

federal agencies, Native American tribes, universities, professional associations, conservation groups, forest-based industries, environmental groups, and forest landowners. Sustainability is a common goal for many public and private interests, and collective efforts such as this conference will be needed to mobilize the skills, capacity, and resources to achieve sustainable forestry.

To bring the fifty-two trends and issues identified in the Statewide Forest Plan into a conceptual framework that would facilitate bringing interested groups of leaders together at the conference, seven themes were described, which collectively include most of the trends and issues from the plan. Key individuals and organizations will champion the development of actions needed to address the trends and issues associated with each of the seven themes.

#### CONFERENCE THEMES:

- Conserving Wisconsin's Biological Diversity
- Minimizing the threat of invasive species to Wisconsin's Forests
- Enhancing Assistance to Wisconsin's Private Forest Landowners
- Managing the Impacts of Changes in Wisconsin's Land Use and Forest Ownership
- Maintaining Wisconsin's Forest Based Economy Enhancing Wisconsin's Urban Forests Minimizing
- Recreational Use Conflicts in Wisconsin's Forests

## MEASURING FOREST SUSTAINABILITY: CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

Are Wisconsin's forests sustainable? Since the Wisconsin Statewide Forest Plan is guided by the premise that a balance of the social, economic, and ecological values of forests is essential to the state and its citizens, the answer to this question is fundamental to measuring the success of the plan.



A number of methods have been developed to measure forest sustainability. Most notable is the framework of Criteria and Indicators for Forest Sustainability developed as part of the Montreal Process. In 1993, representatives from twelve countries—including the United States—joined together in Montreal, Canada, to discuss how sustainable forestry might be defined and measured in terms of outcomes. The product of that meeting is referred to as the Montreal Process, a

framework of Criteria and Indicators for tracking progress in forest sustainability.

The Criteria and Indicators for Forest Sustainability are organized around 7 overarching criterion by which sustainable forestry is measured (see Appendix):

1. Conservation of Biological Diversity
2. Maintenance of Productive Capacity of Forest Ecosystems
3. Maintenance of Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality
4. Conservation of Soil and Water Resources
5. Maintenance of Forest Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles
6. Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Multiple Socioeconomic Benefits to Meet the Needs of Society
7. Legal, Institutional and Economic Framework for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Management.

Within each criterion, several indicators to address the particular criterion are identified. Often multiple variables, or metrics, can be used to evaluate each indicator. Progress in sustainability is determined by evaluating the sum of the indicators for each criterion.

Criteria and Indicators are included in this plan as an example of one tool to measure forest sustainability. Other organizations and forest certification systems have adapted the Criteria and Indicators to their particular needs. The 2000 Wisconsin Forest Assessment does not use Criteria and Indicators directly, but does mention the potential use for future assessments. The Criteria and Indicators may similarly serve us as a useful resource as we begin developing strategies for implementing the plan and ensuring long-term forest sustainability in Wisconsin. The Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators as described in the appendix and the on-line technical resources provide a cross-walk between the indicators and the trends and issues.