

## History of Dialogue Related to U.S. Government Commitment to Sustainable Forest / Resource Management

*(Updated October 2002 by Ruth McWilliams of the USDA-Forest Service)*

- 1968 **International Conference for Rational Use and Conservation of the Biosphere** (Paris, France): United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held pioneering event for discussing ecologically sustainable development.
- 1972 **United Nations Conference on the Human Environment** (Stockholm, Sweden; known as Stockholm Conference): Addressed economic and environmental issues and led to United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)—mission is “to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.”
- 1983 **World Commission on Environment and Development** (known as Brundtland Commission): Prime Minister of Norway (Gro Harlem Brundtland) asked by Secretary General of United Nations to lead a special commission.
- Addressed how the world community could:
- Develop a long-term environmental strategy for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond.
  - Define a shared perception of long-term environmental issues and appropriate efforts to deal with them effectively.
- 1984 **International Conference on Environment and Economics** (OECD): Concluded that environment and economics should be mutually reinforcing. Helped shape *Our Common Future* (see below).
- 1987 ***Our Common Future*** (also known as Brundtland Report): Published report of the World Commission on Environment and Development popularized term ‘sustainable development.’
- Defined ‘sustainable development’ as “...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
- 1992 **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development** (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; known as Earth Summit): Established ‘sustainable development’ as a common goal of human development for the 160 or so countries that attended the meeting.

Recognized sustainable management of forests as key component to sustainable development.

Set out Agenda 21 as a blueprint for action in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; includes non-binding Statement of Forest Principles that provides guidelines for sustainable forest management.

**1993 United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD): CSD established to help countries implement Agenda 21 in follow-up to Earth Summit.**

**International Seminar of Experts on Sustainable Development of Boreal and Temperate Forests** (Montreal, Quebec, Canada): Resulted in initiative to develop and implement internationally agreed criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests.

**Second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe** (Helsinki, Finland): USDA-Forest Service, representing U.S. as observer country, stated belief that all countries, not just members of the International Tropical Timber Organization, should adopt the goal of sustainable forest management by the year 2000.

**Presidential Decision Directive / NSC-16** (United States): Stated that United States committed "...to a national goal of achieving sustainable management of U.S. forests by the year 2000."

**Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force** (United States): Established in August 1993 to further President's National Performance Review calling for agencies of the federal government to adopt "a proactive approach to ensuring a sustainable economy and a sustainable environment through ecosystem management."

Released report in June 1995 titled *The Ecosystem Approach: Healthy Ecosystems and Sustainable Economies* that presented findings and recommendations.

**1994 United States GAO Report on Ecosystem Management (United States): United States General Accounting Office (GAO) examined Administration's federal management and natural resources framework for Congressional requestors, resulting in report dated April 29, 1994, titled *Ecosystem Management: Additional Actions Needed to Adequately Test a Promising Approach*.**

Barriers identified as: (1) problems with data, (2) problems with interagency coordination, and (3) insufficient collaboration with non-federal parties.

**Working Group on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests** (Geneva, Switzerland): Ten countries establish "Montreal Process" and hold first meeting in September 1994: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and United States.

**International Conference on Population and Development** (Cairo, Egypt): Conference gave high profile to view that extreme poverty and a short of essential environmental resources can exacerbate ethnic and political divisions.

1994 **Santiago Declaration (Santiago, Chile):** Original ten Montreal Process countries (listed above) endorsed on February 3, 1995, a statement of political commitment together with a comprehensive set of seven criteria and sixty-seven indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests.

Now includes twelve countries on five continents comprising 60 percent of the world's forests, 90 percent of the world's temperate and boreal forests, and 35 percent of the world's population: original ten (listed above) plus Argentina and Uruguay.

**Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF):** United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development established IPF to continue forest policy dialogue following Earth Summit for two years, with first IPF meeting held on September 11-15, 1995, in New York City.

1996 **Montreal Process Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): TAC established to support Montreal Process.**

Working Group agrees that all participating countries will prepare First Approximation Reports.

**President's Council on Sustainable Development** (United States): Released report, *Sustainable America—A New Consensus*, that:

- Outlined goals for “economic prosperity, environmental protection, and social equity together” (known as the 3 e’s)
- Included policy recommendation on sustainable forest management: “Establish a structured process involving a representative group of stakeholders to facilitate public and private efforts to define and achieve the national goal of sustainable management of forests by the year 2000.”

**Seventh American Forest Congress** (United States): More than 1500 citizens gathered in Washington, DC to discuss “what common ground do we have with regard to America’s forests?” and developed vision elements and set of principles, many of which include ‘sustainability.’

**United States Department of Agriculture Policy (USDA)** (United States): Secretary established Department-wide policy on Sustainable Development (Secretary’s Memorandum 9500-6) focusing on sustainable agriculture, sustainable forestry, and sustainable rural community development.

1997 **Intergovernmental Panel on Forests Proposals for Action:** IPF Proposals for Action were presented to the United Nations and endorsed by the Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (UNGASS).

**Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF):** IFF established in July 1997 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) under the Commission on Sustainable Development as successor to IPF to continue policy dialogue on forests, with program of work including IPF's Proposals for Action.

**Montreal Process First Approximation Report:** Participating countries developed individual country reports for Montreal Process to "share lessons learned." The countries then prepared a consolidated report, published and presented along with reports by other regional initiatives at Eleventh World Forestry Congress (Antalya, Turkey).

**National Association of State Foresters' Resolution on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (United States):** National Association of State Foresters (NASF) approved Resolution Number 1997-6 on September 18, 1997.

**National Association of State Foresters and USDA-Forest Service (United States):** NASF and USDA-Forest Service (FS) exchanged letters leading to further commitment by FS to sustainable forest management.

1998 **Private Sector Support (United States):** Six private sector organizations wrote Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) within Federal government to urge cooperation among Federal agencies in data collection: NASF, Global Forest Policy Project, American Forest & Paper Association, National Audubon Society, Society of American Foresters, and World Wildlife Fund.

**G-8 Foreign Ministers:** Ministers fully endorsed the 1997 outcomes of the UNGASS meeting on sustainable forest management. Published, and committed member countries to implement, the Action Program on Forests.

Set out specific measures to promote sustainable forest management which featured implementation of national criteria and indicators.

**Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on Sustainable Resource Management (United States):** In response to a private sector letter to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the FS convened public meeting for public and private sector representatives to share perspectives about Montreal Process and discuss opportunities to foster sustainable forest and resource management in the United States.

**Oregon's First Approximation Report (FAR)** (United States): FAR is the State of Oregon's Report on the Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests developed through the Montreal Process. Oregon, the first state in the nation to apply the national criteria to its forests, did so under the guidance of its Board of Forestry and Department of Forestry.

**Great Lakes Sustainable Forest Management Report** (United States and Canada): Report for the Great Lakes Forest Alliance involving Michigan, Minnesota, Ontario, and Wisconsin, dated June 4, 1998, on *Assessing Program in Sustainable Forest Management: Proposed Criteria and Indicators for the Upper Great Lakes Region* reflects public input forums and advice of a technical assistance group.

1999 **Roundtable on Sustainable Forests** (United States): Self-chartered with federal and non-federal co-chairs, and facilitated by Meridian Institute "...to serve as a forum to share information and perspectives that will enable better decision making in the U.S. regarding sustainable forests."

Initial focus "is to implement and promote utilization of the Criteria and Indicators (C&I) contained in the Santiago Declaration of the Montreal Process as a means of measuring national progress towards achievement of this goal."

**Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable** (United States): Organized as a companion process to the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests and facilitated by Colorado State University with federal and non-federal involvement to "identify indicators of sustainability based on social, economic, and ecological factors, to provide a framework for national assessments of rangelands and rangeland use."

**Sustainable Minerals Roundtable** (United States): Includes federal agencies and non-federal organizations, convened by the University of Nevada-Reno, "to support the nation's commitment to sustainable development" and to "develop indicators of sustainability, based on social, economic, and environmental factors, to provide a means for assessing the status and trends of minerals/materials and energy systems."

**Our Common Journey** (United States): Report of four-year study conducted by the National Research Council within the National Academy of Sciences published in response to request from major benefactor, George P. Mitchell, to address the research needs for the global commons of atmosphere, land, and water as well as to respond to the Academies' desire to reinvigorate the role of science and development in sustainable development and to contribute to the meeting of 80 international academies in 2000 on the topic of a transition toward sustainability.

2000 **United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)**: Established in February 2000 as a non-legally binding permanent intergovernmental body to "promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests..." and to facilitate and promote the implementation of proposals for action emanating from the

Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and its successor, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, over a five year period.

**Federal Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Forest Management Data** (United States): Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) initially signed October 16, 2000, by nine Federal agencies in U.S; included twelve agencies as of September 2001 provides:

- A common interagency forum for Federal coordination to resolve issues integral to collecting, monitoring, analyzing, reporting, and making data available on an ongoing basis related to the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators.
- A process for helping the Federal agencies develop a national report by 2003 for policy makers and the public in the United States and for the Montreal Process on the state of the Nation's forests and progress towards sustainable forest management in the United States.

2000 **Sustainable Forest Data Working Group of Federal Geographic Data Committee** (FGDC) (United States): FGDC Working Group chartered in February 2001 to further the goal of sustainable forest resources by fostering the standardization and implementation of criteria and indicators of sustainability; and responsible for developing annual work plans to implement the Federal MOU on Sustainable Forest Management Data.

**UNFF—Organizational Meeting and First Session:** Organizational Meeting of UNFF held, which led to First Session where a Multi-Year Program of Work (MYPOW) was adopted to focus work of future UNFF sessions on specific issues and at which the work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests was initiated.

**United Nations Millennium Declaration:** General Assembly Resolution 55/2—United Nations Millennium Declaration—was adopted by countries of the United Nations during the Millennium Summit to reaffirm their commitment to “a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.”

Declaration identifies eliminating poverty as highest priority; and includes related Millennium Development Goals.

Section on ‘Protecting our common environment’ emphasizes need to adopt a new ethic of conservation and stewardship, with steps including “to intensify our collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.”

**United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE):** Countries in Europe and North America, participating in the ECE Regional Ministerial Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Geneva, Switzerland, adopted a Ministerial Statement that focuses on two overarching objectives: Poverty eradication, and Sustainable production and consumption patterns. Related priorities include: Sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, Environment and

health, Making globalization work for sustainable development, Improving governance and democratic processes at all levels, Education, Science and technology, and Financing for sustainable development as a crucial cross-cutting issue.

**NASF Sustainable Forestry Implementation Committee (SFIC)** (United States): NASF, at its 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, reaffirmed its “strong commitment to leadership and involvement in sustainable forestry in the United States” in Resolution Number 2001-1 that changed the status of its ad hoc SFIC to a standing committee.

**Society of American Foresters’ Sustainability and Forest Certification Working Group** (United States): New working group created to focus on cross-cutting aspect of sustainable forestry and forest certification systems as well as to help support activities of other Society working groups and committees with related interests.

**First Approximation Report for States of the Northeast and Midwest** (United States): Result of two-year assessment published by the USDA-Forest Service in cooperation with State Foresters and State Forest Resource Planners within 20-state region includes a *Sourcebook on Criteria and Indicators of Forest Sustainability in the Northeastern Area* dated May 2002.

**UNFF—Second Session (UNFF2)**: UNFF2 addressed progress related to environmental aspects of the conservation and sustainable management of forests (e.g., deforestation and forest degradation) as well as concepts, terminology, and definitions.

Included Ministerial segment during which a “Ministerial Statement and Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development” was adopted.

**World Summit on Sustainable Development** (Johannesburg, South Africa): Summit resulted in two negotiated documents: *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* and *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*.

Also focused implementation of Agenda 21 set out at the 1992 Earth Summit on more integrated and cross-sectoral solutions through voluntary public/private partnerships for sustainable development.