

Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators
US Roundtable on Sustainable Forests

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Remarks by Peter O'Donohue, US Department of State

- Rob has asked me to say a few words about why it is in US interests to participate in and support the Montreal Process on Criteria and Indicators (C&I). I believe there are two major reasons.
- First, the decisions other countries make about their forests affects the US. After Canada, we are the world's largest exporter of forest products. Right now, our industry is being under-priced on the world market by illegally and unsustainably harvested timber products. AF&PA can tell you what a serious problem this is.
- The US is also the world's largest importer of forest products. We want to be sure those products continue to be available to us, and that means other countries need to manage their forests sustainably.
- Americans also value the rich biodiversity of forest ecosystems, which are a source of new pharmaceuticals, disease resistant crops and vacation adventures. We even value them from a distance just the way New Yorkers value our national parks although they may never visit one.
- Therefore, it is in the US interest to promote a common understanding of good forest management. The Montreal Process C&I have been a powerful tool to this end, enabling us to establish globally accepted elements of good forest management. This can help us move other countries to improve their forest management decisions and practices.
- Secondly, forest policy issues are high on the international agenda. The UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Climate Change Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity, World Bank and many other organizations and treaties are all discussing forests.
- Why? Because forests provide food, fuel, shelter, medicine, livelihood and employment to people worldwide. If forests are destroyed, hillsides

collapse, water is polluted, people go hungry. That can lead to costly economic and political instability, which can in turn threaten our national security.

- Sustainable management of forests globally is essential to food security, economic development, stable export revenue earnings and poverty eradication in many regions of the world. So, it is one of our foreign policy strategies for promoting prosperity and stability in other countries.
- Our job at State is to ensure that US government positions going into forest negotiations in the United Nations and elsewhere are consistent and reflect US interests. C&I are helping us do this.
- Today, 150 countries are engaged in 9 regional or international processes that have agreed to comparable sets of C&I. These include processes for Europe, the Amazon Basin, Central America, Dry Africa, Central Africa, the Near East, South Asia and the International Tropical Timber Organization, as well as the Montreal Process.
- The 12 countries of the Montreal Process represent 90% of the world's non-tropical forests, 50% of all forests and 40% of the world trade in forest products. It is viewed as one of the most effective C&I processes, in no small part due to US domestic use of the Montreal Process C&I.
- This is the "power" of the Montreal Process. Other C&I processes tend to look to the Montreal Process for leadership. And within the Montreal Process, other countries tend to follow successful US examples of applications -- including the use of C&I by the States.
- Therefore, we need to know US stakeholder views on what are reasonable and meaningful C&I. We needed to know that in 1995 when we first agreed to the Montreal Process C&I -- and we need to know it now in order to improve the indicators and make them more useful.
- This is the job of this workshop. We need your analysis of the results of the 3 national workshops and a cogent summary of which indicators work and should remain unchanged, which need refinement and how, and which should be deleted or added -- and why.

- That's what the other 11 Montreal Process countries are doing right now. We want to be prepared to engage effectively in a dialogue with them and persuade others to our views as needed.
- In closing I'd like to share with you a couple of upcoming international milestones important for C&I. First, the 5th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 5) begins next week in New York.
- This is a major meeting, which will decide how global forest policy issues will be addressed in the future. The Montreal Process will be represented and will host a side event to inform participating countries and organizations of our progress in reviewing the indicators.
- In the run up to UNFF 5, the Forum has taken steps to frame the global forest dialogue consistent with the criteria identified by the Montreal Process and the 8 other C&I processes. This is very useful because the criteria basically identify the essential components of SFM.
- Last May at UNFF4, countries agreed to recognize 7 thematic elements of sustainable forest management, which track very closely with the Montreal Process criteria. We hope UNFF 5 will be able to strengthen the use of these 7 elements as an organizing and conceptual framework for national action and international cooperation on forests.
- Following UNFF 5, in February 2006 Japan will host the 17th Meeting of the Montreal Process Working Group on C&I. This meeting is important in 2 ways. It will decide how to revise the Montreal Process indicators based on recommendations of the Montreal Process Technical Advisory Committee, which will be hosted by Russia in October.
- It will also include participants from other processes so that we may share the experiences and accomplishments of the Montreal Process. I hope some of you will be able to join this special meeting of the Montreal Process.
- My thanks to the Forest Service and especially Rob Hendricks for inviting me here today. I look forward to learning more from you about refining the Montreal Process indicators to give us all better information about the state of and trends in our forests and those of other countries.

