and Leclec 2013). Furthermore, these four modes of governance highlight that the notion of authority is central in forest governance. Authority defines which actors have the ability to make decisions over forest resources. For example, community forests might be classified as examples of self-governance at first glance. However, the details provided by Teitelbaum *et al.* (2006) rather indicate that some of them would be better described as examples of shared-governance, because the provincial governments maintain their authority over various levels of the forest management framework. Research suggests analyzing authority at the level of systems or arrangements such as industrial forest, co-management, business, community forest and non-industrial private forest (Beckley 1998; Blais and Chiasson 2005; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). Other studies suggest analyzing authority by breaking down these systems or arrangements into smaller elements which are then tagged as processes (Wyatt *et al.* 2010) or functions of forest management (Carlsson and Berkes 2005; Forsyth 2006). However, little research bridges these multiple levels and modes of forest governance.

Recent analyses of forest governance were mainly carried out at the national, provincial or regional level (Hoberg 2001; Howlett and Rayner 2005; Forsyth 2006; Howlett and Rayner 2006; Howlett *et al.* 2009). There are few analyses, however, that explain changes in governance at the local level (Chiasson *et al*. 2013). Notably, we have little information on changes in forest governance due to the emergence of relatively new actors in Canadian and Quebec forestry, namely Aboriginal peoples. Indeed, Aboriginal communities are seeking greater authority over forest resources for multiples reasons; for example, it is seen as a means for bringing their values

back into the forest, protecting their traditional lands, facilitating investment and job creation, building trust in their institutions, as well as contributing to the development of professional capacity in forest management (NAFA 2002). There is a significant body of research in the United States that has indicated the importance of sovereignty for the successful development of Native Nations (Jorgensen 2007; HPAIED 2008). Sovereignty means that Native Nations are making their own decisions on matters as diverse as law and regulation, forest resource management, economic development, education and health care. For example, their research found that forest operation productivity and the price that Native Nations get for their timber were higher when Native peoples were managing their forests instead of the federal government (Krepps and Cave 1994). However, Trosper *et al*. (2008, p.229) summarize some explanatory limitations of US research in Canadian context:

> "Their results are based on the sovereignty tribes enjoy in terms of those resources in the US where tribes have won the ability to directly assert control and management over resources on reservation lands. In Canada, sovereignty is sharply limited, not varying much among First Nations except for the few that have negotiated special agreements with the federal and provincial governments."

This is especially true in the Canadian forestry sector: Aboriginal communities only have limited powers over their traditional territories which are rather managed by provincial governments. Aboriginal governance in Canada is a work in progress where "authority can be assumed incrementally and gradually, or come suddenly thorough a significant legislative change" (CFNG 2013, p.10). Therefore, one aim of this research is to explore further how, in the Canadian context, Aboriginal communities can gain authority and develop new modes of governance.

Building on Aboriginal governance research in Canadian and US research, it is possible to propose attributes for effective Aboriginal governance arrangements (Jorgensen 2007; Starks *et*

al. 2013; CFNG 2013; Tindall *et al.* 2013): ***clear and predictable rules*** reduce uncertainties and conflicts and positively affect the interests of investors to put time, energy, and money in a particular community; ***accountability, evaluation and reporting*** allow for performance evaluation and the sharing of information with community members; ***staggered council terms*** help avoid that an entire branch of government is elected all at once and provide continuity when a change of government occurs; ***participatory approaches*** allow people to participate in decision-making; ***independent dispute-resolution mechanisms*** provide people with fair and quick mechanisms to solve disputes; ***human resource capacity*** consists of having competent people to govern the communities; ***financial resources capacity*** ensures that the governance system is working. Interestingly, these attributes are similar to some principles that define effective self-governance institutions (Ostrom 1999): clear rules, collective-choice, monitoring, and conflict-resolution mechanisms. It is important to highlight that conflict-resolution mechanism is a recurrent theme in the scientific literature. For example, Notzke (1999, p. 200) indicates that co-management is viewed by the Aboriginal parties as a potential means of conflict resolution. Furthermore, the conclusions of the Harvard Project indicate governing institutions have to match the local culture of Aboriginal communities (Cornell et al. 2004; Jorgensen 2007). One issue is that forestry systems in Canada have mainly channeled Aboriginal communities into mainstream forestry with little space to define their own institutions (Wyatt 2004; Booth and Skelton 2011). This situation might explain why research on Aboriginal forest governance has mainly focused on authority-sharing between the state and Aboriginal authorities through various arrangements such as co-management (Notze 1995; Forsyth 2006; Tindal *et al.* 2013), tenure (Ross and Smith 2002; NAFA 2003; NAFA 2007; FNFC 2010) or distinct consultation (Wyatt *et al.* 2010). Therefore, Aboriginal forestry research has over-looked an

important aspect of forest governance--the ability of Aboriginal communities to self-organize and develop new modes of governance outside of government. Therefore, there is a need for empirical research at the community level in order to understand the conditions conducive to new modes of Aboriginal forest governance. This research will make a contribution to knowledge by identifying the role of the Aboriginals, the mechanism that connects them to other forest stakeholders, as well as the conditions conducive to effective arrangements of Aboriginal forest governance.

1.2.3 Community development

The third and related field that this thesis draws on is community development. Phillips and Pittman (2009, p.6) indicate that community development is a process "developing and enhancing the ability to act collectively" and an outcome "(1) taking collective action and (2) the result of that action for improvement in a community in any or all realms: physical, environmental, cultural, social, political, economic, etc". This definition is very similar to the definition of community capacity-building, which Kusel (1996, p. 396) defines as, "the collective ability of residents in a community to respond to external and internal stresses; to create and take advantage of opportunities; and to meet the needs of residents, diversely defined." Community development also shares similarities with other community development frameworks, such as capacity development (Wilkinson Chapman 2004), Community Capital (Flora and Flora 2008), Sustainable Rural Livelihood (Scoones 1998), and asset-based community development (Haines 2009). In short, these frameworks explain that the success of community development depends on available assets, including social cohesion and group acceptance of and adherence to agreed rules and a dispute resolution process. Indeed, each community has access to resources (e.g.

natural, human, or financial resources). When invested toward a particular goal, community resources become capital or assets (Flora and Flora 2008). Hence, communities do rely on different assets (or capital) to initiate actions. Beckley *et al*. (2002, p.633) identify the following types of capital:

> "social capital (the will and ability of peoples to mobilize resources and work together), human capital (the education, job experience, acquired skills, health and mobility of individuals), and infrastructure that supports the economic and social activities of the community, and natural resources or natural capital as the goods and services delivered by the natural world that affect community well-being."

Sometimes, researchers use different names for capital (or assets), but the categories are similar. Green and Haines (2008) for example, identify seven forms of assets: physical, human, social, financial, environmental, political, and cultural. In contrast, Beckley *et al.* (2002) identify only four types of assets: economic, human, natural and social. It is important to know how researchers identify capital because taken together these assets define what is known as community capacity.

Craig (2007) argues that community capacity-building is superfluous because it is nothing but community development. However, it is important to understand that there are various approaches to community development. There are more "top-down" approaches that focus on issues, problems and needs (Haines 2009), and which emphasize the role of external experts in solving community problems (Flora and Flora 2008). The model of industrial forestry is a good example of a "top-down" approach. This model emphasizes the role of forest experts, focuses on economic needs and sees other needs as problematic. There are also "bottom-up" approaches that relate to the concept of empowerment, i.e. strengthening the community's ability to address and solve its own problems, as well as the ability to act. Aboriginal forestry is characterized by the

latter philosophy because it recognizes that Aboriginal communities have the ability to develop their own model of forestry, based on local values, experiences, and knowledge.

There are different academic views of community development that emphasize different ways of achieving this end goal. This suggests that Aboriginal communities need to make strategic choices about what they want to accomplish, how forest resources can contribute, and what paths they have to take to get there. The following section presents a framework linking the fields of entrepreneurship, governance literature, and community development. Central to this framework is an attempt to integrate Aboriginal perspectives into forest development models.

1.2.3 Aboriginal forest-based development framework

Aboriginal communities have needs, such as subsistence, education, and employment. AFEs can address these needs by providing a wide range of products and services, such as timber and non-timber forest products, training, technologies and tourism products. Forest governance defines processes, rules, and decisions, thus providing a framework in which AFEs can operate. Community development occurs when Aboriginal communities put in place economic (e.g. AFEs) and governance systems that meet their unique needs. This research employs a community-driven (or bottom-up) philosophy, wherein Aboriginal communities address their needs by creating a vision of a desirable future and identify their objectives for forest-based development.

The Aboriginal forest-based development framework emphasizes that it is important for Aboriginal communities to think strategically about what they want to accomplish and the paths that are available. This framework raises four key questions: 1) Where are we? 2) What do we

want? 3) How do we get there? 4) How well are we doing? The first question seeks to integrate the values, experience and knowledge of a community, by identifying what is working (or what is not working) for them. This is important because many approaches to community development focus on needs. For example, a Band Council can build a saw mill to provide jobs for its community members. However, because the community lacks the managerial capacity to complete this project, it is likely to fail (Booth and Skelton 2011). The project might also conflict with the local culture and, again, is likely to fail (Anderson 1997). As such, many scholars (Jorgensen 2007; Kepkay 2007; Flora and Flora 2008; Stevenson and Perreault 2008) recommend that new projects should take into account the strengths of the community rather than focusing only on the needs of the community. The second question that the framework addresses, seeks to define a community vision for a desirable future. Doing so entails articulating the objectives for forest-based development of a community. Focusing on the strengths of a community can help define a more realistic vision for development. Third, the framework asks "How do we get there?" This question identifies the resources that need to be mobilized in order to meet community objectives (Chaskin 2001). The final question of the framework is, "How well are we doing?" By defining Aboriginal objectives for forest-based development, this research will provide a framework that will permit evaluation of the success of initiatives in the future. In addition, such a framework can provide guidelines for decision-making and, entrepreneurial initiatives (Jorgensen 2007). It can also promote continuity after an election and provide a framework for Aboriginal communities when negotiating with the government and forest companies.

The forest-based development framework guided and assisted this research in determining how the factors that can contribute to the success of Aboriginal communities seeking to develop a culturally adapted model of forestry.

1.3 Research question and objectives

This research recognizes the numerous challenges that face Aboriginal communities that wish to successfully engage in forest-based development (e.g., capacity constraints, governance issues and lack of cultural fit with the industrial forestry model). This research also highlights the aspirations of Aboriginal peoples for more sustainable ways to manage and develop forest lands and resources. A fundamental aim of this research is to better understand the worldviews of Aboriginal peoples in order to advance knowledge in the area of forestry development (Fortier *et al.* 2012).

This research examined the experience and knowledge of Essipit Innu First Nation. The research question that we addressed was: How did Essipit succeed in developing a culturally adapted model of forest-based development? For thirty years, Essipit has been making progress in developing AFEs that operate on its traditional territory called Nitassinan (St-Georges 2009). The literature suggests that community-level conditions can either facilitate or constrain the development of businesses. Thus, the first objective of this research was to explain the conditions for the success of Essipit forest businesses:

<u>Objective 1</u>: Examine the factors that contributed to the success of the forest enterprises held by Essipit First Nation.

The scientific literature also suggests that the success of AFEs is strongly related to the level of control that Aboriginal communities have over the system of governance. Thus, the second objective explored the forest governance systems on Essipit traditional territory.

Objective 2: Describe the local forest governance system on Essipit Nitassinan and the influence of Essipit on this system.

Finally, the scientific literature indicates that successful Aboriginal forest development means 1) economic and governance system that match the objectives of the community and 2) that these objectives of Aboriginal communities are different than those of the forestry industry. Therefore, the third objective emphasizes the right of Essipit to define its own objectives for forest-based development.

Objective 3: Understand the objectives for forest-based development for Essipit.

This objective also addresses the need of Aboriginal communities to think strategically as stated in the Aboriginal forest-based development framework. Objective 3 is linked to objectives 1 and 2 as economic and governance systems would presumably enable strategic choices based on community objectives.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

In chapter 1, we have introduced the research and presented the theoretical foundations that underpinned the research. Chapter 2 explains the general methodology used to address the research objectives. Chapter 3 will present contextual information for the case study of Essipit

First Nation. Each research chapter (i.e. chapters 4-6) will provide specific details on the methodology relating to each research objective.

The Aboriginal forest-based development framework is the common thread structuring each of the results chapters. Chapter 4 looks into the past and presents the forest entrepreneurship model used by Essipit, their businesses and their activities. Chapter 5 assesses the current forest governance system on Essipit Nitassinan: who makes decisions, what are the decision-making processes and what type of influence does Essipit have? Chapter 6 looks into the future and provides perspectives from Essipit on objectives for forest-based development, as well as how these objectives inform the way forward. It is important to note that chapters 4, 5 and 6 have been prepared with a view to publication.

Finally, chapter 7 will conclude the dissertation by summarizing the research findings, identifying the major contributions of the research, explaining the limitations of the study and suggesting directions for future investigation.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

In chapter 1, we highlighted that, in the field of forest resource management, research does not generally place Aboriginal values, experience and knowledge at the heart of the research process. The issue is that the dominant model of "industrial forestry" has failed to integrate Aboriginal values. Aboriginal communities had little to say about how things can be done. Overall, there is still much work that needs to be done in order to fully understand Aboriginal forestry (Wyatt 2008).

This research employs a participatory approach to advance knowledge in Aboriginal forestry. Participatory research provides local communities with a significant role in the research process, grounds research in local perspectives and needs, and distributes research benefits directly to the community (Wilmsen *et al.* 2008). While the intention of this research was initially to conduct a multiple case study analysis with two Aboriginal communities in British Columbia and two in Quebec (referred Beaudoin 2012 Forestry Chronicle), we ended up with a single case study. One reason is that this research is exploratory in nature and, thus, a single case allowed for the examination of many variables to build a complex and holistic picture of how Essipit integrated their values, experience and knowledge into the dominant forest model to produce a culturally adapted model that reflected the needs of their community (Creswell 1998). This methodological choice negatively affected the explanatory power of this research; yet it allowed us to 1) spend more time in the community, 2) build trust and relationships, 3) define and carry out the research project with the research partner, and 4) ensure mutual research benefits.

In this chapter, we introduce the notion of participatory research as a research approach. We then provide an overview of the case study and a description of the different data collection

techniques that were used. We also provide a justification for the research decisions that were made. Research limitations are discussed at the end of the dissertation (section 7.3).

2.1. Participatory research

2.1.1 Participatory research in theory

Scientist researchers have an important role to play in defining a world view that is inclusive of Aboriginal peoples and shared by other local forest stakeholders. Latour (2004, p.152) specifically mentions that the essential functions of scientists reside in their capacity to detect and take into account all possible propositions, to determine how and who is best to judge them, to rank the different alternatives, to help obtain consensus and finally to "institute the chain of causalities." In other words, scientists have the potential to initiate changes in forest research and practices, inform forest stakeholders and enlighten forest policies. However, scientists search for general knowledge and the denial of the citizen's ability to create "credible knowledge" can lead to the failure to address local needs (Fortmann 2008). In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Smith (1999) argues that previous scientific research failed to provide Aboriginal communities with adequate control over ways of knowing and learning.

Participatory research can address the gap in existing research by acknowledging the importance of broadening the consultation circle in order to open to new and alternative ways of thinking about forestry research and practices. In practice, this means that research maximizes the involvement of community members at every stage of the research process. Community members are involved in conceptualization, funding, data collection, analysis, and even knowledge diffusion. In fact, community member's participation becomes a criterion of validity.

Scientific research places the expertise of researchers at the forefront when designing research. In contrast, participatory research aims to encourage the active participation of community members, wherein scientists are facilitators of engagement. Wulfhorst *et al.* (2008, p.25) summarize the benefits of participatory research for communities:

> *As a research model, participatory approaches provide those affected with the opportunity to help guide what issues the research should focus on, assist with the process of defining and articulating the research questions, and facilitate and conduct investigation with intent of applying the findings in the community.*

The same authors identify three criteria that distinguish participatory research: 1) community-centered control, 2) reciprocal production of knowledge, and, 3) outcomes and benefits for the community. These criteria highlight the benefits that can result from community involvement in research.

Participatory research has the potential to acknowledge local problems in a more effective manner. The research quest for generalization tends to disconnect research from community needs. When community members are involved in the research project and design, there is a greater likelihood for developing local solutions. Wulfhorst *et al.* (2008) clearly state that "community input can help to guard against experts making incorrect assumptions about the values, concerns and goals of community whom they study, as well as allow their own bias(es) to influence research findings." By combining production of knowledge with community actions, participatory research is also able to build community research capacity (Natcher 2008b). Ultimately, building community research capacity through their involvement should lead to co-production of knowledge and more grounded tools for managing the land and resources (Saint-Arnaud 2009; Shearer *et al.* 2009). Participatory research also offers an effective approach to

developing research partnerships (Fortmann 2008; Wilmsen *et al.* 2008). According to Arnold and Fernandez-Gimenez (2008, p.66), participatory research encourages "partnerships between researchers and community members, while maintaining high standards of validity and scientific rigors".

Overall, the goal of participatory research is to provide greater benefits to communities by emphasizing their engagement in the research process. Participatory research is particularly important in Aboriginal forestry research because it explicitly recognizes that a change in the culture of forestry cannot be done without the meaningful involvement of Aboriginal peoples (Stevenson and Natcher 2009). An important challenge of research is to shift from an expert-based research paradigm to one where Aboriginal peoples define the problems at hand, elaborate the research and find solutions on their own. Thus, closer collaborations developed through participatory research will help to build research capacity, not only of Aboriginal peoples, but also of non-Aboriginal peoples. For example, Linda Smith (1999) argues that researchers collaborating with Indigenous communities ought to be familiar with their values and beliefs, practices and customs.

2.1.2 Participatory research in practice

This section addresses the efforts that we made to engage in participatory research with Essipit representatives who were directly involved in the design, realization, evaluation, and dissemination of the research project. Collaboration with Essipit First Nation was initiated in 2009 during another research project. Essipit was clearly interested in supporting the current research project. Between Fall 2009 and Fall 2011, we worked with our local contacts in Essipit to identify the research objectives and methodology, as well as to explore funding opportunities.

In November 2011, a research proposal was presented to the Band Council of Essipit, which provided its approval to formally engage in the research process. Then, in May 2012, we arranged a formal visit to Essipit in order to present and discuss the details of the proposed research with our local contacts, as well as to increase awareness of the research within the community. During Fall 2012, we developed a proposal for a Mitacs-Accelerate internship in order to raise funds for the data collection. We were successful in securing the funding.

Essipit representatives also played an active role during data collection (i.e. interviews and focus groups). One or two members of the Essipit Negotiation and Consultation Team participated in some interviews and focus groups and they were able to inquire further about certain topics or add questions during the interviews. On a regular basis during a Mitacs-Accelerate internship, we discussed the results of data analysis with the Essipit Negotiation and Consultation Team. Preliminary results were also presented and discussed during a conference-dinner with community members in November 2013. Finally, our local contacts reviewed and commented on the final reports.

The participatory methodological approach and an internship in Essipit provided a greater exposure to the reality of Essipit and, thus, helped us to better understand the local context and values. Second, it allowed us to build strong relationships with local community members. This method helped to build Essipit research capacity by transferring knowledge and skills on research procedures and techniques, as well as facilitating the involvement of community members in the research. In addition, this method made the research results available faster to Essipit and in a more accessible format.

The value of “sharing” is very important in participatory research. First, the control over the research was shared: the research project was defined and carried out in collaboration. Second, the research partners gave mutual access to information. For example, the researchers had access to Essipit’s internal reports, communications and meetings and Essipit had access to researchers’ data and reports. Third, data was analyzed openly and preliminary results were shared and discussed on a regular basis; in order words, knowledge was co-produced. Fourth, the research results will be shared both with the Essipit community and the research community. Finally, the contributions of Essipit (i.e. sharing the credit of this research) were recognized in the “acknowledgement” section of this dissertation.

As part of this research, we asked community members what benefits they saw from engaging in the research. The community members who participated in this study said they were satisfied with their experience and happy to have had the time they needed to express their views on future forest-based development on their land. Furthermore, the discussion groups allowed time to explain the current state of the negotiation process with the government and the functioning of the forest regime.

The research approach used in this thesis builds on the principles elaborated by Essipit, such as sharing of knowledge and respect for one another’s culture. The overall aim is to provide mutual benefit and to support future collaboration. In sum, this thesis presents research *by* and *with* Essipit, instead of *on* and *for* Essipit.

2.2 Case study research

Scientific literature indicates that case studies are an effective means to address questions of "how" (Creswell 1998; De Sardan 2008). Thus, the Essipit case study was useful in understanding how the community integrated their values, experience and knowledge to adapt the dominant forest model to produce a culturally adapted model of their own. Case studies are also useful tools for exploring and describing relatively new and undocumented phenomena in their natural settings (Creswell 1998).

Stake (2005, p.443) forewarns about a potential misunderstanding: "Case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied." A case is a "bounded system" that can be defined in location and in time; it can be a person, an organization, an event, a program (Creswell 1998). In the context of this research, the Innu First Nation of Essipit is treated as a case. There are three main reasons for choosing this particular case. First, the community showed a keen interest in this research. Second, Essipit is characterized by strong community development models that succeed both socially and economically (CPNIE 2008; St-Georges 2009; Proulx and Gauthier 2012). Third, they have experience in AFEs creation and management (St-Georges 2009). Thus, the understanding of the Essipit model of forest-based development will offer a significant contribution to the existing literature, while also supporting the community's own development efforts.

To build an in-depth picture of a case, a researcher must use multiple sources of information in data collection (Creswell 1998; De Sardan 2008; Gauthier 2008). The following presents the various techniques that we used. It is important to note that chapters 4, 5 and 6 will provide more details on data collection and analysis.

2.2.1 Data collection

Research data was collected in Essipit from May 2012 to July 2013. However, a six month internship between January and July 2013 provided the main framework for this research. Overall, we used four techniques for gathering information: observation, documentation, interviews, and focus groups.

In order to examine the factors that contributed to the success of the forest enterprises held by Essipit First Nation (objective 1), we used semi-structured interviews because key informants had specific experience and knowledge that needed to be explored in detail (Savoie-Zajc 2008). Fontana and Frey (1994) explain that the essence of semi-structured interviews is the establishment of a relation between the interviewer and the participants. Thus, interviews were also useful for introducing the research project and establishing relationships and trust. Compared to surveys, semi-structured interviews are more flexible and allow for spontaneous interactions (Babbie 2010). Compared to focus groups, semi-structured interviews explore the personal experience of key informants in more-detail (Savoie-Zajc 2008).

Participant observation also allowed a first-hand look at the local forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory called Nitassinan, the influence of Essipit on this system, and to gain a clear understanding of the local governance system on Essipit Nitassinan (objective 2). Participant observation allowed for the collection of data through direct interactions with Essipit First Nation. We interacted with the Essipit Band Council and community members, as well as non-Aboriginal partners. We also participated in decision-making processes. Using a participatory methodology helped us to gain a good understanding of the local forest governance system. For example, we participated in meetings between Essipit and the government of

Quebec. We took notes both during and after meetings, conversations, and community events. Sardan (2008) highlights that perceptions, memories, and the subconscious all play a role in data collection. Thus, writing exercises can help capture data through these more informal techniques. During an internship, we wrote a report on the partnership between Essipit and the forest company Boisaco, as well as prepared two conference presentations (i.e. one on the challenges of the new forest regime and one on Essipit approaches to forest management). In addition, Sardan (2008) identifies that some of the limitations of participant observation are as follows: the presence of the researcher can influence the behaviours of research participants, the researcher may be assimilated to the local perspective, and findings cannot be generalized to other cases. To limit the risk of influencing research participants, the researcher in the field had previous experience in qualitative research and gave indications to co-researchers from Essipit. To avoid assimilation, preliminary results were discussed with others researchers, notably during conferences (Beaudoin 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2013d). This case study is not generalizable, but the case is well-detailed in order to help readers of this research relate the findings to other cases.

We used focus groups to understand the objectives of Essipit for forest-based development (objective 3). Paul Geoffrion (2008) provides a strong rationale for working with focus groups and his views are shared by other researchers (Creswell 1998; Babbie 2010). Focus groups allow for non-restrictive answers from participants and clarification of their different viewpoints. Group interactions provide in-depth understanding of a topic, and often bring out information that would not have emerged from individual interviews. Furthermore, group interactions make possible the verification of the degree of consensus among the participants. Focus groups also provide fast results and require a limited amount of resources: one person is usually enough to plan, animate, analyze, and report discussions. Overall, the method remains flexible and allows

the researcher to extend or limit some discussions. However, Geoffrion (2008) also forewarns about some disadvantages of focus groups. Moderators can potentially influence discussions or, as noted by Babbie (2010), over-direct the interview and interviewees. In addition, group interactions may have negative effects if people are hesitant to share their point of view in the presence of others (Creswell 1998). Babbie (2010) also points out the effect of "group conformity". This refers to the tendency for people to adopt similar point of views when in a group setting. These issues can be controlled with good preparation (Krueger and Casey 2000).

Finally, the administrators of Essipit Band Council provided relevant documents to address the research objectives, including public documents (e.g. newspaper articles, reports, research) as well as internal documents provided by Essipit Band Council (memos, meeting notes, reports, official letters, etc).

2.2.2 Data analysis

The first step in data analysis is to manage the information collected. For objectives 1 and 3, we began by transcribing all audio recordings. Transcripts were imported into NVivo 10 in order to carry out qualitative analysis of the research data (Miles and Huberman 2003). However, before coding, we printed and read all transcripts in order to have a sense of the general story (Creswell 1998). For objective 1, we used a thematic coding strategy (Miles and Huberman 2003). We classified the information included in the transcripts into themes (codes) covered by the interviews. For objective 3, data coding was done inductively. In order to better reflect the views of the participants no predetermined theme was used story (Creswell 1998).

For objective 2, we first gathered all research notes, reports and oral communication and documents received from the Band Council. Then, we used this information to describe the reality that we witnessed during an internship (De Sardan 2008).

2.2.3 Validation

First, being on-site for an extended period of time increased the quality of this research by building trust with participants, understanding the local culture, and verifying the research findings with local contacts (Creswell 1998). Participants had a chance to review their transcripts. Second, research results were validated by the use of multiple sources of information. The idea is that findings should not rely on only one source of information (De Sardan 2008); yet this does not mean that there is only one truth, but that reality can be understood and explained through various point of views. Third, research participants were invited to a dinner-conference in November 2013 in order to present and validate preliminary results of the chapter 4 and 6. Further, we solicited the participants' opinions about the credibility of the research findings (Creswell 1998). Finally, the quality of the research findings for chapter 5 was validated by the Essipit forest engineer.

2.2.4 Ethics

Essipit were incorporated at all stages of the research. Over the past four years, several meetings (in person or conference call) were held between Marc St-Onge (local contact) and myself to define research priorities, objectives and methodology. The research received formal support from the Band Council in November 2011. Data analysis, as well as reporting of the results, were carried out in close collaboration with Essipit. We followed the guidelines for ethical research, as

outlined by Asselin and Basile (2012). We took account of and familiarized myself with the cultural context, we provided sufficient time for feedback, free and informed consent and flexibility in adapting the research agenda to participant constraints, we shared the results as they became available, and we allowed time for the results to be validated.

In Quebec, the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute has prepared a research protocol (IDDPNQL 2005). In conducting this research, this document was consulted and the research guidelines were followed in several ways. First, the core criteria of participatory research aligned with the principles of the research protocol, namely power, equity and respect. In addition, we took into consideration local knowledge and experiences. The research provided mutual benefits as Essipit was involved in data analysis and validation. We also benefitted from the guidance of a number of people, including Essipit community leaders, a supervisory committee and an expert in Indigenous research.

Finally, this research project has been approved by the UBC Research Ethics Board. A presentation letter was used to obtain Free and Informed Consent from respondents. The main goal of ethical procedures is to protect the rights of the participants, by ensuring free and informed consent, fairness and equity, privacy and confidentiality (CIHR *et al.* 2010).

CHAPTER 3: ESSIPIT INNU FIRST NATION

In this chapter, we present the community-level conditions in which this research occurred. First, we provide the socio-demographic characteristics of the population, as well as information on the local government and traditional territory of Essipit. Then, we provide a brief overview of the history of Essipit economic development.

3.1 Essipit community, band council and traditional territory

Essipiunnuats, or the members of Essipit First Nation, form one of nine Innu communities located in the province of Quebec, Canada. The Indian reserve of Essipit represents an area of 0.8 km^2 (see figure 1). It is located approximately 275 km north-east of Quebec City on the Haute-Côte-Nord region, along the St. Lawrence River. Figure 2 provides a closer view of the location of the reserve. It is located 40 km from the mouth of the Saguenay River, close to Tadoussac, which is a popular tourist destination in Quebec. In total, Essipit counts 673 members of which 204 live on reserve and 469 live outside the reserve, in adjoining areas and outside the region.

Figure 1: Location of Essipit reserve and Nitassinan in Quebec
(Source: Essipit Band Council 2013)

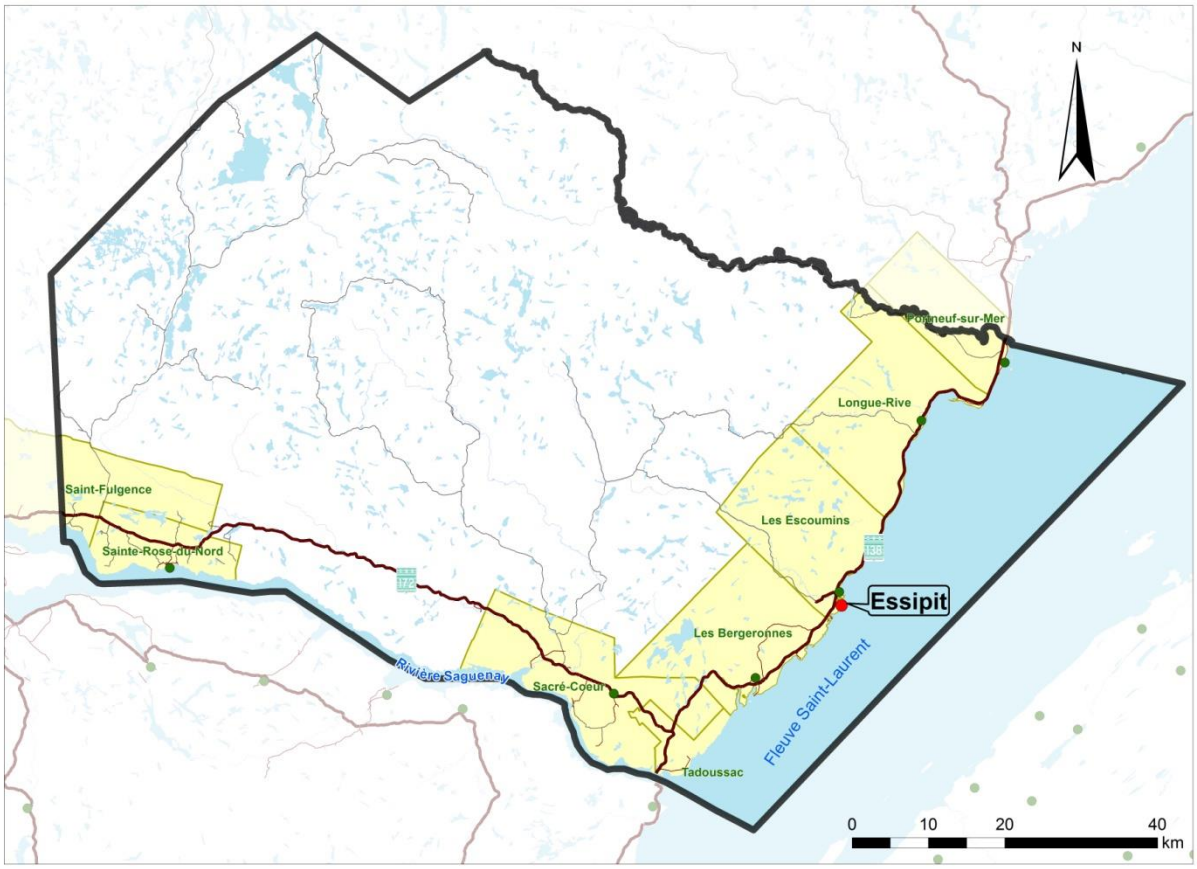

Figure 2: Essipit reserve and Nitassinan in the Haute-Côte-Nord region (Source: Essipit Band Council 2013)

The following chapter presents and discusses some socioeconomic indicators of the population provided by the Essipit Band Council in November 2013. Table 2 details the distribution of the population by age group for members on and off reserve. Essipit labour force on reserve counts 101 members, of which 17 have no high-school diploma, 15 have a high-school diploma, 31 have a professional degree, 21 have a cegep diploma, and 17 have a university degree. Table 3 shows Essipit employment statistics for 2013. The economy of Essipit is seasonal: 253 jobs out of 485. Thus, the summer season is characterized by full-employment. In winter, 38 members of the labour force on reserve are unemployed.

Table 2: Distribution of Essipit population by age group, for members on and off reserve

Characteristics	On reserve	Off reserve	Total
Total population	204 members	469 members	673 members
Distribution of the population by age group			
0-17 years	48	88	136
18-29 years	24	69	93
30-44 years	46	103	149
45-59 years	33	121	154
60 years and more	53	88	141

The Band Council of Essipit is the local government as identified under the Indian Act. The Council includes a chief and three advisors; each of them holding one vote in decision-making (although the Council generally operates on the basis of consensus). While the Chief holds a full time position, advisors do not; they hold part-time positions with a low salary. Elections occur every two years: either for the Chief and one advisor or for two advisors. Therefore, an elected official will generally remain in place for four years. On a regular basis, the Council holds a general assembly to inform their members of past and future decisions. The general assembly is sovereign; this means that it can dictate a course of action to the Chief and his advisors. In the past, it settled a difficult situation where the Chief and one councillor were opposing the other two councillors. The General Assembly can also decide to have an early election. Moreover, the Council owns several businesses under the banner "Essipit Enterprises" or in partnership with other First Nations or Quebec enterprises, including the convenience store, gas station, whale watching cruises, condos and campsites, fish restaurants and shops, as well as primary and secondary fish processing factories.

Table 3: Essipit employment statistics 2013

Employment	Sector	Non-Aboriginal				Aboriginal				
		Full-time	Seasonal	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Seasonal	Part-time	Total	Grand Total
Administration & public services										
CPNIE administration	Public	10	-		10	11	-	-	11	21
Health and social services	Public	1	-	-	1	4	-	-	4	5
Essipit Police	Public		-	-	-	3	-		3	3
Education and culture	Public	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	2
Technical and maintenance services	Public	2	4	-	6	10	4	-	14	20
Economic development & community business management	Public	3	-	-	3	1	-	-	1	4
Road Essipit	Public	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	2
Sub-total		**17**	**4**	**-**	**21**	**31**	**5**	**-**	**36**	**57**
Entreprises (100% Essipit)										
Outfitter Domaine du Lac des Cœurs (o/r)	Tourism		2	-	2	1	5	-	6	8
Outfitter Domaine Sportif du Lac Loup (o/r)	Tourism	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	2	3
Outfitter Club Claire (o/r)	Tourism	-	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	4
Outfitter Lacs à Jimmy (o/r)	Tourism	-	4	-	4	-	1	-	1	5
Outfitter Domaine du Lac Bernier (o/r)	Tourism	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	1	3
Essipit whales whatching cruises (o/r)	Tourism	-	12	1	13	-	2	1	3	16
Shipek cottages (o/r)	Tourism	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Management society P.R.P. (booking)	Manage-ment	3	3	2	8	4	2	-	6	14
Essipit condos	Tourism		6	1	7	1	2	-	3	10
Tadoussac camping (o/r)	Tourism	1	15	2	18	-	-	-	-	18
Anse-à-Jos et Yves cottages	Tourism	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Le tipi camping	Tourism	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Montagnais community center	Service	2	-	1	3	-	1	-	1	4
Bar C.C.M.	Service	2	3	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Essipit Bowling	Service	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	2
Montagnais convenience store	Service	3	-	2	5	4	-	-	4	9
Essipit Artisan – Store	Service	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	2
Essipit Artisan – Production	Arts	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5	5
Léo crab fishing boat	Fishery	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	4
Essipit radio	Commu-nication	7	-	-	7	1	-	-	1	8
Sub-total		**18**	**56**	**9**	**83**	**12**	**25**	**1**	**38**	**121**
Entreprises (partnership)										
Namesh – transformation (o/r)	Fishery	-	42	-	42	-	1	-	1	43
UMEK - transformation (o/r)	Fishery	-	24	-	24	2	64	-	66	90
Pêcherie Manicouagan – distribution (o/r)	Fishery	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15
Crabiers du Nord - transformation (o/r)	Fishery	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	114
Nikan – harvest (o/r)	Fishery	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Granulco - transformation (o/r)	Forestry	12	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	12
Navigation des Basques Ferry	Transport	1	26	-	27	-	1	-	1	28
Sub-total		**13**	**97**	**-**	**110**	**2**	**66**	**-**	**68**	**307**
GRAND-TOTAL		**48**	**157**	**9**	**214**	**45**	**96**	**1**	**142**	**485**

o/r : off reserve; n/a: non available

The territorial regime of Essipit consists mainly of four zones (see figure 5): the Nitassinan, the reserve, the Akumunan and the Innu Assi. The traditional territory of Essipit is called the "Nitassinan", which means "Our Land" (Lacasse 2004). The Nitassinan covers an area of 8403 km^2 (Gouvernement du Québec 2004), including a marine, costal and terrestrial area. Most of the territory is under the jurisdiction of the province of Quebec and, thus, provincial and federal laws apply. The Indian reserve of Essipit is a small territory of 0.8 km^2 that has been set apart by the Canadian government for the use and benefit of the community members. The Nitassinan also includes a project of Biodiversity Reserve (provincial park) called Akumunan. Negotiations between the Government of Quebec and Essipit Band Council are well-advanced. Finally, Essipit is negotiating with the governments of Canada and Quebec in order to affirm a Treaty that would recognize the Innu Assi of Essipit. The Innu Assi will include "all attributes of full ownership of the soil and subsoil, including the right to freely and fully use, enjoy and dispose of these lands and, in particular, to exploit the fauna, aquatic, water, hydraulic, forest, floral and mineral resources therein" (Gouvernement du Québec 2004). More details on Essipit territorial regime are provided in chapter 5.

The Nitassinan has always been and remains a defining characteristic of the lifestyle, culture, and values of the Innus, including Essipiunnuats and their ancestors. Indeed, the Innus have always believed that they are connected to the land, which creates a sense of stewardship rather than a sense of ownership and control of the land and its resources (Lacasse 2004). Innu Aitun designates "all activities, in their traditional or contemporary form, linked to the culture, values and traditional lifestyle of the Innus associated with the occupation and use of the Nitassinan and with the special connection the Innus have with the land. These include all practices, customs and traditions including hunting, fishing, trapping and picking, for subsistence, ritualistic or

social purposes. All spiritual, cultural, social and community aspects are an integral part of it. Commercial aspects are however regulated by Canadian or Quebec laws" (Gouvernement du Québec 2004, p.9).

Archaeological evidence shows that the Innu have been present in Eastern Quebec for over 6000 years. These peoples were semi-nomads, which means they were travelling in forest areas during autumn and winter and they returned closer to major waterways, especially the St. Lawrence River in spring and summer in order to trade with other Aboriginal groups and exploit coastal resources (Laforest 1983). The forest allowed them to obtain food, clothing, materials and tools. It was a place for social gathering and intergenerational relation. The Innus were also transforming the forest, by creating portage trails, as well as places of embarkation and disembarkation. In sum, the forest was a place where the Innu culture was alive, developed and transmitted to younger generations. More information can be found in the literature on the historical land use and occupation made by Innus Nations (Laforest 1983; Lacasse 2004). For the purpose of this research, the next section focuses on the history of the economic development of Essipit.

3.2 History of Essipit economic development

3.2.1 Development on reserve

From the creation of the reserve in 1892 until the mid-1970s, Essipit experienced a period of economic and demographic decline (CPNIE 2008). The population declined to 95 members in 1966 before starting to increase thereafter, rising to 114 members in 1971, 129 members in 1976 and 139 members in 1980 (Laforest 1983). In the late 1970s, the reserve consisted mainly of

residences for the band members and services were very limited. In 1980, the majority of members were finding employment off the reserve. Consolidated Bathurst, a large forest company, was the largest employer and was providing jobs to a dozen members (Laforest 1983). At the forestry level, all timber volumes were allocated to large forest companies, and, therefore, no access was available for Essipit.

In 1977, some young Essipiunnuats were elected at the Band Council and made changes at the political and administrative level. The Council decided to take an approach of "community development": an approach where the Council acts as both an entrepreneur and a government in order to support economic and social development, notably through the creation of community businesses. The Council began by developing services and infrastructure on reserves (CPNIE 2012): a community center (1977-78) , a bowling alley (1979), a lounge-bar (1981), administrative offices (1981), a playground for children (1982), a handicraft kiosk (1982), tennis courts and soccer field (1983), an apartment building (1983), a warehouse (1983) and a community radio station (1983). However, the small size of the reserve was limiting the development of Essipit and, thus, the Council started to explore other avenues.

3.2.2 Development off reserve

In 1980, the Council hired a Director of education, culture and economic development (CPNIE 2012). The Director consulted with community members to list their skills, work experiences, interests and aspirations. Consultation first indicated the importance of the practice of traditional activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping by community members. In addition, several members also had work experience as loggers. After the consultation process, the Council concluded that access to forest lands and resources would be a key for the development of the

community. Accordingly, the Council began the first economic development initiative off reserve in 1983. The Council bought the outfitter Domaine du Lac des Coeurs and, thus, acquired the exclusive rights for managing wildlife resources, as well as the infrastructures built on the outfitter. This outfitter represents 141 km^2 of land in Essipit Nitassinan. The Council purchased a second outfitter in 1989, called Club Claire (29 km^2).

3.2.3 Consolidation of the tourism sector

During the early 1990s, Essipit already owned tourism infrastructure on reserve and off reserve (i.e. two outfitters) and, thus, decided to expand its position in order to become a tourist destination. The Council added four other outfitters to their holdings. Then, to increase tourist traffic, the Council invested in whale watching cruises which are very popular in this region of Quebec. The Council bought two whale watching businesses: *Sanctuaire Marin des Bergeronnes* in 1993 and *Croisières T.G.B.* in 1995. These companies were merged in 1998 to become *Croisières Essipit*. The council carried out research on the history of the Innus of Essipit, their traditions and culture. Gradually, cultural content was shared through Essipit tourism businesses. In the mid-1990s, Essipit was able to access silviculture contracts on the territory of its outfitters. At the same time, the Council continued to invest in services and infrastructure on reserves, including a three-unit apartment building or triplex (1992), an outdoor stage for celebrating Pow-Wows (1992), purchase of private lands, a local newspaper *Tipatshimun* (1995), cottages, an administrative center and health clinic (1997), a new convenience store and a craft shop (1999-2000). Finally, to complete the development of the tourism sector, the Council constructed a luxury condominium complex in 2003, consisting of eight buildings of four units located along the St. Lawrence River (Condos Natakam) that can be rented to tourists.

3.2.4 Economic diversification

In the early 2000s, Essipit reached full employment[2] in summer time. This situation led to a lack of local labour. Hence, Essipit economic development goals changed from job creation to: 1) maintaining and improving employment, 2) diversification of income sources for the community, and 3) access to renewable natural resources. Thereafter, the Council focused on developing projects in partnership with companies that provided the necessary labour, assumed some of the workload and shared their experience, as well as some of the risks inherent to each project.

In this context, Essipit achieved a vertical integration of the fisheries sector, through acquiring ownership in companies that carry out harvesting (production), processing and distribution activities. More details are provided in chapter 4. In 2008, the forest company Boisaco[3] and Essipit signed a Land Management and Development Partnership to improve their collaboration in forest management and economic development (details presented in chapter 5). Following this agreement, the Council developed a business project for the production of pellets for residential and commercial stoves and became a founding partner of Granulco in 2009 (Boisaco 2012). Essipit has 25 % shares in the company. In 2013, the Council bought the outfitter Club chasse et pêche Ste-Anne-de-Portneuf (48 km2).

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[2] Most of these jobs were seasonal: their duration varied from 14 to 20 weeks per year. Thus, unemployment is higher in winter time.

[3] It is important to note that Boisaco is characterized by a cooperative business model and, thus, is itself a community oriented business controlled, in part, by its workers. In April 2013, Boisaco had a guarantee of 406,850 m^3 of wood . Ministère des ressources naturelles (MRN). 2013 Région d'application des garantie d'approvisionnement (GA) de la Côte-Nord, https://www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca/forets/amenagement/documents/droits-region09.pdf (February 26, 2014).

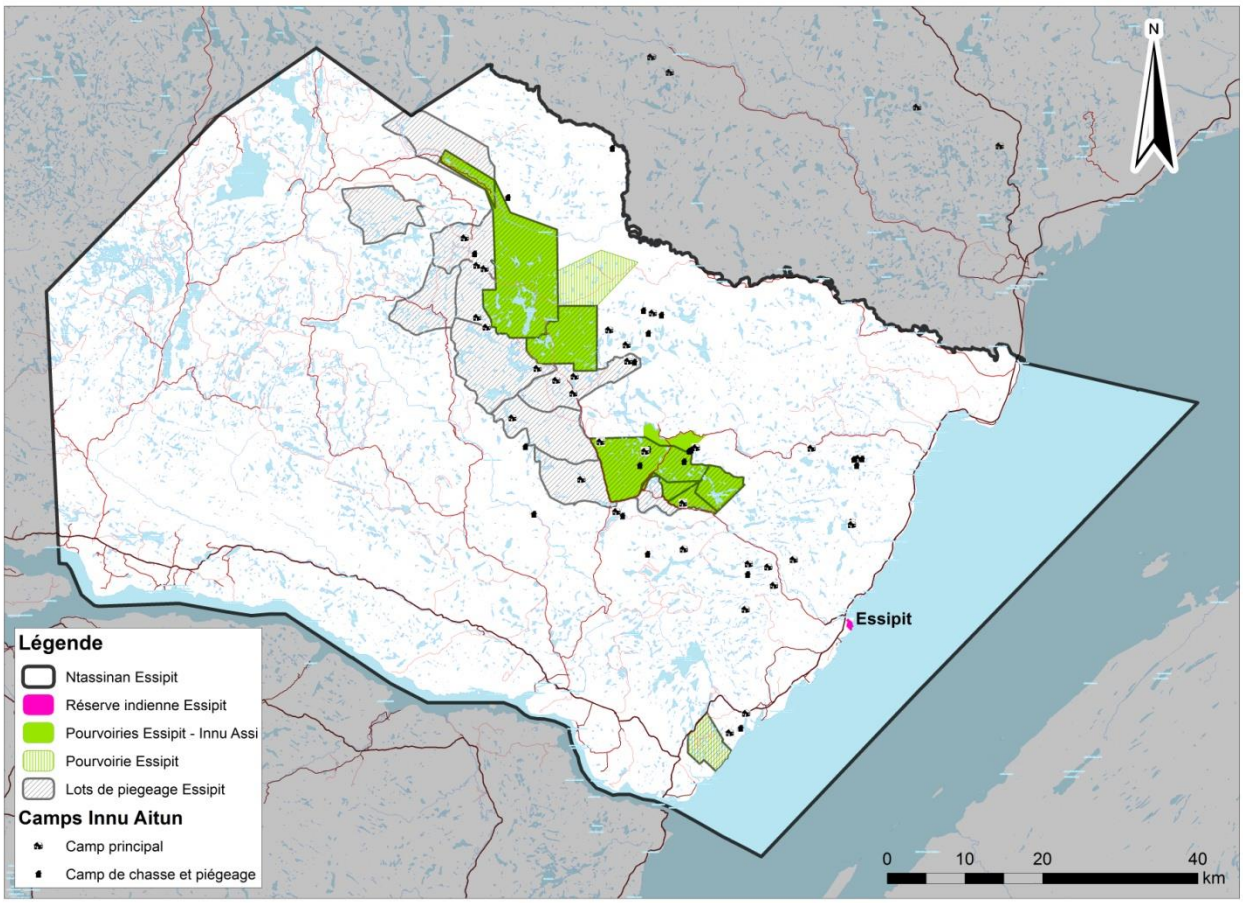

Figure 3: Location of Essipit outfitters[4] (Source: Essipit Band Council 2013)

In this section, we provided an overview of the economic development that occurred in Essipit over the past 30 years. Essipit actions have helped to define a distinct model of forest-based development. Essipit currently owns and manage six outfitters (see figure 3), covering 385 km^2 of land including their infrastructures, with exclusive commercial rights for hunting, fishing and trapping. Essipit also carried silviculture contracts for a decade. Essipit forest-based development also included road building and maintenance, as well as value-added products. The next chapter

[4] It is important to note that this map provides partial information on Essipit land uses: approximately 50% of community members have been interviewed by Essipit and the map does not show land uses off Nitassinan.

will explore in more details the Essipit model of AFEs in order to identify what worked and did not worked.

CHAPTER 4: THE ESSIPIT MODEL OF ABORIGINAL FOREST ENTREPRENEURSHIP

4.1 Introduction

In Canada, Aboriginal forest enterprises (AFEs) can play an important role in improving socioeconomic conditions and economic self-sufficiency of Aboriginal communities (La Rusic 1995; Anderson 1997a; NAFA 2000; Ross and Smith 2002; Natcher 2008a; Beaudoin 2009; Booth and Skelton 2011). It can also contribute to cultural development within Aboriginal communities by allowing them to control and develop activities on their traditional territory. Furthermore, Aboriginal forestry enterprises can contribute to the sustainability of forestry in Canada. For these reasons, many initiatives have been introduced to support and increase the economic participation of Aboriginal peoples in forestry (NAFA1993; Stevenson and Perreault 2008; Government of Canada 2012b; FFPNQ 2013; FNFC 2013; NAFA2013). However, to date, the impacts of various initiatives and programs have been limited to improving the well-being of Aboriginal peoples: the forest sector is not adequately respecting Aboriginal rights, values and cultures (Ross and Smith 2002); the forest sector was found to have a marginal contribution to employment and family incomes within Aboriginal communities (Parkins *et al.* 2006); Aboriginal communities in forest regions are experiencing lower socio-economic conditions than non-Aboriginal Canadians (Gysbers and Lee 2003); opportunities are lost, because Aboriginal communities are characterized by capacity deficiencies (Bombay 2010). Overall, there is a lack of knowledge about the conditions that can support successful AFEs and address the socioeconomic needs of Aboriginal communities.

Therefore, our aim is to explore Essipit model of AFEs in order to understand the factors of success of this model. Between May 2012 and July 2013, we conducted two series of interviews with key respondents: first, with administrators of the Essipit Innu Band Council; second, with representatives of Essipit AFEs, as well as their non-Aboriginal business partners. In this text, we begin by identifying factors that can shape Aboriginal forest entrepreneurship. We then outline the methodological considerations and present the results of the research.

4.2 Conceptual framework

AFEs can take a variety of organizational forms, such as private businesses, cooperatives, joint ventures and community businesses (Anderson 1997b; Anderson and Giberson 2004; Hickey and Nelson 2005; Beaudoin 2009). Aboriginal communities may adopt a strategy that promotes a particular form of AFEs, promote various models at the same time, or implement a transition from one model to another one (Anderson 1997b; Beaudoin 2009). Furthermore, Dana (Dana 2007; Dana and Anderson 2007) suggests considering informal AFEs, namely self- employment, because subsistence activities, such as fishing, hunting, trapping and gathering, are still providing for the basic needs of Aboriginal peoples (Simeone 2007; Natcher 2008b).

In 2002, there were 1493 AFEs in Canada (Wilson and Graham 2005). This number may be higher today, given that different reports suggest an increase in Aboriginal economic participation in forestry (NAFA 2003; NAFA 2007; BC MFML 2010; FNFC 2010). Moreover, the number of AFEs in 2002 was only including five categories of business opportunities: logging, forest management services, trucking, wood processing, and value-added activities. AFEs can engage in a much wider range of opportunities, such as forest-based tourism and recreation, non-timber forest products, or ecological goods and services (NAFA 2011).

There are indications that the economic role of AFEs in Canada is improving. However, several challenges remain and there are still many factors that limit the efforts of Aboriginals seeking to participate in forest development. One of the most important barriers concerns limited access and control over forest resources (Wilson and Graham 2005; Wellstead and Stedman 2008; Booth and Skelton 2011). In particular, most timber rights are already allocated to forest companies. Another challenge, often cited in the literature, is a lack of access to financial resources (Wilson and Graham 2005; Wellstead and Stedman 2008; Beaudoin 2009). AFEs can be affected by ineffective political institutions (Jorgensen 2007). For example, Trosper *et al.* (2008) have demonstrated the importance of separating politics and day-to-day business decisions to ensure the profitability of AFEs. Ineffective provincial bureaucracy and regulatory frameworks can also hinder the development of AFEs. Notably, the Tl'azt'en Nation provides an example of this:

> The federal government put conditions on the mill disallowing any addition to existing province-wide processing facilities or the purchase of new equipment. According to one administrator, the restriction forced the company into inefficient operations that ensured it could not compete in a normal business market (Booth and Skelton 2011).

Aboriginal communities face several other challenges including a lack of managerial capacity (i.e. professional, technical, financial, and business skills) and infrastructures (Natcher 2008,Wellstead and Stedman 2008). Beaudoin (2009) highlights the importance of support services for the creation and development of AFEs. Such services can help with funding, skills development, technical advice and market access.

Small and Medium Forest enterprises (SMFEs) share most of these challenges (LeBel *et al.* 2010; Beaudoin and LeBel 2011; Tomaselli *et al.* 2012; Macqueen 2013), notably bad market conditions. Are there fundamental differences between AFEs and SMFEs? The literature

proposes “community-orientation” as a distinctive characteristic of AFEs (Anderson 1997a; Peredo *et al.* 2004; Berkes and Adhikari 2005; Hindle and Lansdowne 2005; Dana and Anderson 2007). Lindsay (2005) highlights that “Indigenous entrepreneurship is more holistic than non-Indigenous entrepreneurship; it focuses on both economic and non-economic objectives.” Similarly, Dana and Anderson (2011) assert that “individual profit motive exists; however, there are also community needs and objectives.” Beaudoin and LeBel (2011) note that even in a community where the economic model is based on private enterprises, AFEs strongly commit toward the community to which they belong and seek to help in many ways such as training for young people. Yet Kozak (2007) also identifies community-orientation as a characteristic of SMFEs. Diochon (2013, p. 304) defines social entrepreneurship as “identifying an opportunity to improve social well-being, then acquiring and employing the resources required to do so” and associate it to the concept of Aboriginal entrepreneurship. How are AFEs different from other form of enterprises? An argument can be made that Aboriginal entrepreneurship differs in several aspects (Trosper 1995; Peredo *et al.* 2004; Hindle and Lansdowne 2005; Lindsay *et al.* 2006): 1) special connection with their traditional territory, 2) distinct identity, 3) context of colonisation such as imposed institutions, and 4) band-owned businesses. Yet, these distinctive characteristics and their implications are not well-understood in the context of AFEs.

Currently, there are a significant knowledge gaps on AFEs making it difficult to draw a path towards success. For example, Fortier *et al.* (2012) highlight the lack of research interests for the economic role of Aboriginal peoples in forestry. Given the importance of AFEs, it is surprising that there is little research that focuses explicitly on this question. Furthermore, most research to date has focused on firms or partnerships (Anderson 1997a; Brubacher 1998; Wilson and

Graham 2005; Boyd 2006; Trosper *et al.* 2008), but few have mapped out a more complete picture at the community-level.

This research will directly address this knowledge gap. The challenges aforementioned illustrate provide a framework to examine the collective model of AFEs of Essipit Innu First Nation, located on the Haute-Côte-Nord region of Quebec.

4.3 Methodology

The Innu First Nation of Essipit provides a relevant case study, because of their past and present participation in AFEs (St-Georges 2009). Various sources indicate that Essipit constitutes a collective model of development that succeeded both socially and economically (CPNIE 2008; St-Georges 2009; Proulx and Gauthier 2012). To date, no research has examined the path taken by Essipit to build its model of AFEs. This chapter directly address this gap in the literature.

Data collection occurred between May 2012 and July 2013. Local collaborators helped to identify key informants who met the following selection criteria (Creswell 1998): 1) be a member of Essipit First Nation; 2) be 18 years or older; 3) have knowledge, experience or an interest in forest-based development. To corroborate information provided by Essipit community members (Creswell 1998), we also met three non-Aboriginal business partners of Essipit. By diversifying the sources of information, we were looking for divergent views on Essipit models of AFEs. In total, we carried out semi-structured interviews with 17 key informants before we reached a point of data saturation (Gauthier 2008). Appendix 2 gives an idea of the interview questions.

In addition, we found it useful to explore the vertical integration of the fishery sector by Essipit. Essipit experience in the fisheries represents a good basis for comparison; notably because Essipit had not been able to do the same in forestry (i.e. exploit opportunities in timber harvesting or primary manufacturing of timber products). In addition, we interviewed three entrepreneurs from two forest enterprises based on Essipit reserve. They were not included in Essipit model of AFEs, because they represent different contexts. They participate in the model of industrial forestry. In addition, one enterprise is owned and managed by a non-Aboriginal and the other by a new member. Finally, they do not constitute critical elements without which Essipit model of AFEs would not have worked.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed. NVivo 10 was used to carry out data coding (Miles and Huberman 2003). We used a thematic coding strategy (Miles and Huberman 2003) to structure and organize the information into themes (codes) covered by the interview questions. Then, we used inductive and open coding in order to refine the themes (Babbie 2010). To maximize the quality of the research findings, we validated the preliminary results with local contacts and with community members during a conference-dinner in Essipit in November of 2013.

4.4 Results

Interviews allowed us to draw a portrait of the business portfolio of Essipit (figure 4).

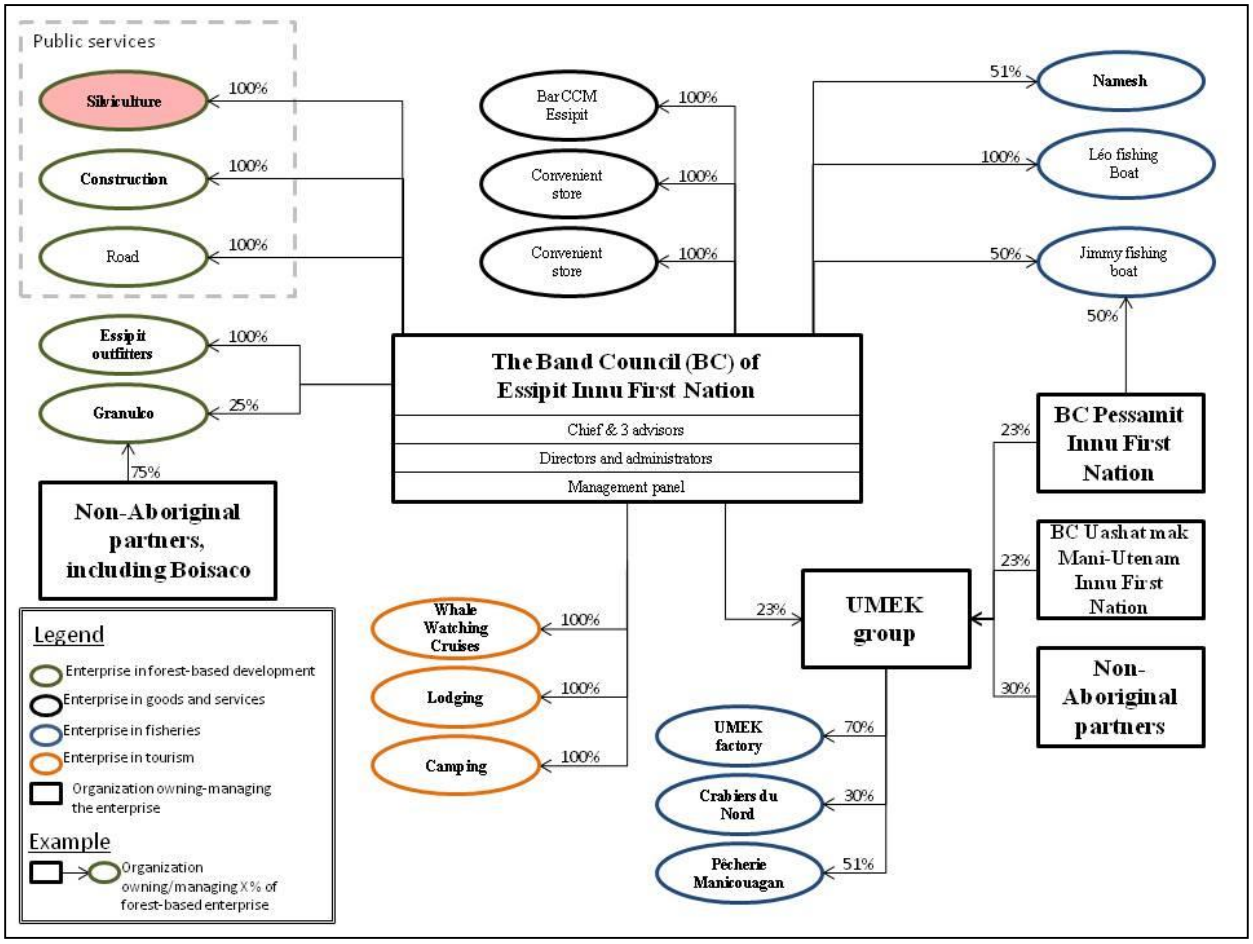

Figure 4: Essipit business portfolio

It includes public services, community businesses and joint ventures between the Band Council and Quebec non-Aboriginal enterprises or other First Nations. Essipit business portfolio encompasses activities in forest based-development, fisheries, tourism, as well as goods and services. Forest-based activities are organized under three organizations: the Band Council of Essipit Innu First Nation, Essipit Outfitters and Granulco. The following section presents these

organizations, their history of development, their challenges and their contributions to the community of Essipit. We also present the experiences of Essipit in the fishery sector in order to exemplify the contributions of other economic sectors to the Essipit model of AFEs.

4.4.1 The Band Council of Essipit Innu First Nation

The Band Council contributes to Essipit model of AFEs in many ways. First, a director of Essipit enterprises is in charge of band-owned businesses, including Essipit outfitters and past activities in silviculture. This individual worked for the Band Council for 30 years. Second, a director of economic development is in charge of analyzing business projects, creating business plans, and finding funding sources. For example, he analysed and developed the Granulco business project. In addition, this individual sits on the many different boards of directors of Essipit joint ventures (e.g. Granulco). This individual worked for the Band Council for more than 20 years. Third, a management panel, composed of Essipit elected officials and administrators, decides where to reinvest the profits of Essipit businesses. Parts of the profits are reinvested in Essipit AFEs. Fourth, a negotiation and consultation team, composed of five full-time professionals, is responsible for all forest consultations, such as the consultation regarding the new forest regimes, the forest operations of Boisaco, and a follow-up on land uses by community members. Fifth, a construction sector builds and maintains the infrastructure of Essipit outfitters and a road sector builds and maintains forest roads on the territories of Essipit outfitters.

4.4.1.1 History of development

The Council's role in forest-based development began when it bought the outfitter Domaine du Lac des Cœurs in 1983. Two years after, in 1985, the Council took over the responsibility of

maintaining and repairing forest roads on this territory of 141 km^2. However, the Council quickly became aware of the high financial costs associated with hiring a contractor. Thus, the Council bought the necessary machinery and hired workers to carry out the work internally. Today, the Council is maintaining and repairing forest roads of the territories of its six outfitters, which represents 385 km^2.

In 1988, Hydro-Quebec sent a letter to Essipit announcing that it planned to carry out chemical spraying on the territory of the outfitter Domaine du Lac des Coeurs. This operation was meant to control the vegetation under the power lines of Hydro-Quebec. Essipit was against chemical spraying and therefore opposed the project. The Council met with a representative of Hydro-Quebec. It insisted that there be no spraying on the territory, and that the community was able to achieve the same result with chainsaws or brush cutters. After negotiation, Hydro-Quebec accepted the proposition of Essipit and, thus, Essipit obtained its first silviculture contract.

In 1989, the Council was managing two outfitters. They were reviewing the forest management plans of forest companies in order to verify if they intended to carry any forest operations on the territories of Essipit outfitters, as well as on Essipit trap lines or elsewhere on Essipit Nitassinan. The Council found that silviculture operations will be carried out on the territories of their outfitters. Essipit met with REXFOR[5] in order to organize and carry out forestry projects internally. Although REXFOR had some doubts about the ability of the Essipit to successfully carry out silviculture work (i.e. lack of experience and expertise), REXFOR agreed – after

[5] At that time, the Quebec Government gave REXFOR the responsibility to administer silviculture contracts.

negotiations - to issue an initial pre-commercial thinning contract (around 400 ha). To address their lack of expertise, the Council hired a project supervisor with experience in silviculture.

In 1994, the business relationship between Essipit and REXFOR ended. Instead, the Council started to deal with the beneficiary of a timber supply licence who was in charge of forest management. Essipit received annual silviculture contracts for more than a decade (CPNIE 2012). To get a better sense of the contracts' importance, Essipit gained a contract for 505 hectares in 1997 and another for 600 hectares in 1998 (CPNIE 2012). The community stopped doing silviculture work in 2004. The next section explains why.

4.4.1.2 Challenges

When Essipit was carrying out silviculture contracts, they encountered three main challenges: a lack of labour, a limited access to contracts, and a conflict of interests with the forest industry. The individual who was responsible for silviculture contracts explained the situation as follows:

> *"it became increasingly difficult. Among our loggers, there were only a few guys from Essipit. We always only had a few, maybe one or two. We decided to stop. It was too complicated; but it was a shame, because the ten guys we had made 600-700 ha every year. It generated 20 weeks of work. I made money and was able to repair forest roads. [The forest company] decided to pull the plug. We will seriously consider forestry again, the day we will have lands to ourselves and no longer depend on anyone (E-01).*

According to this respondent, transferring the responsibility of forest management to large forest companies had negative consequences for Essipit, because the Essipit silviculture enterprise was acting as a contractor. First, it caused a decrease in profitability, because large forest companies had higher administrative fees. Second, the change in administration also created difficult relations, because of conflicting interests. In 2004, a dispute arose between Essipit and the forest

industry that was granting contracts to Essipit. The forest company wanted to harvest timber in an area used by the last herd of woodland caribou in the Haute-Côte-Nord region. Essipit sought to protect the herd by creating a protected area (now the Akumunan biodiversity reserve project). This conflict resulted in the permanent closure of Essipit silviculture activities and the end of Essipit involvement in forest management. However, the Akumunan received an official status as a biodiversity reserve project in 2005.

Finally, this informant mentioned that the Government did not take into account the perspectives and interests of the community in forest management. He referred to forest interventions they have done in the past that were aimed at reducing the number of trees per hectare and controlling the composition and quality of residual forests. During their operations, they were interested in keeping fruit trees (non-commercial species) which are beneficial to wildlife and, therefore, to their outfitters. They were told by a government representative to cut the fruit trees or they would not receive their payment. This individual acknowledged that this might have been accepted in another region by another government representative, but it is still an example that is representative of the general situation.

4.4.1.3 Benefits

Silviculture contracts have created revenues, jobs and expertise in the forestry sector. In addition, Essipit has gained greater control over the activities that occurred on the outfitter territories and Essipit Nitassinan.

> *We realized that forest management allowed us to control forest access. We were in charge of repairing the roads (E-01)*

For example, Essipit was able to raise awareness among its forest workers in order to harmonize forest operations with the activities of their outfitters.

> *It is much easier to make it compatible with other activities when you control forestry activities, whether with those who fish and hunt or those who are walking in the forest [...] If you hear the machines and the "bing-bang", it's more difficult (E-05).*

In particular, Essipit asked its forest workers to drive slower on forest roads when approaching sensitive areas used by the clients of the outfitters.

The road sector of the Council, hired two operators to repair and maintain road access for Essipit outfitters. The road sector provides a full-time job for a non-Aboriginal and a seasonal job for a member of Essipit. The construction sector of the Council builds and renovates cottages and other facilities for the outfitters. This sector also includes one full-time inspector and one worker, as well as three seasonal workers from Essipit. One non-Aboriginal also works part-time for this sector.

4.4.2 Essipit Outfitters

Essipit outfitters are fully owned by the Band Council and have the legal status of a company. While daily decisions are taken by the coordinator of the outfitters, strategic matters such as major investments are discussed between the coordinator and the director of Essipit enterprises. The director also sits at the management panel in order to discuss the financial needs of the outfitters.

With only one exception[6], each outfitter has a cottage for guards, cottages for clients and other facilities. For each outfitter, facilities are located in one area, notably for close monitoring of wildlife captures. As such, when clients return from their fishing trips, they have to note the name of the lake, the number of fish, the weight of each fish and the number of fishermen involved in the catch. Data collection serves to create three indicators of fishing quality: the average weight of fish, the production of each lake and the overall success of fishing at the site.

4.4.2.1 History of development

Essipit's role as an outfitter began in 1983, when members of the community who regularly hunted and fished in the vicinity of the outfitter Domaine du Lac des Coeurs (141 km^2) discovered that the business was for sale. The Council took the necessary steps to seize the opportunity. The purchase of an outfitter created employment and generated land development in a manner that was consistent with Essipit culture, as it involved management of the land for hunting, fishing and trapping.

The coordinator of the outfitter attended regular meetings of the Quebec Outfitters Association. Taking into consideration that many owners of outfitters were elderly, the coordinator expressed an interest in buying other outfitters at a fair price (i.e. market value). One manager of Essipit Outfitters explained that it made sense to maintain and develop good relationships with other owners of outfitters, because many non-Aboriginal outfitter owners had negative views and attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples. It was often assumed that wildlife resources would be

[6] The staff and infrastructures of the outfitter Domaine Lac des Cœurs also serve for the outfitter Club chasse et pêche Ste-Anne-de-Portneuf.

overexploited by Essipit. In this sense, maintaining good relations and paying attention to potential purchase opportunities established future prospects for expanding the outfitter holdings of Essipit. In 1989, the Council purchased the outfitter Club Claire (29 km2); in 1990, the outfitter Domaine sportif du Lac Loup (55 km^2); in 1994, they acquired the outfitter Lacs Jumeaux (16 km^2). The outfitter Lac Jumeaux and the outfitter Club Claire were merged and expanded in order to create an adjoining territory (81.5 km^2) and increase the fishery potential without putting too much the pressure on these resources. In 1996, Essipit acquired 50% of the outfitter Domaine du Lac Bernier (32.7 km2). In 1999, the acquisition of the outfitter Lac à Jimmy (24 km^2) was significant as it allowed Essipit to draw customers for whom the existing outfitters were too far. This outfitter is located right next to the only highway in the region. In addition, this outfitter is the only one where Essipit is adding raised fishes into the lakes of the Outfitter. Essipit finalized the purchase of the outfitter Domaine du Lac Bernier in 2006. As the Outfitter Domaine du Lac des Coeurs was exploited to its optimal potential, Essipit Band Council purchased the outfitter Club Chasses et Pêche Ste-Anne-De-Portneuf (a 48 km^2 territory adjacent to Domaine du Lac des Coeurs) in 2013 to better distribute the pressure on the fish population.

In total, the Council has purchased six outfitters that are relatively close geographically in order to create, at the heart of Essipit Nitassinan, a set of territories under its management. One administrator of Essipit explained that the community funded the acquisitions of outfitters using federal programs before 2000 and, after that, a combination of 1) financial programs and 2) funds available through Essipit management boards (e.g. funds generated by the fishery businesses). In 2013, the Lac des Coeurs outfitter was awarded a prize after installing a solar energy system for the site. This project was expensive, but it avoided the use of a generator: a

system that is louder and creates more pollution, but costs less. If the solar energy system works well, the plan is to install similar energy systems in all the other outfitters.

4.4.2.2 Challenges

The major obstacle to the development of Essipit outfitters lies in the fact that the Quebec government no longer issues new leases. In addition, expanding the geographical limits of existing outfitters is very difficult, if not impossible. Furthermore, there is an investment risk as leases for outfitters with exclusive commercial rights have limited duration and they do not give land ownership. In addition, other industrial developments may affect the integrity of these territories. Another challenge discussed during the interviews concerns recruiting new staff and retaining existing staff. Finally, the managers of Essipit outfitters mentioned that they have faced the same challenges over the past 30 years: increase the turnover, maintain the service quality and satisfy customers. Yet, the pros must outweigh the cons as interviewees reported that the Council is looking to buy more outfitters.

4.4.2.3 Benefits

First of all, the acquisition of outfitters has been a key element in the development strategy of Essipit. The first objective was to create jobs. Every year, the six outfitters generate one permanent job for the manager of the outfitters, nine seasonal job for guardians for Essipiunnuats and nine non-Aboriginals, as well as two wildlife technician jobs (seasonal) for non-Aboriginals. In addition, an administrator from Essipit explained that outfitters provide greater negotiation powers with the government and forest companies on issues such as economic participation, accommodation and treaty negotiation:

> *Since we bought the outfitters, I think that we stop speaking in the abstract about Aboriginal rights. You have more than Aboriginal rights; you have [commercial]hunting and fishing rights. These are exclusive commercial rights owned by the Council. Thus, the idea of discussing, negotiating, finding common ground... the land is yours. We facilitated the negotiation process with the government, because if you go tell a landowner that you will expropriate them and that they have to sell to Indians. Imagine how difficult that can be! Now, Essipit did the work for them. The government could have done this [and say] for example: We will solve the problem. We will buy outfitters for [Essipit] and when the time comes, we will hand over the outfitters to them." However, they couldn't do it. We were proactive in this (E-01).*

In particular, outfitters (i.e. commercial rights) helped to access silviculture contracts with REXFOR and forest companies. Controlling the land economically also facilitated the treaty negotiation process between Essipit and the government. In the past, local negotiations covered 40km^2 of land on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence River. The local non-Aboriginal population protested against this project. Instead, it was proposed by the opposition to give Essipit the outfitter territories, since "the land already belongs to them." The negotiation now includes the conversion of over 300 km^2 of public lands into private lands.

The outfitter justified the purchase of machinery for building and maintaining forest roads and, thus, allow for economies of scale in other public services, such as snow removal on reserve. Furthermore, outfitters have balanced spending and revenues. Revenues are used primarily to provide good conditions for workers and improving outfitters facilities. Sometimes, an outfitter has posted deficits, but they were covered by revenues made by other businesses such as the fishery or tourism sector. The economic contributions of outfitters are well summarized by the following respondent:

> *We are successful in managing our outfitters in a way that they don't make deficits. We are even able to reinvest over time. So we have improved the value of our businesses, but they have never contributed to the management panel. It has always been the opposite; the management table has always invested in the outfitters.*

> *Fisheries bring the money. [...] The outfitters allowed us to participate in forestry, to acquire equipment and make economies of scale elsewhere. For example, we remove the snow on the roads of the reserve. We have loaders, excavators and many other things. Globally, the outfitters buy gas at the convenience store, self-finance, decrease the overall spending of the community and create jobs. It has been a real leverage for development (E-09)*

In terms of culture, one respondent explained that:

> *There is a lot of land occupation. It is difficult to have a place on the territory. It is an issue. Essipit bought outfitters as a means of territorial expansion (E-12).*

For example, Essipit outfitters allow youth and elders to partake in cultural activities. In addition, outfitters are a good fit culturally. One respondent explained that Aboriginals possess a good knowledge of the territory, as well as hunting, fishing and trapping activities.

> *In 1983, it was not common to finance economic development projects through the acquisition of outfitters. Yet, if there was one thing the Indians were good at: they could be guides, they could hunt, fish and trap. But, when it was time to create outfitters, [the government] never asked the Indians to manage wildlife. They never asked a band council if they wanted to try that (E-05).*

Another respondent specified that the outfitter guardians transmit their passion for the land to their clients.

> *The advantage in having people of the community working in the outfitters is that they are passionate. They have always worked in the forest. This passion, they transmit it to the clients (E-04).*

In the past, some members even left their logging jobs to work at the outfitters:

> *I remember the first [employees], they were loggers or heavy machinery guys [...] They quit forestry. A guy like Marcel Ross, who was operating a Timber jack, he dropped forestry. Ovila Ross, he was logging. He logged all his life for Consolidated Bathurst. He quit his job and came to work for the outfitters (E-01)*

Finally, Essipit administrators developed skills in business and natural resource management through their experience working for the outfitter, as outlined by one of the Essipit business partners working for Granulco:

> *They really developed, over the years, their own economy, their own jobs, instead of waiting for the government [...] for financial help and other things. [...] They developed interesting projects that boosted the region. They made everything in their outfitters. They developed whale watching cruises, cottages, tourism. They really developed, in past years, projects that sustain the community. [...] We found synergies, because they showed a lot of potential. People like the economic development director with all his experience; it is good to have him on the Board of Directors, to interact with him and to benefit from his strengths (E-13).*

One administrator of Essipit mentioned that managerial capacity brought greater influence in their relations with their business partners:

> *We are little in terms of the total fish supply. However, we have real influence in terms of business development, because of the expertise of the community (E-17).*

This was confirmed by a business partners from the fisheries:

> *To make a partnership, it requires good managers. Me, I trust [Essipit].They have a lot of influence on the other two Aboriginal communities involved in the partnership. [...]The situation has not changed since the beginning, it is the same managers who are there [...] This helps, because we are able to establish business visions. We know each other. There are no surprises. Essipit [political] stability, you don't have it everywhere (E-14).*

This last quote also highlights the importance of stable political institutions for successful Aboriginal economic development.

4.4.3 Granulco

Granulco has the legal status of a company. It produces wood pellets for residential and commercial stoves with an annual production capacity of 25 000 tons. The business is composed of Essipit Innu First Nation (25 %), the Society for economic development of Sacré-Cœur (25

%), SPEQ Investra (25 %), the forest company Boisaco (12.5 %), the Cooperative Cofor (6.25 %) and the Cooperative Unisaco (6.25 %). The Board of Directors for Granulco is composed of four individuals, one of whom is an administrator of Essipit Band Council.

4.4.3.1 History of development

After a territorial dispute that put an end to Essipit experience in silviculture in the early 2000s, Essipit and the forest industry sought ways to collaborate again. One business partner explained the collaboration of the two entities is important, because they are both key economic players on the Haute-Côte-Nord region and share similar visions and values about the importance of local and sustainable development:

> *We want to help Essipit grow and develop economically with us. We are a business of regional population, we are a cooperative. [...] We have common concerns with FSC certification. Caribou economic development and sustainable forest management are other common concerns (E-15).*

In this context, they signed a Land Management and Development Partnership (LMDP) in 2008. In particular, the agreement specified that all future development projects would be addressed through this collaborative approach.

At the same time, Boisaco was looking at ways to add value to the dust of its saw mill. Boisaco invited Essipit to join the discussion on how to resolve their wood pellet project. Thus, Essipit participated in designing the business project of Granulco, and, more specifically, developed the business plan and raised funds for the project. For Essipit, the primary objective in working on this project was to learn to work with Boisaco:

> *Originally, yes, we were expecting profits. However, it was a cheap price to pay to test this partnership. What we wanted to test was working with the forest industry (E-09).*

Essipit had a real and meaningful role in shaping the project of Granulco, which was created in 2009.

A business partner explained that Essipit and Boisaco also explored the possibility of pursuing logging and wood processing opportunities. He stated:

> *[Boisaco and Essipit] explored the possibility of a direct participation of Essipit in our company, but it required significant investment. Our forest company has a high value. The down payment was too large for Essipit to buy enough shares to have an interesting participation (P-13).*

Indeed, Essipit Band Council decided that the investment costs were too high and did not pursue this opportunity further. To finance Granulco, the business partners put a down payment of 20% and used multiple sources to borrow the rest of the money (i.e. Quebec Investment, Canada Economic Development, Quebec Ministry for Economic Development, Desjardins Development Capital, etc). It was impossible to use Aboriginal programs to fund Granulco, because Essipit holds only 25% of the shares the company.

4.4.3.2 Challenges

When Boisaco and Essipit evaluated the market in 2008, there was a shortage of wood pellet fuel in Quebec. The interviewees mentioned that, today, the sector is in a situation of overproduction wherein the pellet price remains at a low level. High competition makes it difficult for Granulco to sell its product. Therefore, the company has not been profitable since it opened in 2009.

Another obstacle is limited supply. First, Granulco is primarily used to give value to Boisaco's sawdust. Second, the volumes available on the market are too expensive to be an attractive option. Overall, it is not possible to increase Granulco's sawdust supply and grow the business to generate economies of scale, or to lower its selling price to beat the competition. The challenge is therefore to maximize the value of Granulco's current supply.

4.4.3.3 Benefits

Granulco has not been profitable since it was created. A part from an administrator of Essipit who sits on the Board of Directors, Granulco is not hiring any worker or management personnel from Essipit. New positions have been posted in the community, without success[7]. Yet, as several interviewees pointed out, Granulco remains important for the community.

> *Because we have worked with the people of [Boisaco], we gained credibility. Now they tend to invite us when they have a project. I don't think they saw us as a natural business partner before [...] Essipit learned how the wood pellet industry was working. We took one step in the forestry sector (E-09)*
>
> *What did work best is that this partnership created a good relation dynamics. Once a year, we meet and exchange. We did not have that before. Yes, we had a certain respect, but these people are now a bigger part of our daily life. It also brings an interesting dynamic where we are more involved, we exchange and we optimize our synergies. There is a difference since the conclusion of an official business partnership (E-13).*

Thus, Granulco helped reconnect two key players in the Haute-Côte-Nord region and improve cooperation between them, as well as promoted mutual understanding of their realities and struggles. It created synergies in terms of resources and expertise. According to the participants,

[7] No assessment has been made to identify the cause of a lack of jobs.

a partnership between a forest company and a First Nation makes a difference when interacting with the government or financial institutions. Finally, Granulco served Essipit by diversifying its business portfolio.

4.4.4 The Fishery sector

4.4.4.1 History of development

Following the *Sparrow decision*[8] of the Supreme Court of Canada in 1990, the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans (MFO) launched the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) in 1992, which aimed to 1) provide a framework for the management of fishing by Aboriginal groups for food, social and ceremonial purposes; 2) provide Aboriginal groups with an opportunity to participate in the management of fisheries, 3) contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of Aboriginal communities; and 4) improve the fisheries management skills and capacity of Aboriginal groups (Government of Canada 2012). In 2002, Essipit used bank loans and funding available through the AFS (i.e. the Allocation Transfer Program) to purchase the crab fishing boat named *Léo* and the harvesting rights (CPNIE2013). Then, in 1999, the *Marshall decision*[9] of the Supreme Court of Canada prompted the MFO to facilitate Aboriginal participation in the fisheries sector. The review of the AFS in 2003 highlighted two main challenges: a lack of capacity (e.g., skills, infrastructure, financial resources) and a lack of sufficient access to aquatic resource harvesting opportunities (Government of Canada 2009). In response, the MFO launched the Aboriginal

[8] R. v. Sparrow, [1990] 1 S.C.R. 1075.

[9] R. v. Marshall [1999] 3 S.C.R. 456.

Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) Program in 2003. The legal and political context created a window of opportunity for Essipit to participate in the fishery sector.

At the same time, the owners of *Crabier du Nord* had a factory in Portneuf-sur-Mer to carry out first, second and third processing of crabs. They were planning to acquire a second crab factory in Sept-Îles. Acknowledging that Aboriginal peoples would become organised one day and become an important player in the fishery sector, they thought that it would be better to partner with them rather than to lose their fish supply. Thus, in 2003, several First Nations (including Innu, Micmac and Malecite) and non-Aboriginal partners engaged in discussion to purchase the crab factory of Omer Lapierre, located in Sept-Îles (CPNIE 2013). The discussion took two years. During this period, the Micmac and Malecite First Nations abandoned the project. However, one administrator from Essipit explained that these two years were critical for successfully integrating the fishery sector.

> *It is because we were careful with the first convention that this mix deal still exists today. It was important to take our time with the first convention that now unites us. Everything had to be written down (E-17).*

The deal stipulated that the First Nations crab supplies would be exclusive to the new factory. In exchange, the First Nations would have an option to buy 49% of *Pêcherie Manicouagan* (i.e. distribution network) within five years and options on all future development in the fishery sector. In addition, a business partner explained that these two years provided some time to structure the business adequately.

> *To limit the risk associated with the political system of band council election and the uncertainty that it brings, we formed a limited partnership. The three band councils, through their economic development corporation, own the shares of UMEQ. For me, it took away political interference (E-14).*

In 2005, the Band Councils of Essipit, Pessamit and Uashat mak Mani-Utenam decided to pool their fish supplies and to partner with two Quebec enterprises: *Crabiers du Nord* and *SSG Management*. The group UMEK was formed in order to purchase the crab factory of Omer Lapierre.

While the three First Nations were first offered 30% of the shares, their control over the fish supply allowed them to obtain 70% of the shares. The business partners agreed that if this partnership worked it was because both parties were able to find mutual benefit in the partnership.

> *We gave the biggest share to Aboriginal communities: 70% shares belong to the three band council through a limited partnership. We did this to access their supplies in a fair way. Since they bring the fish supply, it was normal that they hold more shares. For us, Crabiers du Nord and SSG Management, we made our money with Pêcherie Manicouagan (the distribution business). We charged fees based on the United-States or international crab market. They have greater proportion of shareholdings, because their quotas supply the factory [...] Us, we transferred our industrial technology. Why they are doing well, it's because they partnered with experienced people (E-14).*

To fund this project, each First Nation invested $77,000 and the non-aboriginal partners provided $99,000. The rest of the money (i.e. $1,800,000) was borrowed from Aboriginal Business Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Desjardins and Omer Lapierre.

In 2006, Essipit partnered with Pessamit to buy a second crab fishing boat, named *Jimmy* (CPNIE 2013). In addition, Essipit made a partnership with SSG Management, called *Namesh*, to process seafood and sell it locally through restaurant or retail. Furthermore, Essipit participated in the creation of the Agence Mamu Innu Kaikusseht (AMIK) in 2006, which means "Aboriginal fishermen together" in Innu. *AMIK* is a support organization that seeks to ensure a role of networking, communication, consultation, expert advice and information in order to support,

promote and defend the interests of its community members, including: Ekuanitshit, Essipit, Innu Takuaikan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Nutashkuan, Pakua Shipu, Pessamit et Unamen Shipu (Agence Mamu Innu Kaikusseht (AMIK 2014). AMIK possesses two fishing boats that provide revenues to fund their other activities. In addition, AMIK is funded by the AAROM program.

In 2010, Essipit, Pessamit and Uashat mak Mani-Utenam acquired, through UMEK Group, 51% of the distribution network *Pêcheries Manicouagan*. This company distributes fish products in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia and now has six points of sales (i.e. local stores) for their products. In addition, UMEK Group bought 30% of *Crabiers du Nord* which represents a second fish factory in Portneuf-sur-Mer to transform products other than crab, such as whelk and turbot.

4.4.4.2 Benefits for Essipit model of AFEs

The economic development director explained the financial benefits of the fishery businesses as follows:

> *Regarding UMEK, we started with an investment of $ 77,000 which was repaid after the first year. The value of UMEQ was 1.8 million at the beginning; the value is now 4.5 million. [...] We are paid as fishermen. We sell our catches to UMEQ, and then we make gains in added value, transformation and distribution. All the profits of group UMEQ are reinvested. We bought Pêcherie Manicouagan and Crabiers du Nord. This is an interesting development tool (E-09).*

In addition, Namesh, as well as the fishing boats Léo and Jimmy generate every year a minimum of $500,000. This money is reinvested in the community through Essipit management panel.

4.5 Discussion

This research indicates that Essipit model of AFEs has not stopped developing since they bought their first outfitter in 1983. At the same time, our data indicate that Essipit has not been able to pursue opportunities in timber harvesting or primary manufacturing of timber products; equally, their operations in silviculture ended in the early 2000s. Despite some of the aforementioned challenges, how can we explain that the Essipit model has generally succeeded as described by the research participants?

Scientific literature indicates that access and control over forest resources is a prerequisite for the successful the development of SMFEs (Macqueen 2013), and forest communities more generally (Pagdee *et al.* 2006). Our data points to a similar conclusion. While limited control over silviculture contracts explains in part the termination of Essipit silviculture activities, Essipit was able to buy access to forest resources in the case of the outfitters and Granulco. Furthermore, data on the fishery reinforce this finding. Indeed, by controlling the crab resources, three First Nations were able to participate at every level of the supply chain. Clearly, the accomplishments of Essipit in the fishery sector rule out the hypothesis of a lack of managerial capacity. Our data provided evidence that Essipit possesses the necessary skills to manage business and forest resources. When the expertise was lacking internally, Essipit sought the assistance needed in non-Aboriginal partners. For example, they partnered with Boisaco to create Granulco and with non-Aboriginal partners to vertically integrate the fishery sector.

Research data indicate that, in most cases, Essipit had access to financial resources to fund its business start-ups or take over. Federal programs helped to buy the outfitters and generate funds to create Granulco. Moreover, the lack of financial resources partly explains why Essipit did not

pursue harvesting and first wood processing opportunities. Again, the data from the fisheries confirms the importance of finance resources, as the federal programs played an important role in the acquisition of the UMEK factory.

More importantly, research data brings forward the concept of portfolio entrepreneurship, which explains in part why Essipit was able invest in developing and growing its model of AFEs. Research participants reported that Essipit use revenues generated by other community businesses in other economic sectors. The concept of portfolio entrepreneurs brings into consideration the situation of Quebec SMFE's, which are in "a situation of very high commercial dependency as most of them only transact with one single client" (St-Jean and LeBel 2010, p.96). Thus, this study highlights the potential contribution of portfolio entrepreneurship to favour more robust forestry businesses through diversification and growth, either within the forestry sector or across other sectors. In addition, this concept suggests that community entrepreneurship should evaluate success at the level of the global portfolio rather than at the business level, or within a single sector of activity.

The Essipit case study also illustrates the importance of institutional stability. Indeed, several key positions have been occupied by the same people for more than 20 years, notably the following three positions: economic development director, managing director and deputy managing director. Furthermore, the literature also indicates that separation between politics and business decisions is an important factor for the economic success of Aboriginal communities (Jorgensen 2007; Trosper *et al.* 2008). In the case of Granulco, the business structure ensures that separation: an administrator from Essipit is assigned one of the four seats on the board of directors. Essipit has many band-owned businesses; this is the case for the outfitters for example.

Thus, a separation between politics and business is not always possible. We found that other mechanisms played a similar role in Essipit. First, politicians and administrators have a good understanding of their respective roles and functions. Notably, Essipit has a director for all band-owned businesses. Second, the general assembly provides a control mechanism for the community members over management decisions made by the Band Council. Finally, it seems that the small size of the community, about 200 members on reserve, also has a role at this level. The fact that "everyone knows" appears to inhibit some mismanagement behaviours.

Community leaders also played an important role in the success of Essipit. During the presentation of the research results in Essipit in November 2013, one participant stressed that political leaders matter: Essipit political leaders developed outfitters despite the prejudices of non-Aboriginal peoples and the opposition of Aboriginal peoples; nothing has been granted to Essipit, they had to negotiate their ideas with the government and forest enterprises; Essipit political leaders were convinced and worked hard to find a place in the forest development. Yet the same respondent (E-05) reminded that political will would be meaningless if the community members had not trusted their leaders and demonstrated social cohesion.

Finally, this research adds to the ongoing discussion about what constitutes “success” in Aboriginal perspectives (Trosper *et al.* 2008) or, in other words, what is profitable and what is not to the community. While our results indicate that financial profitability is important to Essipit administrators and business managers, it is necessary to adopt a broader understanding of such concept, as suggested by Lindsay (2005). Indeed, outfitters are not financially rewarding, but the collateral benefits they have generated over the years indicate clear success in 2013; even without generating dividends, Essipit finds this investment profitable. Even if Granulco has yet

to generate positive financial returns, respondents in this study qualified this initiative as successful. Indeed, the approach used by Essipit allows for companies to not be financially profitable, if there are other benefits such as job creation, political influence, strengthening the local culture or if other businesses are generating sufficient revenues. Therefore, other outcome measures that profit would be valuable to consider when evaluating the success of AFEs.

4.6 Conclusion

Scientific literature on entrepreneurship has put greater emphasis on individuals who are opportunity seekers and gives less attention to more collective approaches. By presenting the history of Essipit economic development (see section 3.2) and providing a more in-depth investigation of Essipit AFEs, this thesis provides new insights into the way Aboriginal communities can engage in entrepreneurial processes. It is important to note that culturally grounded entrepreneurship happens elsewhere and not only in Aboriginal communities; Essipit had a very insightful way of culturally grounding SMFEs. Most often, we hear about the struggle of Aboriginal communities against mainstream forestry. “Decolonizing methodologies”, as described by Smith (Smith 1999), also means decolonizing knowledge. Aboriginal communities do not need experts to tell them what to do, but rather convincing cases of Aboriginal forestry in which they can recognize themselves.

This research made evident that Essipit has continuously sought business opportunities and now holds numerous business in various sectors. The business model of Essipit takes different forms, including: services offered by the Band Council, companies fully owned by the Council or community participation in a private company. Motivations to create AFEs were diverse,

including job creation, protection of forest land and resources, greater political influence, economic self-sufficiency, growth, and diversification.

Furthermore, through the Essipit case study, this chapter sought to better understand the conditions for the success of the Essipit model of AFEs. Clearly, the community is run by experienced leaders who have a clear vision the kind of development they want on their traditional territory and continuously looks for new business opportunities. Despite several barriers, Essipit found several ways to control forest resources, develop managerial capacity, and access financial resources, an important one is partnering with non-Aboriginals. This research also brings forward the concept of community portfolio entrepreneurship which sustained the growth of the Essipit model of AFEs.

This research indicates that financial profitability is insufficient to assess the success of the Essipit business model. The Council can sacrifice financial profitability if it foresees that other benefits will be provided. In some cases, the community has even accepted monetary deficits, although in responsible manners. Essipit was able to offset its losses. In order to increase its economic resilience, the community has relied on economic diversification and vertical integration of the fisheries sector. In this sense, the assertion that Aboriginal approaches to economic development involve the process of "creating businesses and operating businesses that can compete profitably over the long-run in the global economy" (Anderson 1997b, p.17) needs to take into consideration that Aboriginal communities focus not only on economic objectives, but also on non-economic objectives (Lindsay 2005; Dana and Anderson 2011).

When taking actions today, communities, governments, businesses and other organizations seeking to support AFEs should not lose sight of longer-term horizons. Essipit's business

portfolio was not built in a day, but rather over thirty years. In addition, industrial forestry was not the starting point to the path Essipit choose to follow. Instead, Essipit opted for opportunities much more aligned with the local culture and chose to focus on capacity, namely outfitters, which opened other opportunities in silviculture, construction road maintenance, and value-added forest products. Yet, this path might not be appropriate in the context of another Aboriginal community. Our study provides an argument in favor of a strategic planning that builds on the community strengths and the local culture.

CHAPTER 5: FOREST GOVERNANCE ON ESSIPIT NITASSINAN

5.1 Introduction

Aboriginal participation in forest management is not a new phenomenon. Miller *et al.* (2010) identify historical examples of using fire to manage vegetation. Several studies also report participation in the forest industry including the fur trade (Laforest 1983; Huff and Pecore 1995; La Rusic 1995; Saint-Arnaud 2009). However, the model of industrial forestry has greatly marginalized the roles of Aboriginal peoples in decision-making related to forest management (Wyatt 2008; Booth and Skelton 2011; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013), also called forest governance. Yet forest governance is a broader concept than forest management as it aims to design appropriate institutional settings that will support and enhance the quality of peoples' life, rather than focusing on forest resources management. In recent decades, there have been many factors that have allowed the emergence of Aboriginal approaches to forest governance. Aboriginal rights, market requirements (i.e. certification) and national and provincial policies have all evolved and changed. In this context, there is a unique opportunity to improve our knowledge on this topic.

In this chapter, we begin by providing some background information on Aboriginal forest governance. We then outline the methodological approach. We conducted a qualitative investigation in collaboration with Essipit Innu First Nation (Essipit) between May 2012 and July 2013. Our intention was to understand the forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory, the process of decision-making, and the actors involved. Finally, we offer a discussion of the research results. The partnership between Essipit and the forest company Boisaco can be

understood as a “new mode of forest governance” that can provide Aboriginal communities with greater authority over decision-making processes on their traditional territory.

5.2 Background

Building on the work of Chiasson and Leclerc (2013), Aboriginal forest governance can be defined as the modus operandi by which Aboriginal officials and their institutions (formal or informal) acquire and exercise authority in forest resources management to support and improve the well-being and quality of life of their community members. This raises the question, “How can forest governance contribute to the well-being and quality of life of an Aboriginal community?” After more than twenty-five years of research, the HPAIED concluded that successful socioeconomic development is more likely to occur for Aboriginal communities who have the power to establish effective institutions of governance that reflect the local culture (Cornell *et al.* 2004; Jorgensen 2007). More specifically, the HPAIED concluded that effective governance includes stable institutions, competent public administration, conflict resolution mechanisms and separation between the government and day-to-day business decisions. However, the idea of “cultural fit” remains vague in the context of forest governance. It is commonly known that elements of governance in the forest sector have often been imposed or negotiated instead of chosen by Aboriginals. It is important to clarify whether existing forest governance reflects Aboriginal culture and, even more important, if Aboriginal communities have the required level of authority to develop such an institutional environment.

It is possible to analyse authority in terms of actors involved in the decision-making process, such as: governments, universities, forest companies, environmentalists, forest communities, Aboriginal peoples, etc. Given that authority is not distributed evenly across the different actors,

research distinguishes between centralized and shared authority (Beckley 1998; Grammond 2009; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). For most of the 19th century, Canadian forests were exploited and controlled by a small number of large forest companies (Blais and Chiasson 2005). In this form of centralized private governance, the role of the government was modest, if not absent; mainly, its role was limited to attributing forest licenses and determining stumpage fees. In the 20th century, provincial governments in Canada played a greater role in decision-making (Beckley 1998; Blais and Chiasson 2005). For example, public forests are under provincial jurisdiction, and each province was able to define its own legislative and regulatory framework since. Centralized state governance is characterized by a strong and active role for the government. More recently, the emergence of new actors in forest governance introduced new arrangements where authority is shared. For example, the new Quebec forest regime includes a regionalized approach where multiple forest stakeholders participate in forest planning (Grammond 2009; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). After five years of public consultations, a new forest regime came into effect in Quebec in April 2013 (MRN 2013c); thereby redefining the roles and responsibilities of each actor. Some elements of the new forest regime have yet to be implemented, like the Sustainable Forest Development Strategy or the Local Forests Policy, for example. The measures of the new regime have been described by some authors (Blais and Chiasson 2005; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). However, it is important to note that these studies were conducted before the new forest regime debuted. Thus, they make reference to parts and sections of the forest regime that were in place at the time but have since been removed. For example, the government completely withdrew from its role in forest certification, but it will continue to hold a major role in forest planning (MRN 2013b). Thus, this research will briefly address these changes as it relates to the understanding of forest governance.

Scientific literature indicates that Aboriginal peoples participate in decision-making in various ways. The evolution of Aboriginal rights has urged the provinces, including Quebec, to include Aboriginal communities in the management of forests. Thus, governments have amended their definition of sustainable forest management (BCMF 2004; CCFM 2006; BFC 2010), adding Aboriginal C&I in their assessment system. Essentially, these C&I seek recognition and respect for Aboriginal rights in order to protect their traditional livelihood and forest uses, notably through specific measures that include First Nations at various decision levels of forest management, regulations to protect certain sites of cultural interests (e.g. trapping camps) or provision of forest-related opportunities. Both assessments of the Quebec and the BC regime, through provincial C&I frameworks, indicate that First Nations involvement in forest management and development remains unsatisfactory (BCMFML 2010; BFC 2010). In addition, the Taku River[10] and Haida[11] decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that governments have a duty to consult and accommodate Aboriginals before authorizing any projects that may affect their rights. Quebec, for example, holds distinct consultation with Aboriginal communities on forest management plans (Wyatt *et al.* 2010). These examples can be tagged under the label of state governance. In addition, studies point to the emergence of new modes of forest governance that are not controlled by governments and influence decision-making (Howlett *et al.* 2009; Grammond *et al.* 2012; Teitelbaum and Wyatt 2013). Forest certification is a market tool that pays particular attention to the recognition and respect of Aboriginal rights (Tollefson *et al.* 2008; Teitelbaum and Wyatt 2013). Forest certification

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[10] Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 550.

[11] Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests), [2004] 3 R.C.S. 511.

remains important to First Nations, because through forest certification they can exert influence over decision-making processes in forest management. In many instances, the national frameworks for C&I have been adapted locally to increase their interest and relevance for Aboriginal communities (Sherry *et al.* 2005; Saint-Arnaud *et al.* 2009; Shearer *et al.* 2009). In addition, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Peace of the Brave define a unique model of co-management between the Cree and the Quebec government (Rodon 2003; Grammond 2009; Jacqmain *et al.* 2012). Finally, economic development initiatives can transform the rules of forest governance. For example, Chiasson and Leclerc (2013) showed that forest cooperatives have opened forest governance (i.e. corporate governance) to new territorial actors and developed new opportunities. Aboriginal development initiatives have altered forest governance significantly by introducing new actors, processes and institutions (Anderson 1997b; Beaudoin *et al.* 2009; Boyd and Trosper 2010). Chapter 4 indicates, for example, that Essipit has gained influence over forest governance through the acquisition of outfitters with exclusive commercial rights to manage hunting, fishing and trapping activities.

At first glance, it would appear that Aboriginal communities are more involved in forest governance than in previous years due to more formal recognition by governments or various market actors (forest companies or certification). However, some reports suggest otherwise. Forsyth (2006) found that Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia (BC) have more control over tactical and operational decisions of forest resources management, but the BC government retains control over strategic decisions. Aboriginal communities in BC have access to different types of tenures that represent approximately 15.5% of the allowable annual cut (AAC) (MFLNRO 2013). However, these tenures are mostly short-term opportunities with limited benefits for Aboriginal communities, and they are often managed by third parties (FNFC 2010).

Several authors have pointed to the importance of designing tenures or access agreements for Aboriginal communities (Ross and Smith 2002; Swaak *et al.* 2009). Part of the problem is that tenure deals only with allocating wood, and therefore does not acknowledge the broader view of forest resources that Aboriginal communities have. Wyatt et al. (2010, p.739) studied Aboriginal consultation under the previous Quebec forest regime and concluded that "none of the [consultation] processes analyzed provide for direct participation in decision-making for forest management, although they do enable varying degrees of influence on such decisions." Therefore, it appears that Canadian provinces still retain their authority in many aspects of forest management. There are many examples, both nationally and internationally, where governments have tried to let other forest stakeholders play a greater role in decision-making (Forsyth 2006; Grammond 2009; Hajjar 2011). These governments maintained their hierarchical authority and sought to control the land and resources.

In summary, scientific literature supports the importance of creating institutions that reflect local culture and sustain successful economic development for Aboriginal communities. To date, Aboriginal forest governance is a poorly understood concept. The aim of this chapter is to provide a clear understanding of this concept.

5.3 Methodology

To describe and explain the system of forest governance prevailing on Essipit traditional territory, we used a qualitative approach inspired by socio-anthropological research (De Sardan 2008). In collecting data, we drew on four sources of data: observation, documentation, interviews, and focus groups.

The results presented in this chapter mainly draw on observational methods carried out in Essipit during an internship that occurred between January and July 2013. During that time, we lived on Essipit reserve, joined the negotiation and consultation team and worked within the administrative office of the Essipit forest engineer. Participant observation allowed us to maximize direct interactions with the group and provided us with a clear understanding of the processes that were to be studied. More specifically, we were able to participate in two local integrated land and resource management panels (GIRT panel or tables locales de gestion intégrée des ressources et du territoire), attend three meetings in the context of an existing partnership between Essipit and the forest company (Boisaco), and attend three consultation meetings with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) which required preparation meetings with Essipit negotiation and consultation team. We worked with the team to review and comment the 2013-2018 tactical plans and operational plans for integrated forest development (respectively PAFI-T and PAFI-O or plans tactiques et opérationnels d'aménagement forestier integré) for Forest Management Units (FMUs) 097-51, 033-51, 023-52 and 023-51. Furthermore, the current manager of Essipit outfitters gave a one-day tour of these territories and he introduced most of the guardians. We also attended several ad-hoc internal meetings, including four on the Akumunan biodiversity reserve project, and bi-monthly management meetings of the Essipit negotiation and consultation team. During these meetings, data were recorded in the form of notes, minutes and/or audio files. The results presented in this chapter also rely on relevant documentation provided by the Essipit negotiation and consultation team, including public documents (e.g. newspaper articles, reports, research) as well as internal documents (memos, meeting notes, reports, official letters, etc).

These first two sets of data highlighted the different actors involved in the forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory, the processes of decision-making, as well as the influence of Essipit on these processes. These data sets provided us with an overview of the current situation and allowed us to draw the portrait presented in this chapter. Two oral communications and one report were presented to members of Essipit Band Council. The documents summarized our understanding of the following: 1) the impact of new Quebec forest regime for participation Essipit in the forest sector, 2) the different approaches of forest management and development used by Essipit, and 3) the Partnership between Essipit and Boisaco. These writing exercises allowed for a back and forth between the research question and the data, and the interpretation of results and research results (De Sardan 2008). This iteration process was useful in identifying the data that was missing in order to complete this chapter.

Finally, the results discussed in this paper also draw on 22 semi-structured interviews and seven focus groups designed to address the research objectives for chapters 4 and 6. We used NVivo 10 to analyse the transcripts, as well as to complete and verify the information in the data. According to Sardan (2008), triangulation is an important characteristic within any field of research. The interviews and focus groups discussed within this chapter are a significant secondary data set.

Multiple research strategies were employed to ensure the quality of data (Creswell 1998; Miles and Huberman 2003). We worked with the local forest engineer to write this text. This approach allowed us to improve the relevance and reliability of the results produced (De Sardan 2008). For triangulation purposes, preliminary results from the study were presented at a conference (Beaudoin 2013a; 2013b; 2013c) and discussed with non-Aboriginal partners of the community

in order to seek out different perspectives. One important aspect of such a procedure is to recognize that reality can be more complex than what is understood by the respondents in the study. Thus, in this research we were able to present different perspectives on the forest management partnership between Essipit and Boisaco (see section 5.4.2).

Finally, it is important to stress the evolving nature of the new Quebec forest regime. Several key elements are still under development and some information is not accessible. One of the challenges this present is how to report on this complexity, without excessively burdening this text.

5.4 Results

To explain Aboriginal forest governance, we differentiate four distinct areas on the traditional territory of Essipit, also called Nitassinan, namely FMU 023-52 (see orange area in figure 5), FMU 097-51 (area in yellow), the Akumunan biodiversity reserve project (area in purple), and the Innu Assi project (area in green). The characteristics, processes and models pertaining to these areas are presented and discussed in the following.

5.4.1 State governance

In FMU 023-52, forest management can be associated with the system of industrial forestry (Beckley 1998). Decision-making remains at arm's-length of Essipit influence. Forests are managed under the provincial legislative and regulatory framework. The multinational corporation Resolute Forest Products (RFP) is the primary company in charge of forest operations in this area. RFP and Essipit interact through public consultation processes. In

addition, FMU 023-52 is characterized by less intensive occupation by Essipit members and enterprises than FMU 097-51.

In this framework, the office of Quebec chief forester performs the analysis underlying the AAC and then determines harvesting level for each forest management unit. Notably, the chief forester produced a handbook that explains the process to determine AAC and, more importantly, that Aboriginal interests are taken into account by excluding certain sites to forest operations and by complying with thresholds in order to maintain forest characteristics on a given territory (BFC 2013, chap.4.16, p.14). The personnel from the chief forester office came to Essipit in June 2013 to explain the calculation of the AAC. At this time, there was no direct involvement of Essipit, or of any other forest stakeholders, in the decision-making process or the analysis that ensued.

Forest planning is very important for Essipit, because it determines where, when and how forest interventions will be carried out. Under the previous forest regime, forest companies were responsible for forest management. Under the new forest regime the MNR intends to undertake planning in collaboration with regional stakeholders (Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). In order to do so, the MNR asks regional conferences of elected officers to implement two mechanisms of public participation:

1) Regional land and Natural Resource Commission (CRRNT or commissions régionales des ressources naturelles et du territoire in French) to develop regional plans for integrated land and natural resource development (PRDIRT or plans régionaux de développement intégré des ressources naturelles et du territoire in French);
2) GIRT panel to realize a PAFI-T and PAFI-O.

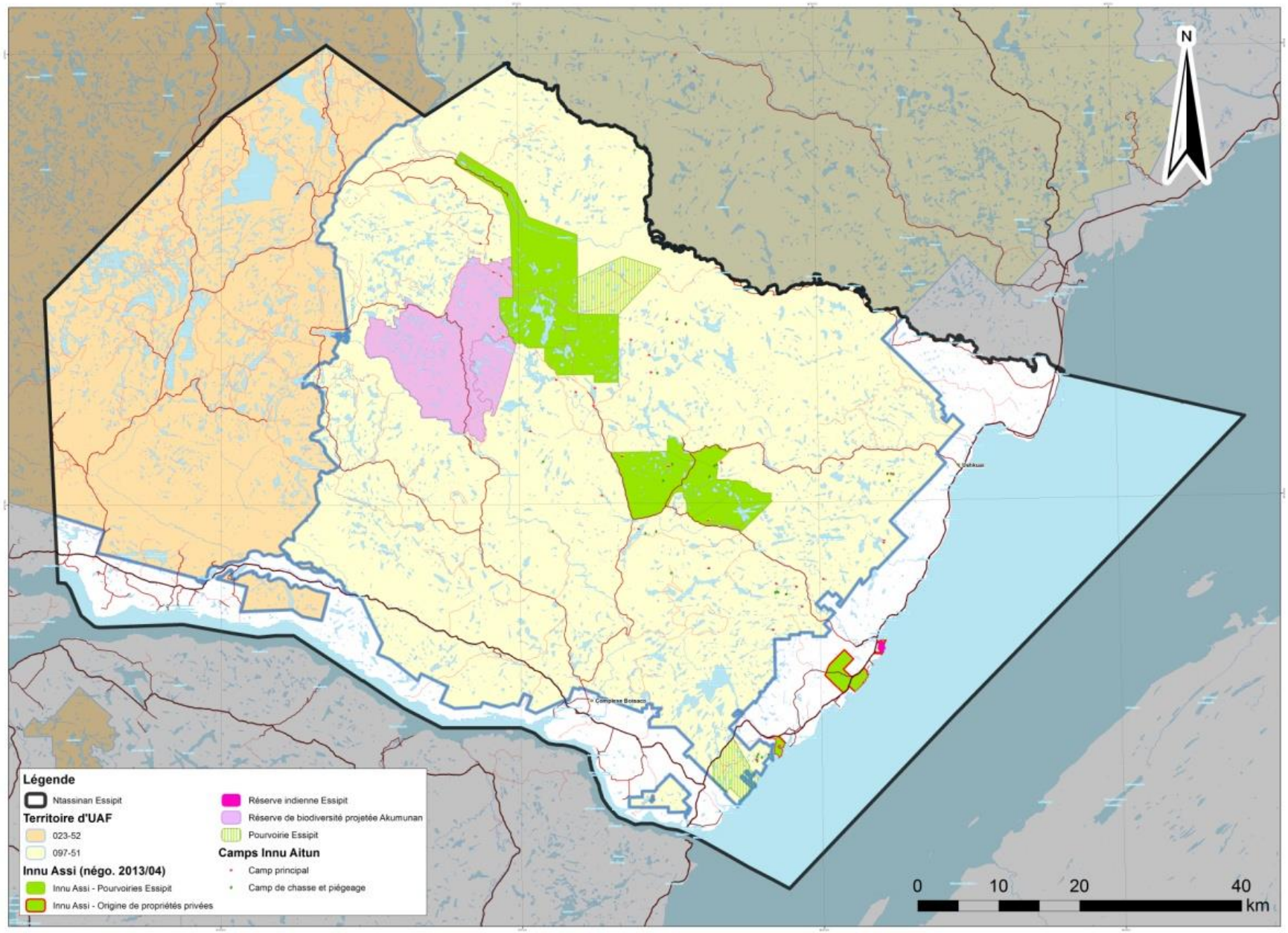

Figure 5: Four areas explaining Aboriginal forest governance (Source: Essipit Band Council 2013)

Regarding the CRRNT consultation mechanism, Essipit do not participate in any regional commission of the three administrative regions that overlap with its Nitassinan, namely the regions of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Côte-Nord and Capitale-Nationale. Yet, participation in regional planning remains important for Essipit. Notably, they requested to include a section on regional governance in the treaty under negotiation with the provincial and federal governments. Furthermore, the community was able to influence some elements of planning (e.g. multi-use forest roads or intensive wood production zones) through their participation in ad-hoc committees of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and the Côte-Nord regions, as well as the Expert Committee (comex in French) of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. Essipit do not participate in any committee in the National Capital region. Otherwise, the MNR held distinct consultations with Essipit on the PRDIRT for these three administrative regions. Our conclusion of this first consultation process is that it does not provide Essipit with a significant influence on decision-making, even if these plans address critical issues for Essipit efforts to protect its Nitassinan. They do not participate, but, even if they did, Grammond (2009) explains that the CRRNT consultation mechanism provides Aboriginal communities with marginal influence as they can only occupy one seat (vote) of the available twenty seats.

Regarding the GIRT panel consultation mechanism, Essipit worked with other forest stakeholders to define values, objectives, indicators and targets (VOIT). VOIT will guide planning and implementation of forest management activities. The VOIT framework of the government of Quebec originates from the Canadian Standard Association (CSA) standards, that identify VOIC for each forest management area linked to a public consultation process (CSA-SFM 2014). The CSA standards are based on the six criteria for sustainable forest management

of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM). Thus, before the new Quebec forest regime came into effect in April 2013, the territory linked to the GIRT panel of the Capitale Nationale region was certified by CSA. For this GIRT panel, an Aboriginal working committee was formed, which involved the First Nations of Essipit, Mashteuiatsh and Wendake, as well as the MNR and the forest company RFP. This committee started by identifying values and objectives. Then, the committee transposed these values and objectives into the adapted VOIT framework of the Government of Quebec.

If Essipit, Mashteuiatsh and Wendake first had a common VOIC (CRNTCN 2012), Wendake finally decided to develop its own VOIC in order to reflect different context between the Wendats and the Innus (e.g. Wendake has the Murray Treaty while Essipit and Mashteuiatsh are engaged in a comprehensive land claim process with transitory consultation processes). Essipit has been able, for each of the three FMUs touching its Nitassinan and also for the South-West zone (shared with Mashteuiatsh and Pessamit First Nations), to introduce Aboriginal VOIT in forest management plans. However, because the consultation process dealt with ecological VOIT before social and economic ones to implement a new PAFIT based on ecosystem-based planning, Aboriginal VOIT were not taken into account in the first wave of forest management plans authorized by MNR. Furthermore, the decisional weight of Essipit is very limited in the GIRT panel process. For example, in the National Capital region, Essipit holds one vote in a total of seventeen delegates. Consequently, Essipit is questioning its participation in this mechanism, due to the human, material and financial resources required and the small impact they have on the actual decision-making process. Nevertheless, Essipit participation is considered to be a good means through which to receive general and specific information and data on forest planning

processes, the state of forests, as well as an opportunity to explain Essipit's perspective or gain a general understanding of the different stakeholders involved.

While the first intention of the MNR was to regionalize forest planning (i.e. in collaboration with the participants of the GIRT panel), some challenges and constraints have prompted the government to act otherwise. First, the regional MNR had to work with tight deadlines to put in force the new regime and to complete the 2013-2018 forest management plans. Thus, the regional MNR wrote the plans and, then, submitted the plans for public consultation. Second, the forest industry lobbied to keep control over operational planning and Aboriginal groups threats to systematically boycott forest certification led the MNR to share some responsibility for operational planning with the beneficiaries of Timber Supply Guarantees (BCRF 2013; MRN 2013a). Notably, the beneficiaries have the responsibility to elaborate an annual program of forest development activities. More specifically, the beneficiaries must do the planning of forest access and infrastructures associated with these operations, as well as all the operational harmonisation linked to these activities (MRN 2013a). Furthermore, the MNR plans to create operational panels in order to "facilitate the operational organization of harvest activities and the maintenance of forestry certification for the area covered by the harvest agreement" (Sustainable Forest Management Act, LRQ, c. A-18.1, art. 103.6). These operational panels will not replace consultation mechanisms already in place. It will be a mechanism through which beneficiaries of timber supply guarantees can remain holders of forest certificates and optimize the planning of harvesting operations (MRN 2013a, p.1). According to recent discussions between Essipit and the MNR, Essipit might be able to take part in the operational panels when they will start. Overall, we conclude that most control over forest planning remains in the hands of the provincial government and the forest companies. It is a common finding in the literature that

Aboriginal communities are calling for a change in the distribution of decision-making authority (Forsyth 2006; Boyd and Trosper 2010; Bird 2011).

The mechanism that really allows Essipit to influence forest planning is distinct consultations. This process of forest management allows for harmonisation between forestry operations and other activities conducted by Essipit community members or enterprises. Indeed, regional MNR have the responsibility to consult with Aboriginal communities. Table 4 presents examples of harmonization measures for minimizing the negative impacts of forest interventions on wildlife (example 1), traditional activities (example 2), visual quality (example 3), and operations and clients of Essipit outfitters (example 4).

Table 4: Examples of harmonization agreements

Example	Objectives	Example of harmonization agreements
#1	Protection of caribou habitat	- Realize partial cutting in order to maintain a forest canopy permanently
#2	Maintain the viability of trapping lot	- Spatially distribute cut blocks to avoid concentring impact on one trapping lot
#3	Maintain visual quality of the landscape	- Delimitation protection buffer around sensitive areas
#4	Protect the quality of road access Maintain control over land access (e.g. poaching)	- Realise forest operations in winter - Close road once forest operations are completed

Until now, these consultations took the form of ad-hoc committee meetings (i.e. in person or by conference call). These meetings did not occur on a regular frequency, but based on needs. In-person meetings occurred both on reserve and off reserve. There was no permanent structure at the time of this research. In Fall 2013, Essipit joined some permanent structures in the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean with the MNR and Mashteuiatsh Innu First Nation. While Wyatt *et al.* (2010) conclude that the duty to consult is, at best, a mechanism for Aboriginals to influence decision-making, research results suggest otherwise. During fieldwork, we personally witnessed debates of ideas between the regional MNR and Essipit, as well as negotiations that led to real decision-

making. More specifically, Essipit and the MNR discussed, during an ad-hoc meeting, the best way to execute logging in the Poulin de Courval sector, which is an area used by woodland caribous as calving grounds[12]. At first, Essipit Band Council was shocked to see that logging operations were planned in this area, given that Essipit has been investing significant efforts to protect caribou since the early 2000s. However, the MNR, were open to hearing the concerns of Essipit. They agreed to design an adapted intervention procedure that would maintain a permanent forest cover and, secondly, an adapted monitoring procedure after forest operations. These procedures were designed collaboratively. The negotiations led to "real decision-making" because they resulted in harmonization measures that were directly integrated to harvesting agreements and, set mandatory constraints on forest operations. If Wyatt *et al.* (2010, p.739) indicate that "consultation processes are distinct in name rather than in practice," this research finds that Essipit benefit within the context of distinct consultation. Distinct consultation provides them with a direct link with regional MNR on a regular basis and allows them to have an influence on operational planning. There have not been enough attempts to understand the conditions within which "distinct consultation" processes allow Aboriginal communities to influence decision-making. Results on distinct consultation supports the conclusion of Grammond (2009) that the Aboriginal legal context provides Aboriginal peoples with greater influence on decision-making than non-Aboriginal municipality or regional actors.

Finally, the MNR assigns volumes to forest companies in the form of timber supply guarantees; while the timber marketing board (a new structure of the new forest regime) sets auctions for a portion of timber volumes in order to fix the wood price value. The regional MNR assigns forest

[12] It is important to know that Essipit has been investing significant efforts to protect caribou since the early 2000s.

operations contracts (related to timber harvesting and silviculture work), as well as controls and monitors forest operations. Essipit is consulted on supply guarantees, guarantees transfers between industrials, as well as block put into auction by the timber marketing board. Regarding timber supply guarantee, Essipit has repeatedly denounced the failure of the government to comply with their commitments in respect of the 100,000m^3 of timber promised in the agreement of 2004 (Gouvernement du Québec 2004). The government has always said that these volumes will be available once a treaty is signed. For the timber marketing board, there is a consultation that takes the same form as that of the GIRT panel process. Timber supply guarantee holders can receive forest operations contracts and, thus, can be attributing contracts to local forest contractors. It appears that consultations sometimes give results for Essipit and sometimes not. Here, the conclusion of Forsyth (2006) is validated: for Aboriginal communities, there is little authority-sharing at the strategic decision-making level, but enhanced authority-sharing does occur at the tactical or operational levels.

In this first area, Essipit influences forest management through state governance which involves the following processes (see table 5): public administration, market auctions, public consultation, distinct consultation, and operational panels.

5.4.2 Corporate governance

In FMU 097-51, the provincial legislative and regulatory framework also applies. However, it should be seen as a base layer, because Essipit and Boisaco decided to go further by signing a Land Management and Development Partnership in October 2009 (CPNIE 2008; CPNIE 2009). Although both entities experienced conflicts in the early 2000s, they realized it was best to collaborate. Both entities are key players of development in this region of Quebec: Essipit is

creating 485 jobs (see table 3) and is also offering several services to the regional population; Boisaco was providing employment for more than 600 workers in 2009 (CPNIE *et al.* 2009); both are reinvesting their part of their profits into development projects (see Chapter 4; Toulouse 2011). In addition, Boisaco has exclusive rights to harvest softwood on forest management unit 097-51, which covers Essipit Nitassinan. Therefore, forest activities carried out by Boisaco directly affect the use of the land by Essipit community members. The forest company Boisaco is characterized by a cooperative business model and, thus, shares with Essipit values of local empowerment, community development, collaborations and a sense of stewardship toward the land and its resources. These are the main rationales for the partnership: 1) they have the same land base and the actions of one impact the other; 2) they are characterized by distinct cultural settings, but they share similar core values; and 3) they see benefits in engaging in a partnership.

This partnership aims to increase Boisaco awareness of the efforts made by Essipit to protect its traditional territory. For example, Essipit has invested considerable resources on the Akumunan project, as well as the acquisition and management of six outfitters. Second, the partnership aims to raise Essipit awareness of the challenges facing Boisaco as a forest company. Third, Essipit seeks to increase its capacity to participate in the management and development of the territory, especially by transfer of expertise from Boisaco which has experience in forest planning, supervision and monitoring. Boisaco also obtained a FSC certificate for the forest management unit 097-51 in 2013. Finally, the partnership has an important economic dimension since Essipit hopes to access contracts and jobs for its members, while Boisaco hopes to consolidate its wood supply by accessing the 100,000 m3 of wood promised to Essipit in the negotiation process (Gouvernement du Québec 2004).

In terms of operation, Boisaco performs the operational planning, but it is understood that Essipit will intervene as early as possible in the planning process. Meanwhile, Essipit will consult its members and businesses to identify their concerns and interests associated with the use of the land. Thereafter, Essipit and Boisaco hold ad hoc meetings that allow for exchange on forest planning, as well as on certification, challenges of the new forest regime, etc. After concluding an agreement in the form of "harmonization measures", Boisaco (through its subsidiary COFOR) allocates contracts associated with timber harvesting to forest contractors. Thus, forest interventions are framed by the harmonization measures agreed on between Essipit and the regional MNR, as well as harmonization agreements between Essipit and Boisaco. The partners monitor forest operations, notably Essipit follows up with its members and enterprises, and evaluates compliance with both special arrangements between Essipit and Boisaco and MNR harmonization measures. Finally, after a three year period, Essipit and Boisaco made an overall assessment of the partnership. They are still discussing possible improvements to the partnership, but they agreed to continue the partnership.

In practice, the partnership establishes two distinct management approaches. First, there are the "sensitive areas" that include specific modalities for forest interventions on certain sites of interest and areas recognized as heritage site by Essipit. The Partnership also controls forest operations using tracking sheets that includes the following elements: Boisaco forestry operation guideline (e.g. name of contractors, if not Boisaco, requirements and regulations); Essipit comments and concerns (including its businesses operating on the territory); the harmonization measures; and follow-up on these measures (approach used and efficiency). It should be noted that, when harmonization measures are accepted by both parties and exceed the legal framework of MNR, the Partnership stipulates that Essipit may have to cover part or all of the costs

associated with these additional measures. The Partnership includes a distinct “call for tender” for business opportunities in sensitive areas. Essipit has priority over these contracts and can decide to submit a proposal or not. Second, regarding the territories outside sensitive areas, the management approach follows the provincial legislative and regulatory framework.

After three years, Essipit and Boisaco reviewed the Partnership (CPNIE 2012). The following presents the main elements of this review. First, the Partnership worked better when it began. The staff of Boisaco in place at that time participated in the negotiation and implementation of the partnership and, consequently, had a good understanding of the agreement and the participation of Essipit was encouraged in forest management. Prior to forest operations, field visits were conducted to validate prescriptions and Essipit received annual reports on the level of compliance with harmonization measures. However, staff turnover within Boisaco generated a lag in the understanding of the Partnership. Essipit found deficiencies in the respect of harmonization agreements, such as: management of signalisation, road maintenance and repair on access roads. On the other side, the loss of a key member of the Essipit consultation and negotiation team resulted in some delays in the review of the Partnership. Second, Essipit lacked human and material resources to optimize its interaction with Boisaco, including a lack of resources to hold planning meetings, make field visits to validate silviculture prescriptions, and to carry out follow-ups on harmonization arrangements. Third, Boisaco had to cope with a difficult economic climate and several realignments of Quebec’s forest regime which affected the company and, in turn, the Partnership. On the economic side, the Partnership generated few jobs and provided limited business opportunities for Essipit. This situation can be explained, in part, because Essipit is limited in terms of specialized personnel and forestry equipment. Essipit also noted that there is no real strategy between the two partners to promote the Essipit

participation in a greater number of opportunities. Finally, Essipit and Boisaco both identified communication problems. First, the simultaneous involvement of different departments within the Band Council to analyze "forest issues" blurs the contribution of each department (roles and responsibilities) in solving these issues and the way to relate with Boisaco staff. Furthermore, both parties are expressing problems accessing certain information. Essipit, for example, were having difficulty getting feedback on forest operations carried out under exemption of MNR harmonization measures and obtaining a calendar of the forest operations planned on the territory of their outfitters (territories, recalled, identified as sensitive areas). At the same time, Boisaco identified the need to access reports of consultations on harmonization measures between PNIE and MNR to implement, as quickly as possible, requests and recommendations prescribed by Essipit. In general, better communication is needed with actors involved in forest operations since they are not bound by the Partnership; yet, they have a direct impact on the Essipit Nitassinan. Finally, it is worth noting that the review of the Partnership did not assess the tools available for participation (e.g. tracking sheets of harmonization and calendar of activities).

The review of the Partnership recalls the innovative nature of the initiative. In addition, the review also emphasizes the evolving nature of the new forest regime which is not without consequence for operating of the Partnership. However, Essipit and Boisaco agreed to maintain and continue the Partnership. The Partnership facilitates exchanges between partners and accelerates the resolution of daily issues by avoiding state bureaucracy as an intermediary. In addition, Essipit is interested in acquiring knowledge of forest planning, supervision and monitoring held by Boisaco. Notably, if Essipit sign a treaty and obtain its Innu Assi, Essipit intends to maintain the FSC certification of Boisaco and, therefore, wishes to gain expertise in this field, in particular with respect to certification tools developed by Boisaco in recent years

(e.g. studies, reports, specifications and procedures). Collaboration, that is to say the pursuit of common goals and opportunities, is another factor to consider.

In FMU 097-51, Essipit influences forest management through certification. In addition, it is essential for Essipit to consult its community members and businesses in order to better represent them when negotiating with forest companies or the MNR. Furthermore, the LMDP represents a new process of corporate governance (see table 5). Indeed, Essipit acquired and now exercises additional influence over forest management decisions through a greater influence on Boisaco management practices. For example, the Partnership defines an operational framework which guides the exploitation of forest resources by Boisaco or its subcontractors. More specifically, it defines management techniques and tools for planning and control interventions in forests. In addition, the Partnership also becomes a negotiation tool as it becomes an input (requirement) of forest certification. If Boisaco does not meet certain basic demands, then Essipit has some negotiation power by using certification as leverage.

5.4.3 Essipit Innu Assi and the Akumunan

The green area (see figure 5) represents the territory of Essipit Innu Assi that is currently under negotiation with the governments of Quebec and Canada. At issue is whether this territory will be transformed into private lands. This area includes four of the six outfitters held by Essipit. These territories constitute zones where the First Nation holds exclusive rights for managing hunting, fishing and trapping activities; the other two outfitters, represented by the green shaded areas, are not included in the negotiation process. Pending signing of an agreement, Essipit continues to manage its outfitters, but all industrial projects (e.g. forestry or mining) are

suspended. Essipit Innu Assi is expected to provide a unique opportunity for Essipit to establish its own system of governance with its own laws, institutions, standards and regulations.

The purple area is the Akumunan biodiversity reserve project. Since the early 2000s, Essipit has been investing significant efforts to protect caribou, a vulnerable species. This area is also one of the last ancient coniferous forests on their traditional land. The Akumunan has a legal status that creates a moratorium on oil, gas, forestry and mining operations, as well as hydroelectric power, or any commercial or industrial production (MDDEP 2008). The governance model of the Akumunan is not yet agreed upon, but the current negotiations between Quebec and Essipit suggest that a delegation of power will be given to Essipit, which means Essipit will have primary authority to make decisions, but the MNR will retain hierarchical authority.

Since these two projects are still in draft form, they will not be discussed further in this particular text. However, based on results presented in chapter 4, we included outfitters in table 5 as another model of corporate governance. In addition, we mentioned these two projects because they exemplify the evolving nature of the forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory.

Table 5: Essipit modes of participation in forest governance

Models	State governance					Corporate governance		Market governance	Aboriginal governance
Processes	Public administration	Auctions	Public consultation	Distinct consultation	Operation panels	LMDP	Business management	Certification	Community consultation
Scope of resources	Wood	Wood	Primarily wood (moving toward multi-resources)	Multi-resources	Wood	Wood focus and multi-resources	Wildlife	Multi-resources	Multi-resources
Other(s) actor(s)	Central MNR, regional MNR CFO	WMO	Multi-actors (forest stakeholders)	MNR	MNR-Forest company	Forest company	Essipit outfitters	Third party Boisaco	Essipiunnuats and Essipit enterprises
Authority arrangement	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Shared	Shared	Shared	Shared	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Hierarchical
Locus of decision-making authority	Government	Market	Government	Government	Government	Forest company	Community	FSC	Community
Functions of forest management									
Legislation, regulation and policies	1	-	-	2	-	-	5	-	-
Harvesting levels	1	-	-	1	-	-	5	-	-
Strategic planning	1	-	2	2	-	-	6	-	-
Tactical planning	1	-	2	3	-	-	6	-	-
Operational planning	1	-	2	3	1	3	6	-	-
Attribution of resources	1	1	-	2	-	-	6	-	-
Attribution of contracts	1	-	-	2	-	2 or 3	6	-	-
Controls	1	-	-	3	-	3	6	3	-
Operations	-	-	-	3	1	3	6	-	-
Transformation and marketing	-	-	-	-	-	4 (Granulco)	6	-	-
Land uses management	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	6

* 1- Information: Essipit is informed of decisions made by others; 2- Consultation: Essipit is consulted on proposed decisions and is provided without or with limited accommodation; 3- Accommodation: Essipit is consulted on proposed decisions and is accommodated; 4- Collaboration: Joint decision between Essipit and another party; 5- Delegation: Essipit has primary authority to decide, but has not hierarchical authority; 6- Autonomy: Essipit has full authority.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter gives us a chance to reflect on the meaning of Aboriginal forest governance and to discuss the implications for future research. Indeed, a detailed description of the forest governance system on Essipit Nitassinan explains the role played by the community in forest management, the mechanisms that connect them to other forest stakeholders, as well as the modes and processes that are most effective in addressing the needs of the community.

We find that state governance remains a strong model of forest governance. First, we identify that the Quebec government retains control over strategic decisions (e.g. regulations, calculation of AAC and allocation timber volumes) or shares operational responsibilities with forest companies. Second, we show that the Quebec government has put in place new regional processes to regionalize forest planning, namely GIRT panels and Regional Land and Natural Resource Commissions, but our analysis demonstrates that these processes provide Essipit with limited influence on the decision-making process. Third, this research finds that distinct consultation, a process that involves Essipit and Quebec, offers Essipit a real role in decision-making. While Wyatt *et al.* (2010) claim that distinct consultation gives Aboriginals little influence in decision-making, our data supports the claim of Grammond (2009) that Aboriginal communities acquire real influence through processes of distinct consultation. These contradictory results suggest variations from one community to another. Therefore, more research is needed to understand how Aboriginal communities can effectively engage in this process. This is also necessary in order to better respect the rights and values of Aboriginal peoples and, ultimately, achieve more sustainable forest management. Without that understanding, consultation procedures will remain uninformed, and are unlikely to be effective.

Researchers in the field of forest sciences have invested most of their efforts in trying to understand authority-sharing between the state and Aboriginal authorities, an important contribution of this dissertation is to show that fundamental changes are also taking place at the intersection between two concepts of forest governance, namely self-governance and corporate governance. Indeed, our data identified a new approach developed by Essipit and Boisaco: the Land Management and Development Partnership. The LMDP does not constitute an example of co-management, because co-management requires sharing of authority and responsibilities (Beckley 1998). Interestingly, the conditions conducive to its creation in 2008 overlap with the theory of self-governance (Ostrom 1999). Indeed, this self-organised arrangement occurred on a small land base where Essipit efforts to protect the land were affecting Boisaco's forest operations which, in turn, affected Essipit's land use. Knowing they experienced conflicts in the early 2000's, it is doubtful that they trusted one another in the early years of the partnership, but they developed clear rules and procedures to compensate for the lack of trust. However, the LMDP lacks a common approach to forest planning. Every year, the technical staffs of both organizations engage in an exercise of consultation-validation of forest operations to be carried out on the territory. While the Partnership seeks Essipit participation as early as possible in forest management, it appears the Partnership involves practices similar to distinct consultation. Essipit and Boisaco wish to continue their collaboration and to improve the partnership by finding avenues that will better meet the interests and needs of both parties. The government of Quebec could provide more space to allow Essipit and Boisaco to move into a full arrangement of self-governance. The LMDP does not alter the formal nature of the Quebec forest regime, yet growing collaboration and interdependencies between Essipit and Boisaco, through a common institutional arrangement with common values, orientations, mechanisms (i.e. dispute resolution

mechanism) and tools, promoted cultural understanding and a shift toward negotiated decisions over forest resources at the operational level. Most importantly, this partnership allows for forests to be managed in a way that is more consistent with the local culture of Essipit.

Thus, we find that forest governance on Essipit Nitassinan involves different sets of actors, at various levels of collective action. This links with the concept of multilevel governance which emphasises the negotiated aspects of the various processes of governance (Grammond 2009). In the words of Grammond (2009), situations where "there is interdependence in the decision-making process, that is to say where nobody fully controls the entire process, are typical examples of multilevel governance." The results of this research, as shown in Table 5, demonstrate this clearly. In state governance, we find a distribution of roles and responsibilities between different management structures such as the office of the chief forester, the timber marketing board, MNR-central, and MNR-regional. In addition, the new mechanisms of public consultation seek to reach decisions through regional negotiations. In 2014, Operational panels, a new mechanism, will allow MNR and the forest industry to negotiate decisions at the operational level. Processes of distinct consultation and the LMDP clearly derived from a process of negotiation. Finally, it seems that the Essipit Innu Assi and the Akumunan provide other good examples to support the concept of multilevel governance. As suggested by Morris and Fondahl (2002), territory should not be thought of as rigid and monolithic, but rather as a juxtaposition of negotiated spaces where different actors are involved and different regulations and procedures apply. This is also how we need to consider Aboriginal forest governance.

This chapter reveals that place matters. Essipit does not use the territory evenly. Sensitive areas, such as Essipit outfitters or band members' camps, are mainly located within FMU 097-51 (including the Akumunan and future Innu Assi). This explains in part why Essipit expends more effort trying to influence forest governance in this area than in FMU 023-52, by establishing a partnership with Boisaco. Essipit translated the needs of community members into management planning. The forest management approach being applied on the Nitassinan of Essipit is based on cultural sensitivity. This approach includes three different zones. First, the Akumunan is close to becoming a protected area for biodiversity conservation. Second, culturally sensitive areas on FMU 097-51 serve primarily for community development. Here, socially acceptable forest practices have been designed by Essipit and Boisaco and new ones would be needed if Essipit obtains land rights and management authority over its Innu Assi. Finally, zones outside sensitive areas on FMU 097-51 and FMU 023-52 currently serve the objectives of forest companies: large-scale operations for timber production at lower cost. This option is probably acceptable for Essipit, because the two other zones adequately address the social, environmental and economic needs of the community members.

Finally, this research has methodological implications for future research on Aboriginal forest governance. First, research methodologies should pay greater attention to the level of analysis. In-depth analysis is key in obtaining the necessary details relating to authority and power. Assessing the distribution of decision-making authority at the level of forest management functions was very beneficial for the research. It allowed for the comparison of the various models of Essipit participation in forest governance (see Table 5) and reached conclusions similar to Wyatt *et al.* (2010, p.739), namely that Aboriginal forest governance should be seen as a number of juxtaposed processes and that no single process could meet all Essipit needs. Why?

Table 5 shows that these processes address different functions of forest management, focus on different forest resources and provide Essipit with different levels of authority. This confirms similar assertions previously made by Carlsson and Berkes (2005) and Forsyth (2006). This research adds to the previous literature by proposing four options: geographic units, models, processes, or functions of forest management. The importance of Essipit outfitters for gaining influence on decision-making on the territory provides an argument in favor of adopting multi-resource analysis. This conclusion is also reflected in other Aboriginal initiatives, notably in Anishinabeg community of Kitigan Zibi where a multi-resource management approach was applied in the project of Forêt de l'Aigle (Chiasson and Leclerc 2013) or with the Crees who established a wildlife co-management model and the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (Grammond 2009; Jacqmain *et al.* 2012). However, this study is not able to answer the following question: which institutions of forest governance in Essipit correspond to the local culture? This question will be addressed in future research.

CHAPTER 6: ESSIPIT'S OBJECTIVES FOR FOREST-BASED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Introduction

In Canada, it is now recognized that a better understanding of the objectives of Aboriginal communities for forest-based development is an important part of sustainable forest management (CCFM 2006). Yet little is known about what these objectives are. One reason is that current forest management frameworks and policies are built around an industrial model that emphasizes the economic values of forestry (Beckley 1998; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). This model is focused on generating timber harvesting opportunities, while ecological and other values are generated through regulations and the setting aside of land in protected areas. These policies, practices, and even business models then shape the kinds of opportunities available to Aboriginal communities. This not only constrains the kinds of objectives they can pursue, but also creates the potential for dispute where the objectives of the forest industry are in conflict with Aboriginal values or objectives. Therefore, research is needed that allows Aboriginal groups to articulate what objectives they have, independent of a particular policy or management framework (although Aboriginal objectives may be influenced by it). These objectives will be informed by the values Aboriginals hold, which will also influence the means by which they want to accomplish these objectives and how they evaluate the choices they face.

In order to address these questions, we organized a strategic planning exercise with the Innus First Nation of Essipit, hereafter referred to as "Essipit", to identify their objectives for forest development and the underlying values. This built upon earlier work by Gitane St-Georges (St-

Georges 2009; Beaudoin *et al.* 2012) who used focus groups to establish key values in this same community.

Between March and May of 2013, we held four discussion groups with 28 Essipit members. After analysing the discussions, we identified 34 forest development objectives for the Innu Assi of Essipit. Within the process of treaty negotiations, the Innu Assi is a territorial assignment of full property (communal private land) for Essipit. The Innu Assi will become the base for Essipit' governmental autonomy and an essential part of its socio-economic development.

In this text, we will first contextualize the research topic and explain the methodology. Then, we will present our results, discuss them and conclude.

6.2 Context

Industrial forestry has had major impacts on forest ecosystems and, consequently, on Aboriginal cultures and livelihoods; this situation led to numerous conflicts of values (Berkes 1993; La Rusic 1995; Anderson 1997b; NAFA-IOG 2000; Wyatt 2004; Booth and Skelton 2011). Moreover, tensions are present within Aboriginal communities, as they are torn between the necessity of job creation for their members, their values and respect for the forests (Anderson 1997a). But are these objectives really incompatible, or are the constraints imposed by our development models, which limit the kind of objectives Aboriginal communities can promote?

Several researchers have observed differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal models of forestry in terms of values, knowledge and objectives (CSSP 1995; Natcher 2008; Wyatt 2008; Saint-Arnaud 2009; Stevenson and Natcher 2009; Booth and Skelton 2011; Beaudoin *et al.* 2012). Consequently, it is thought that Aboriginal forestry can propose alternate models of forest

management and development. While it is true that Aboriginals occupy an increasingly significant role in education, employment, management, and operations within the Canadian forest sector (NAFA 2007; NRCan 2010; FPSC 2011), they are forced to adopt values and rules pre-established by existing provincial forest regimes (Wyatt 2004; Forsyth 2006; Booth and Skelton 2011). Moreover, many reports indicate that Aboriginal peoples do not always benefit from participation in forest-based development (Gysbers and Lee 2003; Parkins *et al.* 2006; FNFC 2010; Booth and Skelton 2011). In fact, many important challenges still need to be addressed before Aboriginal forestry can fully develop. Some of the challenges include: lack of control and access to timber; inability of provincial and federal governments to recognize Aboriginal authority; lack of recognition of Aboriginal interests in provincial regulation; lack of financial, technical, and commercial skills; lack of financial support; lack of infrastructure (Wilson and Graham 2005; Wellstead and Stedman 2008; Beaudoin 2009). If some of these elements can be grouped as economic and technical factors (i.e. infrastructure, resources, and personnel) which would be similar for any small enterprise, the scientific literature suggests that the challenge to Aboriginal involvement in forest-based development is more fundamental.

Indeed, there are still too few empirical studies that have a clear understanding of the term "forestry" from an Aboriginal perspective. Fortier *et al*. (2013) have identified, within 474 Aboriginal communities throughout Canada, 1378 collaborations between Aboriginal communities and the forest sector. They found that economic initiatives are the most common form of collaboration, but they raise little interest among researchers (Fortier *et al.* 2012). In the United-States, the conclusions of the HPAIED (Jorgensen 2007) indicate that Aboriginal communities are more likely to have economic success when local culture is taken into account. These conclusions highlight the importance of improving our knowledge about what cultural fit

really means for forest-based development of Aboriginal communities in Canada. Through Trosper's works (Trosper 1995; Trosper 2009; Trosper *et al.* 2012), we can identify six characteristics of Aboriginal cultures:

1. Connectedness: Everything is connected, including the peoples and their territory;
2. Identity: Distinct cultures of Aboriginal peoples are to be protected and enhanced;
3. Reciprocity: Aboriginal systems of benefit need to be maintained;
4. Limits on market economy: Aboriginal economic development put a limit on the logic of market capitalism by not managing forest only the purpose of wood production or profits accumulation.
5. Accountability: Aboriginal peoples must be responsible for their actions;
6. Sustainability: Maintaining the sustainability of the system.

These characteristics can also be found in other scientific literature (Hornborg 1994; Holm *et al.* 2003; Rodon 2003; Simard 2003).

Most Aboriginal forestry studies examine communities working within the constraints of industrial forest models, who are engaged in operations, management and wood processing (Hickey and Nelson 2005; Forsyth 2006; Brubacher 2007; NAFA 2007; Trosper *et al.* 2008; Wyatt 2008; Beaudoin 2009; FNFC 2010; Booth and Skelton 2011). On the other hand, some researchers suggest the need to expand our analytical framework when considering the Aboriginal context (Dana and Anderson 2007; Stevenson and Natcher 2009; Chiasson and Leclerc 2013). For example, Aboriginal communities are very involved in the informal economy, such as subsistence activities (Dana and Anderson 2007; Natcher 2008b; Stevenson and Natcher 2009; Jacqmain *et al.* 2012). Thus, in order to understand what Aboriginal communities consider as successful forest-based development, we need to understand the objectives they have, the

underlying values that motivate those objectives, and how these influence the implementation of strategies to accomplish those objectives. A key distinction with the industrial forestry model is the role non-economic factors might play in shaping objectives. For example, criteria and indicators (C&I) are tools designed to assess and monitor the sustainability of forest management practices, as well as to assist forest professionals in decision-making. In national C&I frameworks (CCFM 2006; Gouvernement du Québec 2014), the objective is to recognize Aboriginal rights within the industrial model of forestry. In comparison, Aboriginal C&I frameworks (Shearer 2008; Saint-Arnaud 2009) emphasize the objective of exercising Aboriginal rights through self-determination or self-government, notably by controlling forest management decision-making processes. In other words, Aboriginal communities believe that the respect of their rights requires defining their own model of forestry. These fundamental differences have other practical consequences; for example, information on the availability of moose or other wildlife that would be considered environmental indicators by non-Aboriginal C&I frameworks, are also considered social indicators in the Pikangikum First Nation framework (Shearer 2008) or economic indicators (i.e. subsistence activities) in the Kitcisakik First Nation Framework (Saint-Arnaud 2009).

As we have seen, our knowledge on the topic is still limited, whether it is because of the constraints set by our development models, the lack of interest from the research community, or the limits of our analytical frameworks. This research project aims to further our knowledge in the matter by giving a strong voice to Essipit Innu First Nation in order to identify the forest development objectives for the future of the Innu Assi.

6.3 Methodology

The research presented in this chapter draws on a case study (Creswell 1998; Gauthier 2008; Babbie 2010). Research was carried out in collaboration with the community of Essipit, located on the Haute-Côte-Nord region of Québec (Canada). This case was chosen for two reasons. First, the community showed a keen interest in participating in the strategic planning exercise as way to envision development of Innu Assi. Second, Essipit is characterized by strong community development models that have led to social and economic success (CPNIE 2008; St-Georges 2009; Proulx and Gauthier 2012). Thus, the understanding of the Essipit model of forest-based development will contribute to existing literature, while also supporting the community's own development efforts.

Data collection relied on focus groups (Krueger and Casey 2000) and occurred between March and May of 2013 during a six-month internship in the Essipit Band Council. With the help of local collaborators, we tried to invite the participants included in the work of St-Georges (2009) during her study of Essipit's preoccupations, values and aspirations regarding its traditional territory, or Nitassinan. Our aim was to develop further the reflection already undertaken, but to refocus it on the context of Essipit's Innu Assi. Participants were 18 years-old or older and had knowledge, experience or interest regarding community or forest development issues, which is consistent with the definition of key informants (Creswell 1998). The seven following discussion groups were thereby formed: male elders, female elders, outfitter guardians, land users, women, forest entrepreneurs and artisans. Groups varied in size from three to eight persons. In total, we met with 28 participants, 14 women and 14 men, of which 19 participated in the research of St-Georges (2009).

Table 6: Description of focus groups

Groups	Descriptions	Citation codes	Number	
			Male	Female
Male elders	Women over 55 years	ME	4	0
Female elders	Men over 55 years	FE	0	5
Outfitter guardians	Members working for Essipit Outfitters	OG	4	1
Land users	Members occupying the territory significantly, especially for the practice of traditional activities	LU	4	0
Women	Women between 18 and 54 years	W	0	5
Essipit forest entrepreneurs	Members who are forest entrepreneurs or aspiring entrepreneurs	EFE	2	1
Artisans	Members working as artisans	A	0	2
		Number of participants per gender	**14**	**14**
		Total number of participants	**28**	

After discussing with local contacts, we agreed to focus the discussions on the Innu Assi territory. As Essipit could become the sole manager of the Innu Assi, a strategic planning exercise would provide a guide for the rest of the Nitassinan where Essipit must negotiate with other forest stakeholders. In addition, we framed the discussions in a horizon of ten years. Based on previous economic development experience, this seems to be a reasonable timeframe to deevelop actions and change. We used a focus guide to promote proper functioning of the discussions (see annex I). We started by quickly explaining the context of the Innu Assi, with a map of the territory as a visual support (see figure 5). We then tried to bring all participants to the same level of understanding with a presentation (based on chapter 4) of Essipit's capacity to undertake forest-based development. Finally, we asked semi-structured questions in order to better understand the following issues: 1) their visions and objectives regarding forest development, 2) the expected benefits, and 3) the indicators for evaluating success of future actions that Essipit will take.

Focus group discussions were conducted in French and were recorded and transcribed. A first reading of the transcript allowed for a better understanding of the general meaning of the

participant's points of view (Creswell 1998). Then, we used NVivo 10 software for open coding (Miles and Huberman 2003; Babbie 2010) in order to take into account the context of the data and to more accurately reflect the views of participants.

After this first coding exercise, we reflected on cultural bias in data interpretation (De Sardan 2008). In parallel, we found theoretical adequacy between research data and the work of Dr. Trosper after a personal meeting with him on May 24th 2013. Then, we analyzed the content of initial codes and sub-codes in order to identify central concepts (i.e. principles) similar to Trosper's six characteristics of Aboriginal cultures, or what Babbie (2010) refers to as axial coding. After this second coding process, we presented six "principles" to the local contacts in order to ensure and maintain the participant's points of view and the fit with the local culture. Thus, the interpretation of the data highlights 34 objectives and related indicators discussed by the research participants, as well as differences of opinion where appropriate. Finally, results were presented to the participants in order to validate and improve the quality of the conclusions (Miles and Huberman 2003).

6.4 Results

Data analysis identified three groups of fundamental principles for guiding the development of Essipit's Innu Assi:

1) Nutshimiu-Aitun (identity-territoriality in Innu): Reinforcement and development of Essipit peoples' culture (identity) and of the link between them and the land (territoriality). These two principles are closely linked because Essipiunnuats live their culture within the territory;

2) Mishkutunam (sharing-exchange in Innu): Sharing and exchange of benefits between Essipit peoples and the outside world;

3) Pakassitishun (autonomy-responsibility in Innu): Reinforcement of Essipit's capacity to take charge of managing its Innu Assi while, at the same time, assuming the responsibilities that comes with it.

The analysis allowed for the identification of a total of 34 objectives for forest-based development. Each objective is associated with one indicator or more to evaluate the success of futures actions (see table 7, table 8, and table 9).

6.4.1 Nutshimiu-Aitun (identity-territoriality)

Essipit gives its outfitters a primary vocation of economic development, that is to say that hunting and fishing activities are mainly accessible to the outfitter's clients. During the focus groups, participants discussed different possibilities to allow traditional practices (Innu Aitun in the Innu language) on these territories: allow members to practice freely on the Innu Assi, have a sector (part or all of an outfitter) available to the members, or develop private cottages. At the same time, participants are aware of the economic vocation of outfitters (jobs, revenues, etc.) and they want to maintain it. The debates on how to harmonize these conflicting activities raised three major concerns: avoid losing the benefits (jobs and revenues) that the outfitters create, avoid being a nuisance for outfitters' clients, and maintain good management of the resources.

Table 7: Essipit nutshimiu-aitun objectives for forest-based development

NUTSHIMIU-AITUN
IDENTITY – TERRITORIALITY
Value: Reinforce the links between the Essipit people and their Innu Assi

Course of action 1 – Maintain a vibrant and strong culture on the land
Course of action 2 – Facilitate access to the land

Knowledge about the forest

Document knowledge about forest
- Number of ongoing research projects

Practices and cultural transmission

Allow Innu Aitun practices
- Establish an accessibility system for hunting, fishing and trapping

Maintain cultural trips
- Number of organized trips
  - Fishing trip for primary school children
  - Hunting and trapping trip for secondary school youth
  - Fishing trip with elders

Organise a day of intergenerational exchange
- Number of organized activities
  - Organised community activity (e.g. community hunting)

Protect traditional and community sites
- Number of sites protected by a buffer zone (including Lac Bernier, Lac Mont Grain, Lac Loup)

Awareness

Organize a day of intercultural exchange
- Number of organized days

Raise awareness towards respect of the land and of other users
- Code of practice for the land
- Number of land wardens

Sites and infrastructure on land

Offer Essipit people access to some community sites
- Availability period
- Number of available sites
  - Rustic site
  - Structured site

Offer Essipit people quality infrastructure in the forest
- Number of camps
- Meeting room
- Km of managed trails

Maintain quality access to land
- Proportion of roads in good condition
- Percentage of intersections with signalization

Land use

Increase land use by implementing policy and program
- Number of implemented policies and programs
  - A policy about land use
  - A land use assistance program

Thus, harmonization of the commercial activities of Essipit outfitters and Innu Aitun practices appeared difficult, unless members subscribe as outfitter clients or benefit from the privileged access they already have[13]. Furthermore, participants said that it is unlikely that Essipiunnuats will leave their current sites to go on the Innu Assi, because a majority of them have already access to land outside the territories of the outfitters (e.g. private cottages or trap lines). Still, cohabitation with non-Aboriginal peoples remains difficult and this situation makes the project of Innu Assi even more attractive to participants.

The participants mentioned that it would be possible for commercial activities of the outfitters and Innu Aitun practices to coexist. As the following excerpt shows, the availability of a community site would facilitate access to the land for members who do not presently have access, in addition to promoting knowledge transmission and culture valorization.

> *This place of gathering would be for community events, but could also serve for knowledge transmission […]it would be good for those who want to be introduced among other things to trapping, even too for evenings of myths and old stories from the community. I would like it! After that, it could allow everyone to go in the forest. Not everyone has a cottage or the income to go to an outfitter (W1).*

Two types of sites have been considered by participants: 1) a rustic site to promote certain learning experiences such as how to set up traditional camps and 2) a more structured site, including among other things a meeting room and cottages, in order to organize bigger events or events during the winter season. In addition to the benefits mentioned above, community sites would allow members to leave their equipment on the land permanently and to generate revenues by renting to non-Aboriginal peoples when the site is unoccupied.

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[13] Members of Essipit have access to outfitters as regular clients with reduced costs during low season.

Participants suggested organizing a day of intergenerational exchange. Some forest-related traditional knowledge is held by older members of the community. This knowledge is not well understood by younger members and threatens to disappear with the aging population. Another objective is to document this knowledge in order to preserve it and transmit it to the youth and future generations. Furthermore, there already exist cultural fishing trips for primary school children and elders, as well as hunting and trapping trips for secondary school youth; this objective also aims to reach community members aged between 18 and 54 years old. Many participants reminded us of the ongoing prejudices regarding Aboriginals and suggested organizing an intercultural exchange day to raise awareness and teach outsiders about the culture and the achievements of Essipit, notably regarding good resource management practices by the outfitters. Thus, compared to existing community sites, the needs expressed by the participants aim to diversify the type and number of activities, to increase the number of facilities and the quantity of available equipment, and to make them available during the winter season.

The concept of respect was present in every discussion group: respect of wildlife, rivers, forest, land, and other users. The following excerpt provides an example:

> *Respect starts with yourself. If you don't respect fauna […], you don't respect yourself (ME1).*

In another example of the importance of respect, the group of land users was explaining that circulating with a moose head on the hood of your car is prohibited out of respect for the animal. Thus, one of the objectives aims to raise awareness about respect of the land and other users, either by implementing a code of practice or with the help of land wardens.

Finally, the establishment of a land use policy would address all issues and objectives discussed above in a coordinated manner. Such a policy, internal to the organisation of the Band Council, would formalize a planning and management framework for the occupation of the land. More specifically, it would establish rules for land occupation and for establishing Aboriginal camps, administrative processes for authorizing and managing land rights, and programs for supporting Innu Aitun practices (financial, human or material). The focus of this policy would be on the use of Essipit Innu Assi as well as the remaining of the Nitassinan. In short, forest development of the Innu Assi has to promote a place of knowledge, meetings, exchanges and teaching. The participants hope for a vibrant culture through a strong link with the land. One participant notes:

> *We need to look at our education. We know very well that the culture, the people, the transmission is rooted in the land, it is alive. It is within the territory that we learn. This is the best education we can give (W3).*

6.4.2 Mishkutunam (sharing-exchange)

In the short term, industrial forestry can have negative impacts on traditional practices and outfitter activities. However, participants recognize that some of these impacts are temporary and that harvesting can generate economic benefits. As such, participants have in mind the creation of an investment fund in order to reinvest revenues from the Innu Assi in its own development.

> *The revenues from our outfitters are reinvested in our outfitters. They are not reinvested elsewhere or whatever. They are used for job creation, improving our roads, improving the quality of the services we offer to the people who come to hunt and fish in our outfitters (LU1).*

Such a fund would help to get through difficult times, to improve infrastructures (e.g. roads), to acquire additional skills (discussed later) and to diversify revenue sources. If the fund was to reach a certain level, revenues exceeding this level could be used for projects on the reserve in

order to improve quality of life for individuals and families. However, some participants reminded that “reinvesting profits” first requires “making profits”, a goal they qualified as a real challenge with the current state of the forest sector. One of the participants observed: “the forest sector is dead”.

Diversification of revenue sources is another important objective in order to guarantee better economic resilience, but also to access the financial resources needed to develop Essipit Innu Assi. To achieve this, many business opportunities have been discussed. For all participants, outfitters are a source of pride and an important lever for economic and cultural development, as the following excerpts show:

> *Basically, it would be to get people to know us through the outfitters (W1); At Lac Loup, we have a camp. It’s offering the possibility to go live there. There needs to be guides […] to make our culture known to others (W3); Yes! To stop prejudices (W2).*

Many participants first wish to continue acquiring outfitters or to diversify the range of products, by developing snowmobile trails, outdoor activities or cultural tourism. To do this, the clients’ needs have to be known in order to develop the right products and to make responsible investments. Second, building cottages or houses for community members has been discussed; note here that Essipit is already building, in the summer and the winter, buildings and cottages for existing outfitters. This is an important socio-economic activity because it allows for the extension of seasonal jobs. Thus, the goal would be to increase the offer. Third, the Council

Table 8: Essipit mishkutunam objectives for forest-based development

MISHKUTUNAM
SHARING - EXCHANGE
Value : Sharing and exchanging benefits from the Innu Assi fairly

Course of action 3 – Offer interesting benefits to Essipit people
Course of action 4 – Offer a promising environment to companies and partnerships

Knowledge

Know customer needs to maintain supply of quality services
- Follow up with customers

Levers of development

Promote sustainable forest development by reinvesting in the Innu Assi
- Establish and maintain an investment and savings fund
- Percentage (by sector of activities) of revenues reinvested in the land

Diversify sources of revenue for more economic stability
- Percentage of revenue/contracts by sector of activities

Maintain benefits at the local level by promoting local businesses
- Percentage of contracts given to local businesses

Acquire new outfitters
- Number of outfitters bought

Diversify the activities offered in the outfitters by developing recreation and tourism sectors
- Km of managed trails

Rent community sites to people or organizations outside of the community during non-occupied periods
- Number of days rented/occupied

Workers

Maintain and improve on-land jobs
- Extension of the duration of seasonal jobs
- Maintain or increase number of yearly jobs
- Maintain or increase salaries and workers benefits

Ensure transfer of expertise
- Number of days of training linked to targeted expertise

Ensure sufficient recruitment
- Recruitment plan : Identify recruitment objectives by sector of activities

Business environment

Offer stability to forest companies
- Wood supply or contracts guaranteed for a certain period (e.g. 5 years)

Promote social acceptability of forest operations within the population
- Number of information tools (brochures, interpretive signs)
- Train outfitter staff in order to educate customers
- Activities offered at the outfitters to increase awareness

could develop professional land management services (planning, photo interpretation, monitoring, etc.), first for Essipit itself and then for outside businesses and organisations. Finally, diversification of revenue sources would also be possible by developing a blueberry farm or by renting community sites to outsiders during unoccupied periods.

Partnership is an essential approach to development for the Innu Assi, because it can fill the gap in expertise (e.g. forest and local labour in some areas of expertise) and can provide important financial support. As the following quote indicates, a partnership also avoids creating a competition that would have a negative effect for both existing businesses and Essipit companies:

> *It is certain that you can't start wood mills. If you do, others will die […] I tell myself that we must do things they don't have. If you make things they have, it means that someone will die […] It is useless. We will be hated by the people we will make die (FE4).*

Moreover, development of the Innu Assi has to promote local businesses in order to maximise benefits to the community or the region. Furthermore, it is also important to offer interesting conditions to forest companies. One of the objectives aims to guarantee a sufficient amount of work, through guaranteed supply or contracts for instance, in order to raise the interest of companies or to rationalize investments. The EFE group indicates that another objective has to aim for social acceptability of forest operations:

> *I'm under the impression that those who don't agree, it's because they don't know (EFE2).*

To achieve this, Essipit members and outfitter clients need to be educated and made aware of the various types of cuts and the forest evolution that occurs afterward. Participative management can also contribute to social acceptability of forest operations (discussed later).

Finally, the predominance of seasonal jobs in Essipit is of great concern for many participants. This is especially true with the changes made by the federal government to the employment insurance system. Indeed, "frequent claimants" of employment insurance must accept a job with lower working conditions than if they were "long-tenured workers." Furthermore, the new system sets stricter conditions for receiving employment insurance. An unemployed person will lose his benefits if he does not comply with these conditions, or refuses a job without good reason. At Essipit, economic activity is structured around seasonal jobs in the fishery, tourism and forestry sectors. Employment insurance provides important incomes during the off-season. The jobs offered by Essipit will be harder to fill because it will be harder for workers to obtain employment insurance as workers are more likely to belong to the category of "frequent users" and forced to accept undesirable jobs during the off-season. Thus, insecurity occurs both for the workers themselves, who could decide to find a year-round job elsewhere, and for the organization of the Band Council which loses its workforce. Consequently, participants identified the objective of maintaining and improving jobs. To achieve this, the following possibilities were discussed: 1) extend outfitters season with new tourism offer; 2) offer complementary jobs during low season (e.g. construction); 3) offer “year-round[14]” jobs, notably forest management related jobs. Another concern for some participants was the imminent

[14] Note that the term “year-round” does not necessarily mean, in this context, jobs over a period of twelve months, as some Essipit people need a few months to practice traditional activities such as hunting and trapping.

retirement of some experienced workers. Thus, one of the objectives is to establish a succession plan that would identify labour needs by sector of activity; another is to implement training to ensure transfer of expertise.

6.4.3 Pakassitishun (autonomy-responsibility)

> *Basically, the cut that is done, it`s that they always have the economic aspect in their heads, thinking about what will be left in their pockets. The day the Council says we are cutting on our outfitters. It is ours, we want to keep having great wildlife, we want to promote development of all these things. Let`s forget the economic and let`s do it for the health of the forest, of wildlife in general. Your people will still be working. It`s obvious you won`t be making a million a month, but you'll still cover your costs and your people will be working and your moose survives for a time (OG6).*

The previous excerpt illustrates a general consensus among the participants that the industrial forestry model cannot be adopted for the Innu Assi of Essipit, due to a matter of scale and because of the impacts on the environment, wildlife, and culture. A customized model of land and forest management has to be developed for this territory. For the participants, controlling land management is a fundamental aspect of the development of the Innu Assi. Greater autonomy will allow Essipit to establish its own rules and to develop its own practices, thereby ensuring respect of their rights and values.

According to different groups (FE, ME and OG), the starting point is to make an inventory of current resources on the territory in order to improve the general state of knowledge and, then, to determine the potential of the land by setting quotas for harvesting wildlife and vegetation, including timber. Participants mentioned that these are crucial steps in order to avoid overexploitation of resources and to ensure sustainability and economic benefits.

Table 9: Essipit pakassitishun objectives of forest-based development

PAKASSITISHUN
AUTONOMY - RESPONSIBILITY
Value : Local control and responsibility of land management

Course of action 5 – Strengthen Essipit's capacity
Course of action 6 – Maintain forest quality

Expertise

Improve knowledge of the land's potential
- Complete a forest inventory
- Number of research projects

Know land use of Essipit people
- Complete an Innu Aitum follow-up

Know the skill needs
- Training plan (needs by sector and priorities)

Develop local expertise for managing the Innu Assi
- Customized training program
- Number of days of training per person per year

Develop partnerships allowing transfer of expertise and capacity building
- Number of jointly realised projects

Practices

Develop a forest management model better adapted to enhancing Essipit's wildlife resource management and culture
- Existence of an allowable annual cut
- Existence of a management plan
  - Silviculture guide for deciduous and mixed stands

Promote participation in forest management choices
- Implementation of a consultation process (panel) with community members
- Present various management scenarios to members
- Innu Aitum follow-up

Forest environment

Protect the forest and its biodiversity
- Number of protected sites
- Numbers of protected species
- Create and manage the Akumunan biodiversity reserve (moose and old growth forests)

Maintain sound quality of occupied areas
- Existence of an operations and cultural activities calendar

Protect landscape visual quality
- Undetermined indicator

Access management

Manage land access adequately
- Number of « illegal occupants »
- Number of closed roads

For them, it is also about developing a forest management model that protects and values their distinct culture. Various management strategies that could make this objective possible were discussed: optimizing certain elements within the calculation of the annual allowable cut (e.g. wildlife habitat models versus harvested volume), adapting silviculture of mixed and deciduous stands to meet objectives that are broader than only timber production (e.g. closed canopy, landscape), identifying operational guidelines in order to harmonise forest operations, outfitter activities and Innu Aitum practices (e.g. partial cutting, calendar of operations, etc.).

According to the EFE group, Essipit has to be actively involved in land management in order to better understand the practical and economic aspect of forest operations, that is to say operational requirements and costs. By being involved, Essipit will be in a better position to obtain a fair value for its investments or to predict the effects of different management scenarios.

As the next quote shows, taking over management of the Innu Assi cannot happen without developing the capacity of community members:

> *At a certain point, if the community wants to manage many hectares and develop it, it takes a vision, it takes data, it takes people (EFE1).*

Thus, one of the objectives aims to evaluate human resource needs and to prioritize these needs. A complementary objective aims to establish a training plan in order to meet these needs. For example, internships would train people and help youth in making career choices. In addition to building more autonomy, it is expected that the development of local expertise can also contribute to the following aims: 1) bring interesting local jobs, 2) develop community pride, 3)

facilitate communication and consultation between the Council and its members, 4) increase community participation in management decisions; and 5) increase trust in decision-making.

The next objective, forest protection, could have been associated with the group "Identity-territoriality". Indeed, it is intimately linked to the territoriality principle; that is to say protection of the territory to which the Essipit peoples have a strong cultural attachment. Another way of explaining this objective is by showing the sense of responsibility apparent in the participants discourse.

> *Protecting the environment, it is imperative. If we don't protect it, it is not our neighbours who will do it in our place […] Because the Indians have always protected the environment. They have always protected things. They went fishing, they did not take all the trouts. They left some for the next year […] They lived from that and they knew how to protect them (FE4).*

Many times during the study, participants expressed a sense of responsibility towards their fathers (ancestors) and future generations. Similarly, forestry on the Innu Assi has to respect the environment:

> *Forestry, it really has to respect the environment, if you want to continue with the other things […] Yes it creates jobs, but I wouldn't go as far as destroying the environment. There's a lot of things to respect (OG4).*

In relation to this objective of protecting the forest and its resources, participants formulated an objective of managing land access adequately. From their experience, forest roads open the territory which then leads to overexploitation of fisheries and wildlife resources through hunting, fishing and other recreation activities.

> *They build roads, but it's later that we are invaded […] I am not against forest harvesting, but under the condition that after the harvest, you deactivate the road or you put natural barriers so that people can't go. You try to preserve the land a little […]*
>
> *We see what land use does, in relation to forest harvesting [in this region], but go to Lac-St-Jean region, there are cottages, it's just like cities! The cities also bring overexploitation of the lakes over the summer, overexploitation of wildlife […] The invasion is too big (LU1).*

Protection of forests in a broader sense involves maintaining the quality of the forest environment, in other words maintaining biodiversity, controlling noise pollution (machinery noise) and landscape protection.

6.5 Discussion

This chapter help us to fully understand what constitutes a culturally adapted model of forestry for Essipit. Based on the focus group discussions, we identify six principles of forest-based development: identity, territoriality, sharing, exchange, responsibility and autonomy. These principles corroborate the six characteristics of Aboriginal cultures proposed by Trosper (Trosper 1995; Trosper 2009; Trosper *et al.* 2012): connectedness, identity, reciprocity, limits on market economy, accountability, and sustainability. We used slightly different names in order to better represent the terms used by the research participants and, therefore, ensure that research participants recognize themselves in the data. For the same reasons, we merged Trosper's characteristics of accountability and sustainability into the principle of responsibility. Our principles of autonomy really differ from the work of Trosper. One possible reason is that American Indian tribes and Canadian Aboriginal communities are characterized by different economic, legal, constitutional and cultural contexts. More specifically, the work of Trosper might be based on the experience of "tribes that have been able to retain or obtain some

independence" (Trosper 1995, p.83) or tribes with fewer needs for greater autonomy. The following discusses the six principles for forest-based development of Essipit.

Firstly, the assertion of a distinct identity and the desire to maintain this unique character were truly present among the participants. The following excerpt shows a good example of this:

> *Innu culture is one thing, but the culture of Essipit people is another. There are things in common and things that are our own. This is what creates our values. I think we also need to transmit it to others; it's not just because you don't speak [the Innu language] that you are not Innu (W2).*

As Trosper *et al.* (2012) indicate, even when the language is in danger of extinction or when the degree of intermarriage with other groups is high, other means allow people to identify themselves as a distinct community. This is the case here, where participants find identity markers in the success of their community system and effective management of outfitters.

The second principle is the link between the people and the land or, to use Fortier's terms (2008), the way of living the land. As the objective "Nutshimiu-Aitun" suggests, the land is a living environment. This also appears in the works of Wyatt (2004) and St-Arnaud (2009). Industrial forestry has strongly impacted the environment and the connection between land and Aboriginal communities. It is therefore not surprising that industrial forestry has, in the past, caused many conflicts and has been rejected by the participants in our study.

Third, the discussion groups clearly highlighted the need to maintain the existing benefits sharing system, which is based on a community approach, or even to reinforce it by improving terms of employment and diversifying economic and business partners. Besides, this community system plays heavily on the sense of identity of Essipit peoples. As discussed in the "context" section, a theme throughout much of the discussion and linked to the objectives was the need to give more

attention to benefits sharing in order to address all of the community's expectations regarding forest development.

Fourth, Essipit's community philosophy imposes certain guidelines on engagement with market economy. For example, timber can be harvested on Essipit Innu Assi, but only under certain conditions. As one of the participants (LU2) mentioned, if there are no benefits for Essipit, there will be no logging and the forest will stay intact. Because profits are often the central goal, industrial forestry can often alienate Aboriginal peoples. Overall, it is impossible to reduce land development to purely economic objectives, as shown in the diversity of objectives identified by our study, or to exclude benefits to people and the community. Wisconsin's Menominee people (United States) have established an allowable cut and used silviculture techniques that are far from the concept of maximum sustainable yield or, at the other end of the spectrum, the idea of not harvesting at all (Trosper 2007).

The fifth principle that was identified in our study is the sense of responsibility towards the land. For Essipit, the land represents an ancestral legacy that they must preserve for future generations. A participant (LU4) clearly explained this concept by saying he wanted to protect traditional sites and keep forests intact for future generations. This concept without a doubt meets the concept of sustainability as described by Trosper *et al.* (2012), or the concept of the seven generations approached by Trosper (1995).

A last principle resides in this quest for autonomy. By keeping the discussions within the scenario of an Innu Assi, the research excluded the topic of land ownership in a way. Nevertheless, participants explicitly referred to it, as shown in this excerpt: "You need a land. This [negotiation process] needs to become concrete" (EFE1). This shows that control over the

land and its resources are still crucial for Essipit, as well as for many other Aboriginal communities (Anderson 1997b; Wyatt 2004; Beaudoin 2009; Saint-Arnaud 2009; Booth and Skelton 2011), in order to decide how resources will be used and who will use them. However, the idea of autonomy is not limited to a question of land access and control, but also to the capacity to take over land management and development. Trosper did not identify autonomy as a characteristic. This can be explained in part by the negotiation context in which Essipit is involved, as well as many other Aboriginal communities in Canada (Maaka and Fleras 2005). In contrast, American Indian Tribes are often in a treaty context (Trosper *et al.* 2008).

It is obvious that the forest development objectives identified in this article are specific to Essipit. However, the six principles resonate strongly with the scientific literature, which suggests that our results are transferable to other contexts. Instead of articulating our forest development models around western principles such as environment, economy and society, our study suggests six Aboriginal principles: identity, territoriality, sharing, exchange, responsibility and autonomy. Furthermore, the diversity and scope of these 34 forest development objectives underlines the need to think globally about Aboriginal forest-based development: access and control of the land, human resources development, investments in land and culture, education, awareness, etc. However, while the creation of an Innu Assi would provide Essipit with the necessary authority to choose their own development avenue, it also gives them the obligation to manage the consequences of their choices. As mentioned in the focus groups, financial, human and material resources are limited, while needs are unlimited. Forest development of the Innu Assi thus requires strategic actions supported by the establishment of a strategy for monitoring costs, efficiency and success of implemented actions, which corresponds to the spirit of adaptive

management. The forest-based development objectives identified in this research will be used in this regard.

Finally, comments should be made on the differences and similarities between our results and the earlier results of St-Georges (2009). There are obviously similarities between the two projects, mainly because 17 of the 28 participants that we met were involved in the former research project. The 34 objectives for forest development identified in this dissertation are based on the values identified in the former research project. Despite this, we can find differences. First, there is six-year time difference between the two projects. St-Georges' focus groups occurred in 2007, while mine in 2013. Furthermore, St-Georges explored the aspirations, values and visions of Essipiunnuats for their Nitassinan, while our research pushed this reflection with more applied concepts, namely objectives and indicators, and specific projet (i.e. the Innu Assi).

6.6 Conclusion

Knowing that 1) industrial forestry often faces opposition from Aboriginal communities, 2) Aboriginal communities request a cultural adaptation of this development model, and 3) cultural adaptation is a key factor for the success of Aboriginal community development, it seems essential to better understand what principles of forest-based development are appropriate for Aboriginal communities.

Our study presents six principles: identity, territoriality, sharing, exchange, responsibility and autonomy. These principles can be used as a lens to determine whether or not objectives and choices are acceptable to the community. Thus, forest-based development of Essipit Innu Assi, whether it is undertaken by the community, a company, or a partnership, must respect these

principles in order to be aligned with the local culture. Our study clearly highlights that timber harvesting is acceptable for the community insofar as it is harmonised with the economic vocation of Essipit outfitters and Innu aitun practices. In addition, it needs to contribute to the community and not impoverish it, especially in terms of knowledge, expertise and jobs. For Essipit, future actions will aim for tangible results, as much as implementation of processes. The 34 forest development objectives can be used as a guide for a self-evaluation process or for adapting to new circumstances and new needs. Additionally, these local objectives will provide the local community with more solid foundations for interacting and negotiating with their diverse partners (government, forestry companies).

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the research objectives and highlights the major contributions of this dissertation. First, we provide a summary of the main conclusions and contributions of chapters 4, 5 and 6. We then discuss some of the strengths and limitations of this research and identify areas for future investigation. Finally, drawing on the research, we discuss recommendations for key actors in the forestry sector.

7.1 Conclusions and contributions of results

The importance of forests to Aboriginal identity, culture and economy is well documented. Aboriginal peoples are increasingly seeking a fair share of the benefits from the development of forest lands and resources. However, we mostly hear about the struggles and conflicts facing Aboriginal communities trying to engage in development through forestry. We rarely hear about successful Aboriginal initiatives and perhaps more importantly, the path that led to their success. This thesis has provided an in-depth examination of how Aboriginal communities can foster the growth of deep roots by using a culturally adapted model of forestry. In doing so, we have explored one example of how Aboriginal communities can engage successfully in forest-based development. As we have demonstrated, the case of Essipit is particularly relevant, because it shows the possibility for socio-economic development when communities are able to think outside the "wood box". Essipit were successful because they engaged in forestry, but also because they acquired outfitters, which became a key part of socioeconomic development for the community. In addition, Essipit was able to gain greater authority over decision-making processes on their traditional territory by innovating in forest governance, namely creating a

Land Management and Development Partnership with the forest company Boisaco. Why can the Essipit model of forestry be understood as a success? It is a success because the Essipit model matches and support the social objectives of Essipit. This dissertation offers six principles for distinguishing the unique character of Essipit's objective for forest-based development: identity, territoriality, sharing, exchange, autonomy, and responsibility. In Innu, these principles are: Nutshimiu-Aitun, Mishkutunam, and Pakassitishun.

By conducting a case study in Essipit Innu First Nation (Quebec), we addressed the following three research objectives: 1) to examine the factors that contributed to the success of the forest enterprises held by Essipit First Nation (chapter four); to describe the local forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory and the influence of Essipit on this system (chapter five); and 3) to understand what Essipit First Nation's objectives for forest-based development are (chapter 6). We now turn to the key findings as outlined in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

7.1.1 Aboriginal forest enterprises (chapter 4)

Chapter 4 employs the entrepreneurship framework in order to examine how Aboriginal communities can engage successfully in Aboriginal forest entrepreneurship. Research findings indicated that Essipit employed a collective approach to seek out forest-based opportunities and exploit them. Several factors explained the success of the Essipit entrepreneurial model: good fit between economic activities and the local culture, the political will of community leaders, competent administrative staff, partnerships to fill capacity gap, a clear understanding by politicians and business administrators of their respective roles and functions, as well as access to and control over resources.

When looking at the businesses Essipit created since they bought their first outfitter in 1983, the importance of portfolio entrepreneurship stands out. Essipit business portfolio of forestry, fishery, good and services, as well as tourism businesses contributed greatly to the success of Essipit. A portfolio allowed the community to invest in and develop forest-based opportunities, as well as support economic loss. In addition, the concept of portfolio entrepreneur suggests analysing the success of an Aboriginal community not only at the business level, but also at the global level of a community business portfolio. In addition, chapter 4 outlines the different challenges facing the development of forest businesses for Essipit. These included: limited opportunities, harmonization with other industrial activities, staff retention and recruitment, bad market conditions, limited access to resources, and control over contracts.

Chapter 4 also provided insight into the differences between the Essipit forest model and the Canadian forest industry model. Essipit perceived, pursued and exploited economic opportunities, where the forest industry was uninterested, for example, outfitters. This supports the assertion that entrepreneurial processes are a function of cultural perceptions of opportunity (Dana 1995; Dana and Anderson 2007; Dana and Anderson 2011). Furthermore, the underlying logic of economic development for Essipit stands in contrast to the logic of capitalism. While mainstream economics prioritizes the maximization of profits, the Essipit model has broader considerations: community needs (e.g. jobs and revenues) and community objectives (e.g. protection of Essipit traditional land). Essipit even accept financial loss for non-economic reasons; for example, in the case of Granulco: reconciliation and regional cooperation. Thus, social and environmental values can be of greater importance than economic values. This confirms findings from other studies around the world highlighting differences between

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal entrepreneurial models (Berkes and Adhikari 2005; Hindle and Lansdowne 2005; Lindsay 2005; Dana and Anderson 2011).

7.1.2 Aboriginal forest governance (chapter 5)

The second research objective related to the analysis of the forest governance system on Essipit traditional territory, or Essipit Nitassinan, namely the processes of decision-making in forest management; the actors involved in the processes; and the level of influence of Essipit over these processes. Results indicate that the Quebec government retained hierarchical authority over most functions of forest management (i.e. legislation, regulation, calculation and determination of AAC, forest planning and allocation of resources and contracts). This confirms similar findings from Forsyth (2006), Wyatt *et al.* (2010) and Bird (2011). This is also "a common finding in other regions around the world where governments have tended to obfuscate resource right transfers or limit the kinds of powers transferred", as indicated by Hajjar (2011, p.114).

An important contribution of this chapter is to propose new ways of understanding Aboriginal forest governance. First, distinct consultations allowed for debate over ideas between Essipit and the Ministry of Natural Resources. This mechanism allowed for the formulation of harmonization measures that set mandatory constraints on forest operations and, therefore, helped to better protect the values and interests of Essipit. This finding shows differently from Wyatt *et al.* (2010) who assert that the duty to consult is, at best, a mechanism for Aboriginals to influence decision-making. In the end, both results indicate that there is insufficient understanding of the necessary conditions for effective consultation of Aboriginal communities in Quebec. Second, Essipit and the forest company Boisaco signed a Land Management and Development Partnership which constitutes a new mode of corporate governance. The

Partnership allowed Essipit to gain a direct role in Boisaco forest management practices. In addition, the Partnership is now part of the FSC audit requirements and, thus, provides additional power leverage for Essipit when negotiating with Boisaco, as well as reinforces the effectiveness of FSC forest certification in Aboriginal forest governance (Teitelbaum and Wyatt 2013). However, it is questionable the extent to which weather forest certification grants sufficient influence to Essipit. This is an important question given that it addressed one of the main weaknesses of FSC certification: "FSC certification is pushing forest managers to make progress on a wide variety of fronts, but through a lens of 'continual improvement' rather than strict conformance with the standard" (Teitelbaum and Wyatt 2013, p.23).

Finally, this chapter introduces multi-level governance as a useful concept to understand Aboriginal forest governance. Multi-level governance explains that authority is rarely controlled by one person or organization, but is rather shared among various actors through processes of negotiation (Grammond 2009). This research provides arguments supporting this: for example, Essipit negotiate authority through distinct consultation with Quebec; Essipit negotiate authority through the Partnership; and, even within the government of Quebec, authority is shared among various organizations. Yet, to reinforce this concept, findings highlight the necessity of including a spatial analysis of forest governance as actors, processes, and authority are changing within Aboriginal territories. Overall, the Nitassinan of Essipit can be characterized as a juxtaposition of spaces where various forest stakeholders, including Essipit, negotiate authority over processes and function of forest management.

7.1.3 Aboriginal objectives for forest-based development (chapter 6)

In forest sciences, we have little understanding of Aboriginal communities' goals for forest-based development, because our current frameworks have imposed limits on the kinds of goals Aboriginal communities can pursue. Thus, this thesis addressed this issue by investigating Essipit objectives for forest-based development for their future Innu Assi (i.e. public land under negotiation for their conversion into private lands fully owned by Essipit). Results identify 34 objectives which we organized into three groups of principles: Nutshimiu-Aitun (Innu terms for identity-territoriality), Mishkutunam (Innu term for sharing-exchange), and Pakassitishun (Innu term for autonomy-responsibility). Furthermore, it defines the differences between the values underlying the Essipit model of forest development and the forest industry model. Indeed, the diversity of objectives identified in this thesis contributes to the argument that Aboriginal peoples have a more holistic view of forest-based development. A model that focuses mainly on maximization of profits would be incompatible with the goals of Essipit and would be more likely to create conflicts. However, this research acknowledges that these 34 objectives are very specific to the context of Essipit. There can be significant differences between Aboriginal communities and community objectives and, thus, what is relevant to Essipit might not be for another Aboriginal community. That being said, this research implemented a process that is transferable to other context. Objectives and principles can serve as a basis for discussing among community members, for interacting and negotiating with governments or forestry companies, and for evaluating and prioritizing development projects.

7.1.4 Transferability

Aboriginal communities often have different cultures, values, needs and objectives. In addition, they are situated within different stages of forest-based development. Is it possible to transfer the results of this case study to another situation? We addressed this question by providing an in-depth and rich understanding of how Essipit produced a culturally adapted model of forestry. This level of detail is essential to determine if the results of this case study would be similar in another Aboriginal community. Indeed, it is possible to identify the specifics of this case study and compare it to a community with similar characteristics. Furthermore, we have sought to validate our interpretations by gathering evidence within the existing literature. Research from around the world, as well as across the discipline, has indicated that Aboriginal worldviews are more holistic than non-Aboriginal ones as they focus on both economic and non-economic objectives (Anderson 1997b; Wyatt 2004; Lindsay 2005; Saint-Arnaud 2009; Trosper *et al.* 2012). This exercise is helpful in showing that some of findings are not specific to Essipit.

The question of transferability is also addressed by the Aboriginal forest-based development framework. The four key questions underpinning this framework are: 1) Where are we? 2) What do we want? 3) How do we get there? 4) How well are we doing? In this research, we answered the first question by examining what is working (and what is not working) with the Essipit model of AFEs and Essipit participation in forest governance. Then, we defined Essipit's objectives for forest-based development in order to answer question 2. While our research only addressed these two questions, the objectives of Essipit will provide guidelines for future actions. Finally, the success of Essipit future initiatives will be evaluated in the light of these objectives. In sum, these questions create a framework with which we can assess Aboriginal participation in forest-

based development. This framework recognizes that there is not one answer to these questions. Thus, it is general enough to be used by other Aboriginal communities characterized by other contexts at other stages of the development process.

7.2 Practical implications

For Aboriginal communities, this thesis provides an argument in favor of a community-driven strategy to support Aboriginal participation in the forestry sector. The environmental, social, and economic differences characterizing Aboriginal communities are well known: they are at different stages of the economic development process; they have different capacity, needs, and interests. A one size fits all solution is likely to fail. This thesis proposes a practical and flexible framework for assisting Aboriginal communities to engage in forest-based development. However, this approach requires a change in the way academics, practitioners, or the government engage with Aboriginal communities. It is true that, sometimes, Aboriginal communities lack certain expertise and capacity it is necessary to find these externally (Parsons and Prest 2003; FNFC 2010; Booth and Skelton 2011). Yet, this dissertation reminds us that Aboriginal communities also have knowledge, expertise and capacity strengths on which can be built on. In addition, research reminds us that their partners, such as government or forest companies, also need to build their own capacity in order to more successfully engage with Aboriginal communities (Stevenson and Perreault 2008).

This dissertation showed that the Quebec government retains control over strategic functions of forest management, supporting similar findings elsewhere in Canada and in the world (Forsyth 2006; Boyd and Trosper 2010; Bird 2011; Hajjar 2011). Control and access over resources have been identified as critical factors for successful development of forest communities by this

research, as well as the scientific literature on community forestry (Pagdee *et al.* 2006; Macqueen 2013) and Indigenous economic development (Jorgensen 2007). In addition, Aboriginal communities may see opportunities and benefits where industrial forestry sees none. It is most likely that an official forest policy on Aboriginal forestry would be beneficial. This dissertation provides useful information to inform such policy.

7.3 Research strengths, limitations and future directions

Given that Aboriginal forestry is a relatively new phenomenon (at least, in academic circles), this case study allowed for further understanding of the complex reality of Essipit First Nation (Creswell 1998). Furthermore, mainstream theories have been described as maladapted to understand and explain this new phenomenon. Thus, this analysis provided explanations which are better grounded in Aboriginal worldviews, notably by using an inductive approach (Gauthier 2008), as well as seeking greater participation of "the people who are directly involved and/or affected by the situation under study" (Wilmsen *et al.* 2008, p.13). In addition, we would like to highlight other merits of the methodological approach we used. A six month internship provided the time required to build trust and credibility with Essipit community members, as well as ensure these people have a strong voice in the research. The community members who participated in the research said they were satisfied with their experience and happy to have had the time they needed to express their views on future forest-based development on their land. The focus groups allowed for explanation of the current state of the negotiation process with the government, as well as the functioning of the forest regime. Indeed, this research approach builds on the same principles elaborated by Essipit to provide mutual benefit and support further collaboration: sharing of knowledge and respect for one another's' culture.

According to Gauthier (2008), there are two main limitations to case study research: internal validity and external validity. First, the problem of internal validity concerns a mismatch between the "observed reality" and the "reported reality" by the researcher (De Sardan 2008). We first addressed the subjectivity problem through collaborations with local contacts, discussion with others students, professors, and peers. During data collection, we also sought contradictory viewpoints, notably by diversifying the sources of information. We made sure to have diversity among community members (e.g. age, gender, occupation, values) or to consider the perspectives of outsiders such as business partners of Essipit.

The second limitation, external validity, consists of a problem of representativeness: the level of generalization is limited to the case involved in this research project (Babbie 2010). This highlights the necessity to replicate this research. Multiple case studies allow a wider set of perspectives (Stake 2005); and thus, strengthen the ability to generalize without "necessarily sacrificing within-site understanding" (Herriott and Firestone 1983, p.14). However, multiple case studies are more resource demanding than a single case study. Furthermore, this research does not allow for statistical inferences such as quantitative research do, but quantitative studies fail to provide in-depth understanding of a particular problem. One solution it to rely on a mixed-methods design for complementary purposes, but also for triangulation purposes (Hesse-Biber 2010). There is an important need for a more reliable and accurate picture of AFEs. As this research took a qualitative research approach to fill these gaps, a future direction for this work is to develop a survey research at the provincial or national scale. This knowledge is essential to guide policy-makers in defining new actions and policies to create an enabling environment for AFEs, as well as to assist Aboriginal organisations in working with AFEs to address their needs and help them achieve their goals. However, Hesse-Biber (2010) highlights some challenges of

mixed methods studies, such as the need for extended skills (i.e. the researcher has to be familiar with both qualitative research and quantitative research) and resources. This research also inherits a common problem of cross-sectional research: trying to understand a process, economic development, from a single "snapshot" (Babbie 2010). This situation stresses the need to conduct a follow-up project to evaluate the changes and success of participating Aboriginal communities. A better understanding of Aboriginal objectives of forest-based development allows developing decision-making tools (e.g. dashboards and modeling tools) that integrates an Aboriginal worldview. In addition, these objectives provide the necessary information to develop a longitudinal study, namely monitoring changes in order to understand what works and what does not work in future initiatives undertaken by Essipit.

Finally, the next research step identified in collaboration with Essipit is to adapt to the Canadian context the analytical tool developed by the Native Nation Institutes and the HPAIED. The aim of this project is develop a better understanding of what can be a system of forest governance that is culturally appropriate for Essipit, as well as the different avenues to implement the necessary changes.

7.4 Final considerations

I am studying Aboriginal approaches for forest-based development, because I want to develop models that explain the conditions that promote entrepreneurial processes or that influence their success such as governance and cultural fit. I am also interested in model differences, because this knowledge may offer management and development alternatives to mainstreams models in place in forestry. These understandings will inform current and future policies and initiatives seeking effective ways to increase Aboriginal participation in forest development and, therefore,

promote more sustainable forestry in Canada. To address these practical and conceptual challenges, I strongly believe that the key is collaboration in local problem-solving at the local level and, at a higher level, bureaucratic flexibility that allows for adaptive management. Hopefully, this research will inform new and more sustainable ways to steward and develop forests by fostering the growth of deep roots in culturally adapted models of forestry.

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APPENDIX 1 – FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Introduction (9:00 à 10:00)

- Mot de bienvenu (salutations et remerciements aux participants - présence et participation au projet)
- Présentation de l'étudiant (co-animateur le cas échéant)
- Explication du formulaire de consentement (projet de recherche)

Démarrage de l'enregistreuse

- Tour de table : présentation des participants (nom et occupation)
- Présentation « Les capacités de la Première Nation des Innus d'Essipit »
- Description des règles du groupe de discussion
- Expliquer le cadre des discussions : Territoire de l'Innu Assi d'Essipit, horizon temporel de 10 ans, développement économique des ressources forestières

Où allons-nous ? (10:00 à 12:00)

**** Distribuer la table vision et objectifs ****

1. Quelle est votre vision du développement forestier sur l'Innu Assi? Comment envisagez-vous l'avenir?
   1.1 Quelles différences existe-t-il entre votre vision de l'avenir et ce que vous voyez aujourd'hui?
   1.2 A quel problème pensez-vous être confrontés avec le développement forestier de l'Innu Assi?
   1.3 Est-ce que la foresterie peut cohabiter avec les autres utilisations/pratiques fait sur le territoire?

2. Quels sont les aspects les plus importants du développement forestier sur l'Innu Assi (par exemple les emplois, les revenus, développement de la communauté, protection de l'environnement, etc.)? Qu'est-ce qui compte le plus?

****Définir ce qu'est un objectif et laisser les participants faire l'exercice individuellement****

3. Quels seraient les objectifs de développement des ressources forestières à se donner pour l'Innu Assi d'Essipit et quelle retombée devrait obtenir la communauté?
   Liste d'exemples :
   - *Renforcer les capacités et le leadership de l'administration locale*
   - *Préserver & transmettre la culture*
   - *Assurer la pérennité des ressources forestières*
   - *Renforcer et diversifier les compétences des membres de la Première Nation d'Essipit afin de leur permettre de participer au développement de l'économie*
   - *Maximiser le capital naturel (ressources fauniques, halieutiques, le bois, etc.)*

- *Améliorer les opportunités d'emplois convenables*
- *Accroître le nombre et la taille des petites entreprises forestières innues*
- *Établir/développer des relations d'affaires avantageuses entre Essipit et des acteurs régionaux*
- *Maintenir la richesse à l'intérieur de la communauté d'Essipit*
- *KK Accroître la stabilité de l'économie locale et régionale Accroître les perspectives de croissance de l'économie locale et régionale.*

**** JM note les objectifs sur chevalet de conférence ****
***** Si nécessaire, faire un regroupement des objectifs *****

Individuellement, identifier les 3 objectifs que vous pensez être les plus importants et les identifier sur les lignes appropriées ? Mettre dans l'ordre d'importance.

**** Participants posent un collant à côtés des objectifs ****
***** Faire le décompte et travailler à partir de l'objectif 1 le plus populaire *****

3.1 Pour cet objectif, quelles devraient être les retombées pour la communauté d'Essipit?

****Définir ce qu'est un indicateur et une cible****

3.2 Si nous avions à mesurer les retombées, quel serait être un bon indicateur ? Seriez-vous en mesure de proposer une cible.
3.3 Pourquoi voulons-nous atteindre cet objectif? Quelle est la valeur la plus importante à laquelle nous répondons avec le présent objectif?
3.4 D'après vous, est-ce que cet objectif pourrait être incompatible ou en compétition avec d'autres objectifs (ex. : un objectif lié à la coupe forestière, aux pratiques Innu Aitun ou à l'exploitation des pourvoirie)?
3.5 Quelles sont les difficultés que vous anticiper dans la réalisation cet objectif?
3.6 Est-ce que cet objectif propose quelque chose de différent de ce qui se passe actuellement sur votre Nitassinan ou est-ce qu'il s'agit plutôt de maintenir ou renforcer quelque chose qui existe déjà?

**** Recommencer avec le 2e objectif 1 le plus populaire et puis avec le 3e objectif 1 le plus populaire ****

Comment allons-nous y arriver ? (13 :00 à 15 :00)

**** Prendre la liste des opportunités ****
**** Ne pas hésiter à inscrive des commentaires pour expliquer les choix.***
Par exemple, une opportunité peut être jugé non faisable aujourd'hui en raison du contexte économique, mais peut-être souhaitable dans 5 ans. *

4. Au cours des 10 prochaines années, Essipit pourra tirer profits d'opportunités suite à la création de territoires Innu Assi. Parmi la liste d'opportunités que je vous ai distribuée :

   i. Certaines opportunités peuvent être jugées désirables puisqu'elles contribueront aux

objectifs de développement d'Essipit. Par contre, certaines opportunités peuvent être jugées indésirables puisqu'elles nuiront à aux objectifs de la communauté. Veuillez indiquer leur niveau de désirabilité des opportunités du tableau ci-dessus (indiquez votre choix dans la colonne « D » sur la ligne à l'aide du chiffre approprié [1, 2, 3, 4 ou 5])

ii. Certaines opportunités peuvent être jugées faisables en raison d'un accès suffisant aux ressources (naturelles, financières ou humaines) par Essipit. Par contre, certaines opportunités peuvent être jugées infaisable en raison d'un accès insuffisant aux dites ressources. Veuillez indiquer le niveau de faisabilité des opportunités du tableau ci-dessus (indiquez votre choix dans la colonne « F » sur la ligne à l'aide du chiffre approprié [1, 2, 3, 4 ou 5 ou 6])

iii. Parmi la liste d'opportunités ci-dessous, indiquez les 3 opportunités que vous jugez les plus prometteuses pour la communauté (indiquez votre choix dans la colonne # en utilisant le chiffre approprié [1, 2 ou 3])

*****Participants posent un collant à côtés des opportunités*****

***** Compter et travailler avec l'opportunité 1 la plus populaire *****

5. Pourquoi trouvez-vous que cette opportunité est prometteuse pour Essipit? Cette opportunité permet-elle d'atteindre certains objectifs identifiés précédemment?
6. Par rapport à ce qui se fait aujourd'hui, qu'est-ce qui pourrait être fait pour permettre à Essipit de développer cette opportunité? Quels sont les besoins?
7. Est-ce qu'il y a certains modèles d'entreprises (privé, communautaire, coopératif, partenariat, autre) qui devraient être privilégiés pour assurer le développement forestier sur l'Innu Assi ? Expliquer.
8. Quel pourrait être les impacts négatifs d'un tel type de développement économique (par exemple : générations futures, finances, entreprises locales, entreprises régionales - conflits, environnement)?
9. Est-ce qu'un tel type de développement économique est incompatible avec certaines activités (ex.: Innu Aitun, recréotourisme, etc) ou certaines pratiques forestières (ex. : récolte forestière, coupe totale ou construction de chemin)?
10. Voyez-vous des opportunités conflictuelles qui demandent une certaine harmonisation?
11. Est-ce qu'on doit s'interdire certaines opportunités sur l'Innu Assi? Pourquoi?

Fin de la rencontre

12. Selon vous, quels aspects sont spécifiques à une foresterie des Innus d'Essipit? Si on survolait le territoire en hélicoptère et on voyait d'un côté le territoire d'Essipit et de l'autre le reste du territoire, qu'est-ce qui ferait que vous seriez fier? Qu'est-ce qui serait différent?

- Demander aux participants s'ils ont d'autres éléments de discussion, commentaires ou des questions?
- Remercier les participants

APPENDIX 2 – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Concernant le développement économique des ressources forestières, les questions suivantes visent à mieux comprendre les objectifs à long termes de votre communauté ainsi que les capacités de la communauté et les activités économiques qui ont lieux actuellement sur votre territoire traditionnel.

Contexte de la communauté

1. Quel est votre rôle dans la communauté?

2. Quels les objectifs à long termes de votre communauté concernant le développement économique des ressources forestières?

3. Quels types d'activités forestières sont actuellement entrepris par votre communauté?

   a) Qui entreprend ces acticités? (p.ex. conseil de bande, membres de la communauté, etc.)
   b) Est-ce que ces activités sont compatibles avec la culture de votre communauté?

4. Quels sont les forces de la communauté pour soutenir le développement économique forestier et ce, selon différentes perspectives : accès au territoire, ressources humaines, ressources financières, alliances ou partenariats, gouvernance ou gestion? (Check-list)
   - Capital Naturel
   - Capital Culturel
   - Capital Humain
   - Capital Financier
   - Capital Bâti
   - Capital Social
   - Capital Politique

5. Quels sont les besoins de la communauté pour soutenir le développement économique forestier

   a) Quelles sont les barrières? (Check-list)

- Capital Naturel
- Capital Culturel
- Capital Humain
- Capital Financier
- Capital Bâti
- Capital Social
- Capital Politique

6. Qu'est-ce qui a marché avec le développement économique des ressources forestières à Essipit?

7. Selon vous, pourquoi le développement économique forestier est-il important pour votre communauté?

Entreprises :

1- Quel a été ton rôle dans le développement de l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise]?

2- Selon expérience, peux-tu me raconter comment tout ça s'est déroulé?

 Personnes impliquées, rôle du Conseil, financement, aide d'un partenaire ou du gouvernement

3- Est-ce qu'il y a des pratiques ou des comportements qui ont changé depuis qu'Essipit est propriétaire de ces entreprises, tant au niveau des travailleurs, des partenaires ou d'Essipit même.

4- Quelles ont été les principales retombées pour les membres d'Essipit de l'acquisition et du développement de l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise]?

5- Est-ce que l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise] est rentable? Expliquez svp.

6- À l'inverse, est ce que l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise] a entraîné des impacts négatifs ou les tensions pour les membres d'Essipit?

7- Quels sont les principaux défis ou enjeux dans la gestion courante de cette entreprise?

8- Quels sont les principaux obstacles au développement de cette entreprise?

9- Comment les décisions de gestion sont prises pour cette entreprise?

10- Un facteur de succès du développement économique des communautés autochtones d'ici et d'ailleurs est de maintenir une distance entre le conseil de bande et les décisions quotidiennes de leurs entreprises. Comment cette séparation entre le Conseil et l'entreprise est prise en compte avec une approche communautaire comme Essipit?

11- Dirais-tu que l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise] est une réussite pour la communauté?
    - Comment est-ce que tu définirais ce succès?
    - Selon toi, quelles ont été les raisons ou les principaux facteurs qui expliquent ce succès d'Essipit?

12- Selon toi, quelles sont les prochaines étapes avec l'entreprise [nommer l'entreprise]? Qu'est-ce qui reste à faire?