



# Implementing Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

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Bernhard Wolfslehner

# C&I so far: Synthesis and Lessons Learnt

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“Victory puts us on a  
level with heaven.”  
(Lucretius)



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# So, where do we stand? – A synthesis

- Literature review
  - a database of more than 100 documents
- National and subnational enquiries in 38 countries
- Outcomes of 3 regional workshops
- Group of 40 international C&I experts



# Does the Pan-European set of criteria and indicators serve as a framework for dialogue and communication?

YES, because

- increased awareness and understanding of sustainable forest management – at least within the forest sector and among those interested in forestry issues
- stimulus and support for communication within the forest sector in terms of mind-setting and streamlining the forestry debate
  - integrated science into political debate (to a certain extent)
- facilitated deliberation and consultation between policy makers and stakeholders → promoting stronger stakeholder participation in the forest policy process
- shaped structure and content of forest-related issues
- increased transparency and accountability of data provision
- streamlined publishing of forest-related information





# Dialogue and communication – needs for further improvement

- Pan-European C&I set considered too complex and forestry-centric  
– barriers to communication (public, other sectors)
- C&I too static to identify key issues and newly emerging topics
- conceptual shortcomings
  - no conceptual framework to think in systems
  - weak links between quantitative and qualitative indicators
  - and on individual indicator level...



# Does the Pan-European set of criteria and indicators serve as an adequate tool for SFM

YES, because **monitoring and reporting?**

- C&I have shaped and stabilized international reporting, used as a reference for national applications of monitoring and reporting on SFM
  - important for long-term development of monitoring instruments
- improved the comparability of forest information among European countries by setting a common reporting framework
- helped to improve availability and quality of data and information
- progress and adaptation of monitoring instruments based on C&I can be observed (incl. scientific discourse)



# Monitoring and reporting – needs for further improvement

- full data availability hardly impossible, though considerable burdens for data collection agencies (esp. sub-indicators and parameters)
- problems in ensuring acceptable data verification and validation
- institutional challenges in monitoring and reporting
  - maintenance and regularity of monitoring instruments
  - provision of capacities, education and training increasingly questioned
  - lacking coordination among national data providers





# Does the Pan-European set of criteria and indicators serve as a tool for assessing progress towards SFM?

PARTLY, because

- reported data for the periods 1990–2010 give insight into time trends and benchmarks among countries
- indirectly, because C&I and PEOLG have certainly influenced certification schemes (most notably PEFC), which provide reference frames and stipulate assessment procedures at regional/local levels



# Assessment – needs for further improvement

- assessment only in pilot phase (SoEF 2011), far from complete
- lack of clear and explicit objectives, thresholds and trade-off information
- development of balanced method needed including:
  - overcoming structural and conceptual shortcomings of indicators for SFM assessment, such as systemic components and causal indicator linkages, key indicators/parameters and composite indicators/parameters
  - agreement on a common interpretation of indicators at the pan-European level, i.e. what is considered as a positive or alarming development or what can be regarded as acceptable
  - better coherence and completeness of C&I data for assessment



## Does the Pan-European set of criteria and indicators facilitate the development and adaptation of national policy instruments?

YES, because

- serve as a reference framework for many SFM-related policies in many instances → accepted tool to stimulate and promote SFM at national level
- safeguard a normative and comprehensive framework for multi-functional forest management
- via its implicit normative power of the SFM concept, increased political commitment to accept and support C&I, and integrate them into national policy instruments has been observed
  - national forest programmes
  - integrated into national legislative and/or policy instruments in some cases



# Adaptation of national policy instruments – needs for further improvement

- still wide variation in methods and quality of implementation onto the national level
- maintaining adequate resourcing and capacities for C&I implementation and development in monitoring is a major challenge
- selective and interest-driven use of C&I observed
- weak links between policy and FMU levels put question-mark on impact of policies on the ground



## Does the Pan-European set of criteria and indicators generate information of inter-sectoral and international relevance?

LIMITED, because

- collaboration and attempts for harmonization among C&I processes in the field of SFM do exist and there is at least communication ongoing on conceptual questions (e.g. with Montréal Process, Global Forest Resources Assessment).
- the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire brings together FAO/FRA, ECE/FAO, Forest Europe, Montréal Process, Observatory of Central African Forests– OFAC, and ITTO for harmonized data collection in 2014–2015
- there are few examples of linkages between different sectoral processes on nat. level
  - e.g. with biodiversity reporting for CBD
  - pan-European level (e.g. [www.ef.europa.eu](http://www.ef.europa.eu) Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators)





# Intersectoral and international exchange– needs for further improvement

- data generated through forest C&I sets are scarcely used in national and European statistics outside the forest sector
  - use of concepts and definitions which are only partially harmonized with those for other sectors
  - data are not considered relevant or are not expressed in a form which is usable by the other users than from forestry
  - lack of political recognition of forestry issues in other sectors → hence information generated through forest-based C&I has only marginal visibility
- communication deficits on cross-sectoral data needs
  - weak reactiveness to information needs outside the forestry world



# Does the pan-European set of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management need to be revised?

YES, because

- explicitly defined goals and objectives for the pan-European set or individual indicators are missing, which creates difficulties to achieve a consistent approach to implementation of C&I for SFM at pan-European and national levels
- lack of data and explicit thresholds to a time dimension or evolution over time may impose a limited use of the indicators as an indication of progress towards SFM
- individual indicators may decrease in relevance and may have to be adapted, supported or replaced by others to meet the current or emerging needs
- it is important to maintain flexibility and the ability to revise the indicator set quickly in response to new challenges and policy developments inside and outside the sector



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“Success is not final,  
failure is not fatal: it is  
the courage to  
continue that counts.”  
(Winston Churchill)

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Thank you for your attention!

bernhard.wolfslehner@efi.int