

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF FOREST MINISTERS'  
CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST  
MANAGEMENT INDICATOR REVIEW



**TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP CHAIRS'  
RESPONSE TO MEMBER FEEDBACK  
ON THE DRAFT LIST OF RECOMMENDED INDICATORS  
FOR SUBMISSION TO THE C&I TASK FORCE**

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The Canadian Council of Forest Minister's (CCFM) Criteria and Indicators (C&I) Task Force, composed of representatives from the federal, provincial and territorial governments, guides the CCFM C&I process and is leading the framework review with support from the C&I secretariat. In December 2001, in preparation for the review, the Task Force commissioned a focus group study to identify specific values, issues and concerns held by Canadians with respect to sustainable use of the forest. Focus groups, involving different sectors of society, were convened across the country.

In February 2002, the Task Force established six Technical Working Groups (TWGs), one for each criterion, to review the indicators in the C&I framework and recommend revised indicators to the Task Force. Task Force members, or alternates accepted by the Task Force, chaired each of the TWGs, which were comprised of experts from the federal, provincial and territorial governments; academia; the Aboriginal community; industry; and Non-governmental Organizations. Two academic experts also advised the TWGs.

The Technical Working Groups met between March and October 2002 to review the indicators. In October, 2002, the TWG Chairs met to compile and integrate the indicators into a single framework, indicators from each of the six TWGs were either retained as is, reworded slightly, combined with other indicators in the sets, or not retained at all. More often than not, this meant that the indicator wording changed somewhat. However, when the Chairs combined indicators, they tried not to lose the original intent suggested by the TWGs.

On December 12, 2002, the TWG Chairs circulated their compiled and integrated list of indicators to the TWG members for feedback. Three detailed documents were circulated which:

- 1) described how the Chairs compiled and integrated the six separate sets of indicators into a single framework and the rationale behind their decisions;
- 2) provided detailed indicator descriptions for the compiled and integrated indicators; and,
- 3) described the links between the compiled and integrated indicators and the original CCFM C&I, the Montréal Process C&I and the values expressed by the focus groups.

Many TWG members provided feedback over December and January, particularly in cases where they felt the intent of their indicators had been lost. The Chairs and the Secretariat followed up on many of these comments by telephone to clarify concerns and find solutions, and at least one TWG held a conference call. A number of recommendations were made, most of which the Chairs implemented.

There were many similarities in the issues and concerns raised by TWG members. This document summarizes those issues and concerns, lists the recommendations, and describes how the Chairs addressed the issues, concerns and recommendations.

**Summary of Issues and Concerns:**

- Make sure that the results that came out of the August TWG meeting can be distinguished from the results that came out of the TWG Chairs' meeting in October.
- Make sure that the decision process by the TWG Chairs at their October meeting is well documented.
- Make sure that linkages between the criteria are emphasized.

- Make sure that the discussions at the TWG meetings, and all of the thinking that went into the TWG recommendations is not lost from the public record.
- Much of the intent in the package of indicators provided by TWG 3 appears to have been lost and needs to be recaptured. In particular, it needs to be clear that commensurate with complying with guidelines should be a process of continued testing and revision of the guidelines based on research and adaptive management studies.
- There needs to be an indicator that addresses slash and coarse woody debris retention/recruitment issues. The Chairs should reconsider their decision not to retain this indicator under criterion 3.
- Clarify the distinction between ecosystem condition and timber productivity under criterion 2 and that often a trade-off must be made between maximizing timber productivity and maintaining ecosystem condition.
- Under criterion 2, clarify that "successfully regenerated" means only that the stand is fully stocked; the species composition may be completely different. Also note that burns may be replanted in addition to harvest areas in some jurisdictions and that it will be difficult for some jurisdictions to break this information down by ecozone.
- Under criterion 2, the indicator that addresses long-term additions and deletions to the forest area, primarily by anthropogenic causes, needs to be specific about the causes to be tracked, rather than giving examples. Also the indicator name needs to be reworded for clarity.
- The National Forestry Database Program has a technical subcommittee which is examining ways to improve national reporting on wood supply. If the subcommittee is successful, the NFDP will be able in 2004 to provide exactly the kind of information sought for indicator 5.3.1, "Annual harvest of timber relative to the level that is deemed to be sustainable".
- The indicator under criterion 1, "Area of forest, by type and age class, soil types and geomorphological feature types in protected areas", needs clarification. It should be made clear that the area in protected areas needs to be referenced to the total area available to determine representativeness, as it is representativeness that is the primary concern, not simply how much is protected. Also, the area in protected areas needs to reference level of protection (e.g. IUCN classes).
- Under criterion 2, the indicator for the amount of undisturbed forest has been dropped, but should be reconsidered. This is important to the public.
- Under criterion 2, the indicators on additions and deletions to the forest area, and on growing stock should be under criterion 1.
- The revised indicators seem quite broad, perhaps covering more than just sustainable forest management.
- The documentation provided on December 12, 2002, was not as clear as it could be.

In addition, a number of minor wording changes were suggested for individual indicators. Also, several TWG members commended the chairs for their efforts in merging the indicators and providing rationales for their decisions with the indicators, while several others expressed surprise at the reduced number of indicators.

### **Specific Recommendations Made by TWG Members:**

- 1) Provide the TWG members with the detailed indicator descriptions for all indicators submitted to the Secretariat after the third TWG meeting in Halifax in August, 2002.
- 4) Describe in more detail the decision making process that the TWG Chairs went through at their October, 2002, meeting in Edmonton. This should be included in the introduction to the document "Summary of Indicator Compilation and Integration by TWG Chairs".
- 3) Provide a table that shows crosswalks between indicators submitted by the six TWGs and the compiled and integrated indicators produced by the TWG Chairs in October, 2002.
- 4) Number the indicators submitted to the secretariat by the six TWGs differently than the indicators produced by the TWG Chairs at their meeting in October, 2002.
- 5) Place a preamble at the beginning of each criterion that describes the linkages between criteria, linkages to indicators in other criteria and important issues to think about when assessing a given criterion.
- 6) At the beginning of each criterion, place a list of indicators from other criteria that are related to the criterion in question.
- 7) Produce some other public, citable document which records the process. One idea might be a theme section in the Forestry Chronicle. Another idea might be a published CCFM report.
- 8) Revise indicator 6.5.3 to more accurately capture the intent of old indicator 3.2.2. Possible solutions include:
  - emphasize, either in the indicator or in a preamble to the criterion, that long-term research is a necessary adjunct to guidelines and that guidelines need periodic review;
  - report on amount spent on long-term research, broken down by broad discipline area;
  - supplement the indicator report with case studies of how certain agencies (e.g. CFS) have split up their research money;
  - supplement the indicator report with a map of long-term research installations in place across the country (e.g. CFS research centres, model forests, long-term soil productivity research sites, university research forests, NCE research installations, etc.)
- 9) Reconsider the decision to drop the indicator under criterion 3 dealing with coarse woody debris.
- 10) For the indicator under criterion 2 dealing with additions and deletions to the forest area, by cause, be specific about the causes to be tracked, rather than giving examples.
- 11) For the indicator under criterion 3, "rate of compliance with soil disturbance standards", suggest that common definitions of soil disturbance need to be developed by appropriate jurisdictions and emphasize that ultimately it is the area out of compliance that we are interested in.

### **Chairs' Response:**

- The Chairs accepted recommendations 1 - 6 and are have incorporated changes into the documents to be submitted to the C&I Task Force.
- The Chairs agree in principle with recommendation 7, but also recognize that this is an issue that must be dealt with by the Task Force or higher.
- The Chairs agreed with recommendation 8 and have incorporated the suggestions into both the indicator description and the preamble for appropriate criterion.

- For recommendation 9, the Chairs agreed that “Percentage of managed forest area having slash and coarse woody debris retention guidelines that recognize the importance of these materials in maintaining soil quality and biodiversity”, is an important concept, however, it is difficult to measure this indicator consistently between jurisdictions. Most jurisdictions also have guidelines or standards dealing with other ecological issues that contribute to maintaining soil quality or biodiversity, including guidelines on: riparian management, wildlife tree management, connecting corridors/networks, soil disturbance, etc. It is difficult, at a national level to delve into the details of these issues when reporting or to measure the area effected by such guidelines. However, such guidelines are an important aspect of sustainable forest management and it has been emphasized that guidelines need to be updated periodically to reflect the best available science. To try and recognize guidelines that address soil quality and biodiversity and to recognize that guidelines need to be periodically updated, the chairs are adding a new indicator to criterion 6. The new indicator examines the number of new and updated guidelines per year related to ecological issues in forest management. The broader focus of this new indicator and the fact that it helps to demonstrate society’s responsibility for sustainable development, make criterion 6 an appropriate place for this indicator. Together with other indicators, the revised framework now addresses whether or not guidelines exist for various ecological issues, to what extent many of those guidelines are being complied with, and whether or not there is research ongoing to support and strengthen the guidelines.
- Text has been added to the indicators and to the preamble of criterion 2 to clarify the distinction between ecosystem condition and timber productivity and to clarify "successfully regenerated"
- Under criterion 2, the indicator addressing long-term additions and removals from the forest area has been renamed to "Additions and deletions of forest area, by cause." The text for this indicator has also been revised to make it more specific as to the causes tracked, rather than just giving examples.
- The chairs accepted with thanks the information on the NFDP subcommittee and the possibility of more information for indicator 5.3.1.
- Text has been added to the indicator under criterion 1, "Area of forest, by type and age class, soil types and geomorphological feature types in protected areas", to clarify that representativeness is the key issue of concern and that measurements should be referenced against the total area. Also, the approaches to measurement section has been revised to clarify that the indicator should address different levels of protection (e.g. IUCN classes).
- An indicator of the area of undisturbed forest has not been included because it can be partially deduced from knowing the total forest area and knowing the area of forest managed for harvesting, additions and deletions of forest area by anthropogenic cause, and area disturbed by shorter-term anthropogenic disturbances such as harvesting. Also, getting agreement on what constitutes "undisturbed" may make it difficult to implement such an indicator.
- The indicators addressing additions and deletions of forest area, and addressing total growing stock were retained in criterion 2. There are a number of arguments for placing these indicators under a different criterion and both criteria 1 and 2 provide a logical spot. The 1995 CCFM C&I place the indicator on additions and deletions to the forest area under criteria 3 and 4. the Montréal Process places the same indicator under MP criterion 3, which is equivalent to CCFM criterion 2. In the end, the Chairs felt that these indicators are more strongly related to ecosystem productivity than to biodiversity.
- The Chairs are agreed that we want to, and are indeed, talking about sustainable forest management in a broad sense, and no more than that.
- The Chairs largely accepted any minor wording changes that were suggested.

- The Chairs recognize that the documents sent on December 12, 2002 were not as clear as they could be and apologize for any confusion. The Chairs and the Secretariat followed up by telephone with TWG members who made comments to clarify misunderstandings before making any revisions.

### **Revised documentation**

The three documents sent to the TWG members on December 12, 2002 were revised based on the comments received. In addition two NEW documents were produced. They are:

- 1) "The CCFM C&I Review Technical Working Group Recommendations for Improved CCFM Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management"  
- A NEW DOCUMENT, a summary of the 54 revised indicators, as compiled and integrated by the TWG chairs, with a more detailed description of the process the TWGs engaged in and preambles for each criterion
- 2) "The CCFM C&I Review Technical Working Group Recommendations for Improved CCFM Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management - Appendix 1: Detailed Indicator Descriptions"  
- Detailed descriptions for each of the 54 revised indicators
- 3) "The CCFM C&I Review Technical Working Group Recommendations for Improved CCFM Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management - Appendix 2: Links to the Original CCFM C&I, the Montréal Process C&I, and Public Values"  
- Links between the 54 revised indicators and the original CCFM C&I, the Montréal Process C&I and the focus group values.
- 4) "The CCFM C&I Review Technical Working Group Recommendations for Improved CCFM Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management - Summary of Indicator compilation and Integration by TWG Chairs"  
- Description of the process of indicator compilation and integration undertaken by the TWG Chairs in October 2002.
- 5) Results of the Third Technical Working Group Meeting, August 2002, Halifax, Nova Scotia- compiled October 2, 2002.  
- A NEW DOCUMENT, not previously sent to the TWG members.