

**History of Dialogue Related to U.S. Government Commitment to  
Sustainable Forest/Resource Management  
and  
Pre-History and History of the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests**

- 1968 International Conference for Rational Use and Conservation of the Biosphere** (Paris)
- 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)
- Addressed economic and environmental issues.
  - Led to United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), whose 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**
- Prime Minister of Norway Gro Harlem Brundtland asked by Secretary General of United Nations to lead a special commission (referred to as “Brundtland Commission”).
  - Addressed how the world community could:
    - Define a shared perception of long-term environmental issues and appropriate efforts to deal with them effectively.
    - Develop a long-term environmental strategy for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond.
- 1984 International Conference on Environment and Economics**
- Organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
  - Concluded that environment and economics should be mutually reinforcing.
  - Helped shape *Our Common Future* (see below).
- 1987 *Our Common Future***
- Published report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (see above), which popularized the term “sustainable development.”
  - Defined “sustainable development” as “...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.
  - Often referred to as the “Brundtland Report.”
- 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development** (Rio de Janeiro)
- Known to the world as “The Earth Summit.”
  - Established sustainable development as a common goal of human development for the approximately 160 countries that attended the meeting.
  - Recognized sustainable management of forests as a key component of sustainable development.
  - Set Agenda 21, a blueprint for action in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that includes a non-binding Statement of Forest Principles, including guidelines for sustainable forest management.
- 1993 United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development**
- Established to help countries implement Agenda 21.

**International Seminar of Experts on Sustainable Development of Boreal and Temperate Forests (Montreal)**

- Resulted in initiative to develop and implement internationally agreed upon 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)**

- 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**

- Stated that the United States is committed “to a national goal of achieving sustainable management of U.S. forests by the year 2000.”

**Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force**

- Established in August 1993 to further President’s National Performance Review, which called 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 General Accounting Office Report on Ecosystem Management**

- Examined the Administration’s federal management and natural resources framework.
- Published report dated April 29, 1994: *Ecosystem Management: Additional Actions Needed to Adequately Test a Promising Approach*.
- Identified the following barriers: (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)**

- Ten countries established “Montreal Process” and held first meeting in September 1994.
- Participants included Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and United States.

**International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo)**

- Conference elevated the idea that extreme poverty and a shortage of essential environmental resources can exacerbate ethnic and political divisions.

**1995 Santiago Declaration (Santiago)**

- Statement of political commitment to a comprehensive set of seven criteria and 67 indicators (C&I) for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests.
- Endorsed by 10 original Montreal Process countries (see above) on February 3, 1995 plus Argentina and Uruguay.
- Signatory countries have 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.

**Intergovernmental Panel on Forests**

- U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development established Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) to continue for two years the forest policy dialogue from the Earth Summit.
- First IPF meeting held on September 11-15, 1995, in New York City.

### **First Approximation Report**

- U.S. government begins work on First Approximation Report based on Montreal C&I.

### **1996 Montreal Process Technical Advisory Committee**

- Established to support Montreal Process.
- Working Group agrees that all participating countries should prepare First Approximation Reports.

### **President's Council on Sustainable Development**

- Released report, *Sustainable America: A New Consensus*.
- Outlined goals for “economic prosperity, environmental protection, and social equity together.”
- Recommended that government initiate “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**

- Over 1,500 citizens gathered in Washington, D.C. to discuss “what common ground do we have with regard to America's forests?”
- Developed vision elements and set of principles, many of which include sustainability.

### **United States Department of Agriculture Policy**

- 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 IPF Proposals for Action**

- IPF Proposals for Action presented to the United Nations.
- Endorsed by the Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (UNGASS).

### **Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF)**

- Established July 1997 as IPF successor by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) under the Commission on Sustainable Development
- Charged with continuing policy dialogue on forests, including IPF Proposals for Action.

### **Montreal Process First Approximation Report**

- Participating countries developed individual country reports for Montreal Process to “share lessons learned.”
- Also prepared a consolidated report that was 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**

- National Association of State Foresters (NASF) approved Resolution Number 1997-6 on September 18, 1997.

### **NASF and USDA Forest Service**

- NASF and USDA Forest Service exchanged letters leading to further commitment by Forest Service to sustainable forest management.

#### **1998 Letter to OMB and CEQ**

- Six private sector organizations wrote Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to urge cooperation among Federal agencies in data collection.
- Organizations included 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 endorsed outcomes of the 1997 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**

- In response to a private sector letter to the OMB and CEQ, the Forest Service convened a meeting of public and private interests to share their perspectives about Montreal Process and discuss opportunities to foster sustainable forest management in the United States.

#### **State of Oregon's First Approximation Report**

- Oregon is first state to publish report on Montreal C&I as applied to its forests.

#### **Great Lakes Sustainable Forest Management Report**

- Great Lakes Forest Alliance published report entitled *Assessing Program in Sustainable Forest Management: Proposed Criteria and Indicators for the Upper Great Lakes Region*.
- Reflects input from public and advice of a technical assistance group.
- Covers forests of Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ontario, Canada.

#### **"Chief's Roundtable"**

- Convened in response to letter to OMB and CEQ (see above) to emphasize need for a multi-stakeholder process to address C&I implementation.
- Attended by Secretary of Agriculture, Chief of Forest Service, and executive leadership from other governmental and non-governmental interests.

#### **Roundtable on Sustainable Forests**

- Convenes first meeting September 1998.
- Multi-stakeholder process "to serve as a forum to share information and perspectives that will enable better decision making in the U.S. regarding sustainable forests."
- Established as open and inclusive process and characterized by shared commitment to goal of sustainable forest management.
- Working motto: "Better data lead to better dialogue, which leads to better decisions."

#### **1999 Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable**

- Organized as a companion process to the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests
- Works 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**

- Multi-stakeholder process working 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***

- 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;
  - Respond to the Academies’ desire to reinvigorate the role of science and development in sustainable development; and
  - 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 IPF and the IFF over a five year period.

### **Federal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Sustainable Forest Management Data**

- 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 available data related to the Montreal Process C&I on an ongoing basis.
- Creates a process for helping Federal agencies develop a national report by on the state of the Nation’s forests and progress towards sustainable forest management in the United States.

### **2001 Sustainable Forest Data Working Group of Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)**

- 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.
- Responsible for developing annual work plans to implement the Federal MOU on Sustainable Forest Management Data.

### **UNFF Organizational Meeting and First Session**

- Led to a Multi-Year Program of Work (MYPOW) to focus work of future UNFF sessions on specific issues
- Initiated Collaborative Partnership on Forests, which consists of 14 international member organizations and serves to support work of UNFF and its member countries.

### **United Nations Millennium Declaration**

- 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 poverty elimination as highest priority and includes related Millennium Development Goals.

- Emphasizes need to adopt a new ethic of conservation and stewardship, 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) (Geneva)**

- North American and European countries participating in the ECE Regional Ministerial Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development adopted a Ministerial Statement that focuses on the two overarching objectives of 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.

#### **NASF Sustainable Forestry Implementation Committee (SFIC)**

- NASF reaffirmed its “strong commitment to leadership and involvement in sustainable forestry in the United States” and changed the status of its SFIC from an ad hoc to a standing committee.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

- Fourteen federal agencies sign MOU that designates USDA Forest Service as the lead agency to prepare National Report on Sustainable Forests.

### **2002 Society of American Foresters’ Sustainability and Forest Certification Working Group**

- New working group created to focus on crosscutting 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**

- Result of partnership between USDA-Forest Service in cooperation with State Foresters and State Forest Resource Planners in a 20-state region.
- Produced *Sourcebook on Criteria and Indicators of Forest Sustainability in the Northeastern Area*, May 2002.

#### **Second Session of UNFF**

- 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)**

- Resulted in two negotiated documents: *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* and *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*.
- Focused implementation of Agenda 21 (see 1992 Earth Summit above) on more integrated and cross-sectoral solutions through voluntary public/private partnerships for sustainable development.

### **2003**

### **National Report on Sustainable Forests**

- USDA Forest Service, in cooperation with 13 federal signatories to MOU, begin to develop a report that evaluates trends and conditions in U.S. forests, both private and public, using the Montreal C&I framework.
- Roundtable convenes two initial review workshops (March and April 2002) and a final review workshop (November 2002) to provide stakeholder feedback.
- Roundtable establishes Core Group to provide feedback and guidance to the Roundtable process.
- Report to be released in late 2003.

### **Beyond**

#### **Activities After the Publication of the National Report**

- Roundtable reaffirms commitment to continuous improvement of C&I.
- Activities in next phase will broaden and deepen commitment to sustainable forests and culture of shared learning.
- Roundtable organizes series of regional workshops to tie National Report to issues of regional importance and catalyze ongoing regional dialogues.
- Participants agree to strengthen connection to relevant international processes.