



Roundtable on Sustainable Forests

A Partnership for the Future

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ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS

Chronology of Major Events, October 2010

Background

The Roundtable on Sustainable Forests (Roundtable) is an open and inclusive process committed to the goal of sustainable forest management (SFM) on public and private lands in the United States. Roundtable participants include public and private organizations and individuals committed to better decision-making through shared learning and increased understanding.

Until recently, the Roundtable's primary activity to date has been the implementation of the Montreal Process criteria and indicators (C&I) for the purpose of developing a shared understanding of current forest conditions and a baseline against which to mark future progress toward sustainability. The Roundtable focused much of its attention on identifying and evaluating the quality of data that can be used to assess the state of the nation's forests and providing input on the production of the National Report on Sustainable Forests 2003.

In 2005, the Roundtable focused on continuing to build broad stakeholder awareness and support for sustainable forests. Specific activities included a workshop the Integration and Synthesis Group (ISG); the Multiple Perspectives Project, stakeholder input on the Proposals for Action of the United Nations Forum on Forests, and how these various efforts help to inform the U.S. contribution to international process of improving and revising the Montreal C&I.

In 2010, the areas of Roundtable activities are as follows.

- Reporting and Monitoring on Progress Towards Sustainable Forests
- Coordinating with Related National Data and Indicator Efforts
- Fostering Sustainable Forest Management through the Application of the C&I
- Engaging the Broader Community of Forest Stakeholders at Multiple Scales.

The Roundtable has utilized multi-stakeholder dialogue as the primary vehicle for inquiry, input, and feedback. Thus far, the Roundtable has fostered dialogue largely through meetings and workshops. Meetings focus on information exchange and the workshops are generally designed for a specific output and purpose. The Roundtable also utilizes listserv and website

for additional outreach and education, as well as on-line consultation for specified stakeholder input.

A list of key milestones in the Roundtable process is presented below.

1999

The Roundtable formed in 1999. Also in 1999 the Roundtable created the Technical Work Group (TWG) and the Communication and Outreach Work Group (COWG). The TWG's mission was to consider a number of technical issues that must be addressed in order to implement the C&I. The TWG was instrumental in organizing the C&I Technical Workshops in 2000, and fostering discussion on key technical issues including the controversial aspects of the definition of forests and rangelands. The COWG's mission was to develop and implement a communication plan to address both the internal and external communication and outreach needs of the Roundtable. The COWG was responsible for developing the Roundtable website, and for developing and sponsoring a series of outreach and education programs related to the Roundtable and sustainable forest management.

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS - Two meetings were held in Washington, DC.

2000

FEDERAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT DATA (UNITED STATES): Initially signed by nine Federal agencies in United States; includes eleven by January 2000, the MOU provides: 1) 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; and 2) A process for helping the Federal agencies develop a national report by 2003 for the Montreal Process on the state of the nation's forests and progress towards sustainable forest management in the United States.

C&I TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS: The Roundtable sponsored three workshops in Spring 2000 to assess the state of knowledge and availability of data for assessing the status of U.S. forests under the Montreal Process C&I. Leading experts from across the nation formed Criteria Technical Committees and focused on each of the 67 indicators under the seven Montreal Process Criteria. The first workshop focused on the five biophysical criteria (Criteria 1-5), and the second workshop on the social, economic, legal and institutional criteria (Criteria 6-7).

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS: Two meetings were held in Washington, DC.

2001

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS:— Three meetings were held in Washington, DC.

2002

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: COMPLEMENTING AND ADVANCING CONGRESSIONAL PRIORITIES: In January 2001, Northeast-Midwest Senate and Congressional Coalitions, Northeast-Midwest Institute, and Yale University Global Institute for Sustainable Forestry sponsored a Congressional Briefing on how efforts to manage forests for environmental, economic, and societal results can complement and advance Congressional priorities such as: protecting watersheds and habitat; conserving significant lands; providing forest products for American consumers and world markets; promoting community-based forestry; and preventing wildfires.

NATIONAL REPORT REVIEW WORKSHOPS: In the spring of 2002, the Roundtable organized two workshops to gather input on the proposed content, format, and approaches for the first draft of the National Report on Sustainable Forests. The first workshop was held in Washington, DC and the second in Portland, OR. A final review workshop was organized in November 2002 to provide an opportunity for Roundtable participants to review the final draft of the Report.

2003

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS: Two workshops were held in 2003.

- The first in a series of regional workshops was the Southern Forests Sustainability Workshop, November 18-19, Charleston, South Carolina – The focus of the workshop was, using the C&I as a framework, the indicator identification process, comparison on forest certification systems, and landowner incentives.
- The second was Sustainable Forest Management in Indian Country, December 9, Portland, Oregon. The focus of this workshop was on case studies of SFM on tribal lands.

THE NATIONAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS: Final released.

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS: Three meetings were held, two in Washington, DC and one in Denver, Colorado.

COMMUNITY INDICATORS WORKSHOP: the Roundtable co-sponsored a workshop on community indicators in Denver, Colorado.

2004

ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS: Two Roundtable meetings were held, one in Alexandria, Virginia and the second in Denver, Colorado.

WORKSHOP ON THE INTEGRATION AND SYNTHESIS GROUP'S CONCEPTUAL MODEL: A workshop on the integration and synthesis Group's conceptual model was held on November 16, in Alexandria, Virginia.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS: Two workshops were held in 2004.

- The next regional workshop in the sequence was: the Upper Mississippi Regional Forest Roundtable, March 23-24, LaCrosse, WI.
- The final regional workshop was Western Regional Workshop on Sustainable Forests, February 3-4, 2004, Phoenix, AZ. The focus of the Western regional workshop was on scales of applying criteria and indicators and case studies.

REGIONAL TRIBAL EFFORTS: The Roundtable and the USDA Forest Service encouraged and followed the progress on three regional Tribal projects in the Northeast, Southeast, and West to evaluate in some way the applicability/adaptability of the C&I as a tool for forest management. (ongoing into 2006.)

NATIONAL TRIBAL EFFORT: USDA Forest Service supported the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs designed and implemented an effort to further define forest sustainability in Indian Country by evaluating the possibility of adapting the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators to tribal forests and forestry (completed in 2005.)

2005

STAKEHOLDERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS: Earlier in 2005 the Roundtable was the subject of a research project conducted by a student at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government on behalf of the Council on Environmental Quality. The goals of the project were to identify a set of best practices and lessons learned that could improve stakeholder involvement and to assess the degree to which current national indicator initiatives contribute to the development of a robust set of national environmental indicators.

PERSPECTIVES ON AMERICA'S FORESTS: DECEMBER 13-14, 2005: The Roundtable held an event entitled "Perspectives on our Nation's Forests" on December 13-14, 2005, in Washington, DC. The December event focused on the Multiple Perspectives Project and the Roundtable's 2006 Work Plan. Authors of the papers commissioned for the Multiple Perspectives Project, as well as a stakeholder response panel, engaged in thoughtful and stimulating discussion with meeting participants.

C&I REFINEMENT WORKSHOPS: Three technical workshops on the refinement of the indicators in the Montreal Process C&I were held in April of 2005. The primary purpose of the workshops was to obtain input from technical experts on potential indicator refinements to inform the United States delegations attending the Montreal Process Technical Advisory Committee meeting in October 2005 and the Montreal Process Working Group meeting in February 2006. In preparation for the workshops, the Roundtable initiated an on-line consultation process to solicit stakeholder feedback on potential refinements to the Montreal C&I. Nearly 100 people provided valuable input on the need for additional indicators, ways to eliminate some indicators, and approaches to indicator measurement. The feedback gathered through the consultation was a major input to three technical workshops on C&I refinements that were held

in April. The workshops took place in different regions of the country. A fourth C&I refinement workshop was held in Washington, DC to continue the work on refinements proposed for the indicators in Criteria 6 and 7.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP: A national workshop was held in Denver, Colorado on May 11 – 13 to obtain Roundtable input on the results of the C&I indicator refinement process and plan the 2006 work plan for the Roundtable.

NEW REPORT ON COMMUNITY INDICATORS: As part of the C&I Review process dedicated to the review and refinement of the Montreal Process C&I, groups of social scientists gathered to discuss the social component of sustainability and the associated C&I of the Montreal Process. Two refinements to the Montreal Process C&I were offered: to create an index of community livability and to create an index of community resilience. To inform these refinements, a project was launched to survey community indicator projects and to compare their efforts to those of the Montreal Process. The report presents the project's findings and concludes with a presentation of lessons gleaned from the project and recommendations for next steps in the Roundtable's discussion of social sustainability.

2006

LOOKING AHEAD: PREPARING FOR THE NATIONAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS – 2010 : On September 6 and 7, 2006, the Roundtable held a meeting on preparing for the 2010 National Report on Sustainable Forests in Washington, DC. The primary purposes of the meeting were to determine the role of organizations that participate in the Roundtable in the preparation of the National Report on Sustainable Forests—2010 and to discuss sustainable forest management efforts underway by various stakeholder groups at different scales. At the meeting, Roundtable participants agreed to reinstate the Communications and Outreach Work Group (COWG) to guide the process of stakeholder education and outreach around the development and release of the National Report and work on broader stakeholder outreach and education.

2007

NATIONAL WORKSHOP: TACKLING TECHNICAL CHALLENGES: On December 9-12, 2007, the Roundtable held a 4 day workshop to provide stakeholders with opportunities to learn about and provide input on: how to address some of the challenges associate with indicator implementation and data collection at local, state, regional and national scales; technical challenges with the implementation of selected indicators; and alternative methods for data reporting and report formats for the 2010 National Report. The Roundtable's COWG held an orientation meeting.

FINAL REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION TO GUIDE THE PREPARATION OF THE 2010 NATIONAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS – RELEASED: The Roundtable assessed lessons learned through the production of the *National Report on Sustainable Forests—2003* in order to assure the broad practical utility of the next national report, which will be published by the USDA Forest Service early in 2011. It is hoped that this second National Report will provide practical use to

the stakeholder and decision-maker communities while also providing useful information to the general public. A team of Roundtable participants was created to consult forest stakeholders regarding what content and format of the 2010 National Report would meet their needs. This report summarizes the results of their consultation.

NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP AND MEETING The Roundtable held a workshop and meeting on September 5-7, 2007 in Madison, Wisconsin to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to learn about and provide input on: developing the methods and metrics for two new forest indicators, Indicator 44 on *The importance of forests to people*, and Indicator 38 on *The resiliency of forest dependent communities*. Following the workshop, Roundtable participants attended a meeting to learn about and discuss topics including reporting on the resilience of forest dependent communities in Canada, preparations for the 2010 National Report, tropical and subtropical forests, customizing the NASF Stewardship Handbook, the Baltimore County C&I project, and other stakeholder updates. The Roundtable's COWG held an orientation meeting.

2008

NATIONAL MEETING AND WORKSHOP: On May 12 - 14, 2008 in Manhattan, Kansas, the Roundtable held a combined meeting and technical workshop. The workshop provided an opportunity for stakeholders to learn about and provide input on Landscape Scale Resource Monitoring and Implementation Landscape Scale Resource Monitoring and Implementation and Revenue from Forest Based Environmental Services Workshop. Stakeholders also attended a meeting to hear status reports on new indicators 38 and 44, preparation for the 2010 National Report, and progress on the 2010 Roundtable Work Plan addendum. The Roundtable's COWG held an orientation meeting.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP AND MEETING: The Roundtable held a national technical workshop and meeting in Knoxville, TN on February 26 – 28. The workshop focused on non-wood forest products. Following the workshop, Roundtable participant attended a meeting which covered topics including visualization and decision support tools to deliver the Western North Carolina Report Card to Local Communities and Policy Makers, land care, education of landowners about C&I, a draft potential sustainable forests act, forests and climate change, and progress on the 2010 Work Plan addendum.

2009

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS – SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES ROUNDTABLE – SUSTAINABLE RANGELANDS ROUNDTABLE – SUSTAINABLE ROUNDTABLES “ALL STEERING COMMITTEE” MEETING: On December 3, 2009, the three resource roundtables met in Arlington, Virginia to expose the sustainable Roundtable communities to the missions and programs of work for each, seek areas of coordination between Roundtables over the next 2-3 years, develop an action plan for moving forward with coordinated activities, develop a game plan for a

combined “All Roundtables” Meeting, and contribute in some way to the ongoing dialogue on developing a set of national indicators.

NATIONAL MEETING – ACTION STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE: The Roundtable held a national meeting on the stakeholder Sustainable Forests Action Strategy, October 14 and 15 in Washington, DC. The purposes of the meeting were to develop stakeholder support and momentum for implementing actions steps to be taken in the *next two years* to improve conservation and sustainable management of the nation’s forests based upon Draft II of the Sustainable Forests Action Strategy and the 2010 National Report Sustainable Forests, clarify the role of the RSF in preparation for the International Year of Forests in 2011, and ratify RSF activities in 2010.

REVIEW WORKSHOPS FOR THE DRAFT NATIONAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS – 2010: Three review workshops were held in 2009. The first two review workshops were designed to gather stakeholder input on the content of the draft National Report on Sustainable Forests – 2010 to help finalize the draft Report, and to obtain input on how to use the National Report and the framework of the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicator (C&I) to strengthen the Nation’s commitment to sustainable forest management. The first workshop took place on February 4-5 in Denver, Colorado and was on February 24-25 in Athens, Georgia. The third workshop, held on March 23 in Washington, DC, was designed to gather input on the content and organization of the Draft National Report to increase the Report’s utility in policy discussions that promote sustainable forest management.

2010

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS WEBSITE UPDATED: A new page was added to the Roundtable website on the stakeholders Sustainable Forests Action Strategy <http://www.sustainableforests.net/sfas.php> as a organizing tool for stakeholders working on the strategy recommendations. The website was also enhanced with links to Facebook, Linked-in, and Twitter to encourage stakeholder dialogue on sustainable forests.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: The COWG developed a communication strategy for the Roundtable that adds and emphasizes the use of social networking tools to foster dialogue on stakeholder action strategy, buzz around the release and use of the final 2010 National Report, preparation and engagement in the 2011 IYOF, and evolution of multi-resource roundtables collaborative case studies.