

INDICATORS THINKTANK

“The selection and use of indicators for sustaining forests”

27-28 September 2006

Admiral Fell Inn

888 S Broadway

Baltimore, MD

Meeting web site: <http://www.manometmaine.org/Thinktank.htm>

DAY 1: Wednesday, 27 September

8:00-8:30 AM **Coffee/Continental Breakfast**

8:30 AM **Introductions and Goals of the Thinktank**

9:00-10:30 AM **What is the scope of our collective experience with indicators?**
Participants will provide short (~5 min +/-) informal overview of their “universe” of experience with indicator selection and/or use. The purpose of this session is to bring the whole group up to speed with respect the breath and depth of experience of participants.

1. Name, affiliation.
2. What is your job (in 1-2 sentences)?
3. Have you been directly involved in the selection and use of indicators?
4. If yes, what has been the spatial scale of your work with indicators (e.g. international, national, regional, state, county, municipality)?
5. What is the biggest question you have about indicator selection and use? OR, what do you hope to learn from the Thinktank?

10:30-10:50 AM **Break**

10:50-5:30 PM **“Lessons Learned” in the selection and use of indicators**
(Lunch 12:00-12:45)
The remainder of the day will be working through a series of questions posed to the group. The answers to these questions will be recorded and used to formulate a manuscript for peer-reviewed publication, jointly authored by participants. (allocated time in blue: minutes)

1. What are the purposes of indicators? (35) Indicators can be used for different purposes and at different spatial scales. It is important to understand why indicators are needed before indicator selection is initiated. (e.g., forest certification, community sustainability, national forest condition, state forest condition).

LUNCH
12:00-12:45

- 2. How do different indicator systems serve different indicator needs? (35)** (e.g., Heinz Center, Montreal Criteria & Indicators, SFI, FSC, Northeast Regional Indicators, State of Oregon, Baltimore Co., Hopewell Big Woods indicators, to name a few).

The next series of questions are designed to explore some of the major challenges with indicators selection and use. We will discuss each challenge and propose solutions or recommendations for addressing each challenge. We will have the opportunity to add or delete from this list of challenges to make sure we use our time to focus on the most important “lessons learned” by the participants.

- 3. Who are sustainability indicators for? (15)**
- 4. Who should be involved in indicator selection? (20)**
- 5. What is the role of stakeholders in indicator selection and use? (30)**
- a) At what level should stakeholders be involved; does this level vary by scale and/or forest ownership?
 - b) How do we manage diverse stakeholder expectations and values vs. what is possible?
- 6. Can/should indicators be scalable? (e.g., from municipal to national scales). (20)**
- a) What are the scale problems and how might they be overcome?
 - b) Does the group have a concrete example of scalable indicators? How well does/did it work?
- 7. How should the frequent mismatch between data availability and data needs be handled by indicator selection processes? (20)**
- What advice to do we have for reconciling this conundrum? How should practicality/affordability be incorporated into indicator selection?
- 8. How does indicator selection and use vary by spatial scale and by audience? (international, national, region, state, county, municipality). (30)**

3:00-3:20 PM

Break

3:20-5:30 PM

Continue with discussion topics...

9. **How can indicator selection tackle the challenge of integrating and balancing social, economic, and environmental [forest] values? What are some emerging tools accomplishing this transparently? What are the facilitation challenges with such an integrated approach? (20)**
10. **Should goals, or target levels (qualitative or quantitative) be set for indicators? When to, and when not to. (20)**
11. **Hard to believe, but *selecting* indicators was the easy part. Now what? How does one build a decision-making framework for putting indicators to use? (25)**
12. **What would a successful indicator system look like? How would we know if indicators are “working?” (refer back to “purposes” above). What’s more important: the social conversation, or achieving the goals, or both? (25)**
13. **Are there remaining KEY challenges of indicator selection and use? (20)**
14. **Organizing our thoughts: editing and revising a proposed outline for our manuscript. (20)**

5:30 PM

Adjourn for the day

6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

Dinner on your own, or in groups.

8:00-9:30 PM

Optional informal evening discussions in the bar.

DAY 2: Thursday, 28 September

7:30-8:00 AM

Continental Breakfast

8:00-10:30 AM

Outlining our manuscript and key conclusions

Step 1: Review of progress, and any overnight thoughts. (20)

Step 2: Outlining the sections’ content: We will break into 2 or 3

groups to get this done in about 1 hour. (60)

Step 3: Report back to the full group (45)

Discussion: target outlet for the manuscript (10)

10:30-11:00 **Debriefing and next steps/timetable**

11:00 AM **Adjourn**

INDICATORS THINKTANK- RELEVANT WEB SITES:

(This is a start, please add your own links or any others that you think would be good for the group and return to jmhagan@prexar.com.)

Thinktank Web site:

www.manometmaine.org/Thinktank.htm

National Report on Sustainable Forestry 2003

<http://www.fs.fed.us/research/sustain/>

Sustainable Measures Website (Maureen Hart)

<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/>

Baltimore County Linking Communities to Montreal Criteria and Indicators (Don Outen)

<http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/environment/workgroup/index.html>

username: deprm password: environment

Oregon Department of Forestry Sustainable Indicators Project (David Morman)

http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/RESOURCE_PLANNING/Sustainable_Forest_Indicators_Project.shtml

Hopewell Big Woods Project (Louise Tritton)

<http://www.natlands.org/projects/project.asp?fldProjectId=1>

Northeastern U.S. Regional Indicators (Connie Carpenter)

<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/sustainability/base/base.shtm>

Forest Sustainability Indicator Tools for Communities (2003)

<http://communitiescommittee.org/fsitool/index.html>

Meridian Forest Roundtable

<http://www.sustainableforests.net/>