



Department of  
AGRICULTURE  
FISHERIES &  
FORESTRY -  
AUSTRALIA



# Conference on Assessing Sustainable Forest Management in Australia

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## Chair's Report

### Introduction

This report is the Chair's record of the National Conference on *Assessing Sustainable Forest Management in Australia*. The Conference was held in the National Convention Centre Canberra from 4 to 6 November 1996.

The main purpose of the conference was to discuss issues relating to the assessment and promotion of sustainable forest management and to identify national policy options for consideration by Governments.

The Conference was attended by 104 participants representing a wide range of stakeholders. Representation included Commonwealth (30), State and Territory (17) Government officials, researchers, scientists and academics (17), forest industries (12), environmental groups (10), rural community groups (4), private forest owners (3), organised labour (3), consultants (3), Indigenous representatives (2) and retailers (2).

A "Friends of the Chair Group" representing different stakeholder groups was established to assist the Chair to resolve difficult issues and help draft the Conference resolutions. The group met at regular intervals throughout the conference and was instrumental in helping achieve a consensus outcome on the final day.

The "Friends of the Chair Group" comprised:

- Geoff Gorrie (Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy),
- Tony Press (Commonwealth Department of the Environment),
- Geoff Johnson (for the Standing Committee on Forestry),
- Rebecca Williams (for the Standing Committee on Conservation),
- Robert Bain (National Association of Forest Industries),
- Curly Humphreys (Pulp and Paper Manufacturers Federation of Australia),
- Virginia Young (The Wilderness Society),
- Michael Rae (World Wide Fund for Nature),
- Michael O'Connor (Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union), and
- Eric Bachelard (representing researchers, scientists and academics).

An Indigenous representative, Jolanda Nayutah, and a forest community representative, Ross Mathewson, joined the "Friends of the Chair Group" during consideration of the draft conference resolutions.

## **Conference Format**

The Conference consisted of plenary sessions and workshops. The first day of the conference was primarily devoted to presentations by stakeholders to the plenary. Day two comprised workshop sessions. At each workshop, participants split into “round table” groups of about 15 participants to discuss key issues.

Workshop facilitators, chosen on the basis of their impartiality, led each group in its discussions. Overall facilitation of the workshops was undertaken by Lorraine Cairns (Fathom Consulting). The workshop facilitators were:

- Steve Cork (CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology),
- Eric Bachelard (Institute of Foresters of Australia),
- Mark Kelly (Fortech),
- Peter Sheehan (University of Melbourne),
- Mick Brown (Forest and Wood Products R & D Corporation), and
- Kathryn Adams (Forest and Wood Products R & D Corporation).

There were six workshops in total which covered the following areas:

- criteria and indicators,
- management and assessment, and
- certification issues.

The final day involved presentation to the plenary of workshop outcomes and negotiation of the final conference resolutions.

Participants worked cooperatively and productively, respecting each others views and showed a genuine interest in progressing the debate. The workshop sessions produced detailed reports and a summary of these reports formed the basis of the negotiated and agreed conference resolutions.

## **Conference Resolutions**

The Conference agreed the following 17 resolutions.

1. There should be adequate stakeholder\* participation on [E]SFM\*\* in both RFA and non-RFA areas at national, State/Territory and regional levels. Processes for involvement should be clear and open. Resources should be allocated to stakeholder groups where necessary to facilitate participation.
2. Indigenous rights, including intellectual and cultural property rights and native title; the rights of organised labour; and rural communities have often been overlooked in development of forest policy. These rights, views and aspirations should be formally recognised in the development of institutional frameworks for [E]SFM.
3. The Montreal criteria and indicators provide a building block for further work for assessing [E]SFM. The criteria are applicable while the indicators require development to be relevant for management application. The criteria and indicators could contribute to effective assessment of [E]SFM in RFA and non-RFA areas. They could also provide the context for voluntary certification and labelling in Australia, once sufficient stakeholder

support, which is vital for credibility, is established. (There was a view that stakeholder support was also essential for the credibility of C&I for use in [E]SFM assessments.)

4. Processes are required to identify areas for further R&D effort. There is a need to bring together the researchers, the operational managers and stakeholders to identify priority areas for R&D effort.

#### *Criteria and Indicators*

5. Indicators appropriate to the Montreal criteria should be developed and progressively applied at the relevant levels. These indicators could also be used as a basis for ongoing monitoring in RFA and non-RFA areas.
6. Indicators applied at the appropriate scale will provide a sound basis for measuring and assessing [E]SFM across all tenures and jurisdictions.
7. To be useful, indicators must:
  - be firmly linked to the criteria and be relevant to the region and goals of forest management;
  - have a sound scientific or other relevant basis;
  - be understandable and clearly interpretable;
  - be sensitive and be able to measure critical change with confidence;
  - have costs appropriate for their benefits (including non-economic costs and benefits);
  - be feasible and realistic to measure over relevant timeframes and spatial scales;
  - have targets for thresholds built in, or be capable of having these applied;
  - contribute directly to continuous improvement in management and performance; and
  - taken together the indicators must also be sufficient to adequately measure [E]SFM.
8. Indicators need to be assessed against the specifications in point 7 above to test their utility. Some indicators need further development in parallel with implementing others.
9. The Montreal Process Implementation Group for Australia should convene workshops of operational managers, scientists and community groups to recommend the indicators for use at the appropriate levels.
10. [E]SFM must be secured within appropriate, clear statutory, administrative and institutional frameworks. All relevant statutes must bind the Crown.

#### *Management and Assessment*

11. Aims of [E]SFM review should include:
  - ensuring continued community support;
  - identifying improvements, including to enhance both industry competitiveness and environmental protection; and
  - scientific underpinning.
12. Assessment of [E]SFM in RFAs should be based on a methodology which includes:
  - policy commitment;
  - planning and implementation;
  - analysis;
  - monitoring and review;

- independent audit; and
  - a capacity to modify and improve management and use.
13. Assessment of [E]SFM should occur in RFAs and in non-RFA areas and across all tenures, accepting that emphasis on particular criteria and relevance of particular indicators will vary.
14. Implementation of [E]SFM in all forests needs:
- management planning/systems;
  - codes of practice;
  - data collection, monitoring and reporting using C&I;
  - benchmarking; and
  - to be cost effective.

### *Certification and Labelling*

15. Certification of sustainably managed forest arises from two levels:
- compliance systems - based on public policy
  - a voluntary market based process (once sufficient stakeholder support, which is vital for credibility, is established).
16. Certification is a basis for labelling (if pursued).
17. There is potential to link the Montreal criteria and appropriate indicators to RFA and non-RFA forests, certification and labelling, State of the Forests Reporting and State of the Environment Reporting.

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\* This is a preliminary list developed at the conference. A fuller list will be developed. Indigenous peoples, organised labour, rural communities, forest-dependent industries, mineral industry, recreational users, private forest growers, conservation groups, graziers, bee keepers, producers of minor forest products, local government, scientists and researchers, retailers, consumers

\*\* ESFM is the term used in the National Forest Policy Statement, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment and National Ecologically Sustainable Development Strategy, and has been the term of reference used in all public processes in Australia so far. The term encompasses the full range of environmental, social and economic considerations.

SFM is evolving as the term that has greater international recognition. It also encompasses environmental, social and economic considerations.

The conference was divided on which term should be employed in the conference outcomes and believe this was not the appropriate forum to take a decision on this issue.

### **Workshop Reports**

The following reports of each of the six workshop groups are reproduced as they were presented to the Conference. Workshops 1a, 1b and 1c considered different aspects of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; workshops 2a and 2b considered management for, and the assessment of, sustainable forest management; while workshop 3 considered issues relating to the certification of sustainable forest management.

## **WORKSHOP 1a: CRITERIA AND INDICATORS - BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM PROCESSES, SOIL, WATER, CARBON CYCLES**

### **Issues Across All Criteria**

The group agreed that the present set of Criteria cover the full range of key issues for Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (including social and economic considerations) and that our attention should be focussed on the indicators within those Criteria. It must be emphasised that the criteria considered in this workshop do not alone protect environmental values but rely on the institutional processes for applying checks and balances on progress towards ESFM objectives (Criterion 7).

To be effective, regional indicators should (at least):

- be firmly linked to the Criteria and be relevant to the region;
- have a sound scientific or other relevant basis;
- be understandable and clearly interpretable;
- be sensitive and powerful to critical change and include measures of error/ confidence;
- have costs appropriate for their benefits;
- be feasible and realistic to measure over relevant time-frames and spatial scales;
- have targets or thresholds built in or be capable of having these applied.

As soon as possible:

- the current set of indicators should be assessed against the above specifications;
- those that do not meet the specifications should be identified for development to an implementable standard;
- a strategy should be devised and implemented to identify and develop additional indicators with input from relevant experts and stakeholders.

The documentation of the Criteria and Indicators should include more detailed explanation of their purposes and guidelines about how they should be interpreted with respect to ESFM.

There should be processes to assess goals for indicators for regional application, requirements for new or improved indicators, and the relative risks to Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management of not developing or improving the indicators. These processes would help to define priorities for research and development on indicators. There is an important role for stakeholders, researchers and operational forest managers working together in these processes.

A priority for research and development should be development of ways to address interactions between indicators and to integrate and interpret information across indicators and land tenures to allow conclusions about Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management.

Procedures should be developed to attribute changes detected by indicators to the agents of those changes, to facilitate remedial action.

Regional indicators should be consistent with and facilitate regional goals for Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management developed by Regional Forest Agreement and other national and State processes. These processes represent another important route for participation of stakeholders in determining Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management outcomes.

Indicators for plantations should be developed and assessed separately from those for native forests, but acknowledging that significant overlap in indicators may exist.

The need for an ongoing process to review decision-paths for achieving ESFM was raised and was considered important by at least some of the group but was not discussed further due to time constraints. This is part of the general topic of giving stakeholders confidence that while the set of indicators is evolving the necessary checks and balances are in place.

## Issues Relating to Specific Criteria

### *Biodiversity*

**The group felt the current set of indicators for biodiversity require extensive review before they will be applicable at the regional scale. Particular concerns were:**

- there was divided opinion about the value or practicality of mapping areas of forest types and seral stages;
- there was concern and uncertainty about the adequacy of the definition of forest types and the use of unconfirmed surrogates of biodiversity generally;
- there was a call for indicators of natural dynamics, viability of populations, capacity for continued evolution and resilience to climate and other environmental change;
- there was broad agreement that current indicators of genetic diversity do not collect the appropriate information;
- present indicators of species diversity are not sensitive to change, do not include a broad enough range of biodiversity, and do not target the type and level of information needed by managers of forests at regional scales.

**Some solutions suggested were:**

- there was broad agreement that knowledge and expertise exists to develop regionally appropriate indicators and that processes for utilising this knowledge should be put in place in each region;
- examples of possibilities included indicators based on structural complexity, habitat requirements (e.g. hollows, understorey cover), predation-risk factors (e.g. proximity to freehold land is thought to increase risk from foxes), population viability analysis, genetic diversity below the species level, and improved indices of fragmentation and habitat interconnectedness;
- increased use of strategic long-term research to develop and improve indicators.

### *Ecosystem health*

**Recent changes to indicators acknowledge the need to monitor threatening processes, but there is a need for a more systematic approach in this Criterion towards indicators for these processes and other aspects of ecosystem integrity. Processes for utilising recent research findings and expert knowledge in developing regionally appropriate indicators should be developed.**

### *Soil and water*

**The indicators here generally cover the important areas but most are not operational at present because of a need to validate proposed indicators, and limitations on measurement of the indicators and/or interpretation of the information. Research and development is required urgently to make these indicators operational in regions where risks to Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management from processes affecting soil and water are identified.**

### *Carbon*

**Currently indicators are not operational at the regional scales. The indicators should be reviewed, including identification of R&D needs, after the next National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report in 1996/97.**

## **WORKSHOP 1b - CRITERION 6 “MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG TERM SOCIO-ECONOMIC MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SOCIETIES**

The Workshop Group went through the indicators in great detail. In considering this criterion and SFM the group agreed that due recognition be given to both wood and non wood values. In general there was high consensus by the group that the indicators and the proposed methodology for each was appropriate. However extensive, specific suggestions were made for modification of the issues, proposed data and sources. These have been attached as recommendations in an attached Appendix.

Several aspects of more general concern were identified. These are as follows:

- (1) Title of Criterion 6 “socio-economic” to be changed to “social and economic”.
- (2) The group considered that all indicators should better reflect the **enhancement** of each issue, within sustainability.
- (3) All indicators should include an introductory paragraph on **intent** of indicators
- (4) Concern was expressed with the level of consultation with stakeholders especially rural communities and Aboriginal people
- (5) The Group recommended that a culturally appropriate forum be established to thrash out involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the Montreal Process and input into criterion indicators, as a matter of high priority.
- (6) A cost/benefit analysis should be determined for each indicator
- (7) Agriculture and forestry in ABS statistics should be disaggregated
- (8) Research and Development into tourism and recreation to determine options and sustainability was regarded as high priority.

**Detailed Comments on draft indicators provided as Attachment 2  
of the Commonwealth / State Conference Background Paper**

Recommend: In expressing the criterion ‘Socio-economic’ should read ‘social and economic’.  
Broad group agreement.

- 6.1.a
- Important, available data.
  - Value adding should be linked to market demand (include in MP notes CI6).
  - Quantitative data for value adding outside region may be difficult.
  - Narrative at source available on a regional basis, including volume by species.
  - Aggregate at regional level and match with sustainable yield.
  - Issue of commercial in confidence vs transparency.
  - Define value adding broadly, eg not necessarily constructing kilns, level of tech invest.
- 6.1.b
- Need clarification: does this indicator include mining.
  - Include Aboriginal products - ochres, implements and artefacts, medicines, bush tucker, intellectual property rights; assessed by Aboriginal people.
  - Group agreed on importance of above issue to be included in CI6.
  - Value at what stage of chain.
  - Delete 2&3 issues paras, instead insert: “Each region to define and include commercial non-wood forest products relating to: Aboriginal; non-renewable; non-extractive resources”.
  - Data: delete “harvested”.
- 6.1.c
- Sources: as per ABARE or other accredited sources; agreed.
  - Issue: what about exported/imported product?
  - Issue: supply/demand stats below national difficult to interpret; so? Whether this is a regional level indicator.
  - All above agreed.
- 6.1.d
- Agreed national level indicator.
- 6.1.e
- Need to define boundaries and definition of ‘recycling’, eg paper, old windows, flooring to furniture.
  - Data collected regionally, aggregated nationally; good international comparative data.
  - Issue: Where/how collected.
  - General agreement: not foreclosing data at regional level if practicable.
- 6.1.f
- Issues: see 6.1.b.
  - Logic of CI order 6.1. Suggest place after 6.1.c. Ref link to 6.1.b. Ref link 6.1.c to 6.1.a
  - Issue: how to measure Aboriginal uses/consumption. No existing data. Need access to forest for traditional consumption.
  - Issue: no imposition of quotas on forest products and values, used by Aboriginal people.
  - Agreement in Group on 2 issues above.



- 6.1.g
  - General questioning in group on intention of this indicator.
  - Issue: incomplete capture for R&D.
  - 'Levies' too narrow.
  - Suggest all forest taxation royalties, tolls etc.
  - Is intention to indicate forest benefit to wider society? Confusion possible between wider social responsibilities to fund programs for public good.
  - Issue: Important indicator for timber workers and rural communities. How much is reinvested in restructure infrastructure?
  - Data: % reinvested in timber/rural.
  
- 6.2.a
  - Issue: in Tasmania, some plantation land is open to recreation. So are plantations excluded in data? and some privately owned plantation.
  - All OK.
  
- 6.2.b
  - Include 'pleasure driving'.
  - Data: include popular 'track-less' walking areas, number of sites and areas of significance, eg lookouts, historic, Aboriginal.
  - General agreement.
  - Recommend 'per capita' rather than /100,000.
  - Include: access for disability/older people/ special needs access. Include samples of users (#) and type.
  
- 6.2.c
  - Need to encourage all tourist operators to include their figures in State Agency data, especially eco-tourism, small operators.
  - Otherwise: group agreement.
  
- 6.2.d
  - Include scope for opportunities for development of tourist infrastructure as part of SFM. Part of maintenance and enhancement.
  - **General principal covering all 6: look at maintenance and enhancement.**
  - Flagged as R&D priority - group agreement.
  
- 6.3.a
  - Where private data not available, informed estimates should be obtained.
  - Indicator: include investment in harvesting, haulage.
  - Note: in some cases roading will be included.
  - Looking for enhancement in this indicator.
  - Upgrading of machinery due to Codes of Practice.
  - Need specific definitions of 'cost' so data is comparable, eg are 'on costs', corporate charges included?
  - Capital inflow reflects perception of security and should be separated: **capital investment and operating costs**
  - Use standard accounting procedure and definitions.
  - **Include** investment in non-wood production values.
  - Data: Full stop after investment, delete remainder of sentence.
  
- 6.3.b
  - See Issue: Data **should** be available at regional level - or, if State-wide, apportion to region.
  - Delete 1st issue para.
  - Public education is different to investing in skills development so report money spent on public education as distinct data.
  
- 6.3.c
  - Need to broaden, all forest uses
  - Data: not only 'new' also 'old' which is implemented.
  - Uptake of technology across the forest sectors.
  - Consideration: region - region comparable data.
  - ?Research standardised quantitative measures, eg productivity/unit as a possible measure of uptake.

- 6.3.d
  - Broaden indicator to include RRI on all investment in forest uses.
  - Differentiate between social and business investment? or social investment included in social assessment/review.
  - Financial return on non-wood forest benefits.
  
- 6.4.a
  - Issue: Resource Aboriginal people at local level to get and store data. Aboriginal ownership of data.
  - Action: Establish series of consultations at grass roots to define data requirements. Now.
  - Issue: If this data is not collected, Aboriginal people may back away from the process.
  - AHC methodology for broader heritage values.
  - Difficult? Give Aboriginal groups the money to start this process.
  - **Put as a preamble to our report - strong message.**
  - Beyond Montreal - involvement in all levels of land use.
  - p19, data - Note use capital 'A' for Aboriginal when referring to Australian Aboriginal people.
  - Include scientific reference areas in indicator.
  - Issue: cultural and historic sites important to all communities.
  - Data: qualitative, quantitative and narrative.
  - Look at places which are being damaged at each review, not only 'protection'.
  - **Recommendation: establish a culturally appropriate forum to thrash out involvement of Aboriginal peoples in Montreal Process and input into criterion indicators, as a matter of high priority.**
  
- 6.4.b
  - ?Different from recreation.
  - ?Subcategory of recreation.
  - Broad support in group for inclusion.
  - Respect the tenet of the indicator, confused re intent.
  - Disjunctive non-consumptive goods, call it cultural, social, spiritual values.
  - **General comment: include para on intent of each indicator.**
  
- 6.5.a
  - Any proposition of value adding should also include employment enhancement (see general principle).
  - Data collection should be continuous and regular to cover seasonal variation.
  - Indirect includes multipliers.
  - Forest sector definition includes **all** forest users.
  
- 6.5.b
  - Ensure ABS data disaggregates agriculture and forestry.
  
- 6.5.c
  - Community vision - develop data/realism/feasibility as part of sustainability. Beyond community workshops narrative should suggest next step.
  - General issues: develop qual - quant, apply cost/benefit analysis.
  - Group agreement.
  - SAU expertise accepted.
  
- 6.5.d
  - Issue: abuses of subsistence definition, eg illegal craftwood, firewood gathering and impacts on SFM.
  - Data: Estimation from Stage Agencies.

## WORKSHOP 1c - LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

### Legislation Must Bind Crown

Management agencies may not be bound by relevant Acts

- eg Environment/Local Government

*Solution:*

Amend relevant legislation.

Natural resource management (NRM) Agencies must be bound by relevant NRM, Environment Planning Acts and all relevant Acts.

### Enforcement

*Solution:*

Consider 3rd Party enforcement rights.

Need to recognise economic and industry structures influence compliance.

### Role of Commonwealth/State/Local Governments

Confusion over Responsibility

- public perceptions
- real administrative role
- legislation and legal arrangements

Inconsistencies among and between different levels of Government (plethora of rules/regulations some of which are contradictory).

*Solution:*

Determine which level of government can deliver SFM.

Establish what responsibilities that Government assumes.

Establish appropriate relationship between Governments and other players to “operationalise” SFM.

Define transparent monitoring and reporting procedures in the RFA.

An RFA must have clear exceptional circumstances provisions (including technological developments).

Increase public awareness of SFM and the role and responsibilities of government.

### Legal Framework for Ensuring Management Intent

Governments may not carry out all SFM responsibilities in all public areas.

Lack of recognition of the contribution of the private forest estate to SFM.

Inconsistent basis for the adoption of the principles of SFM (eg enunciated in East Gippsland RFA).

Inconsistent approach in legislation protecting biological and cultural values - including Indigenous cultural and intellectual rights.

*Solution:*

Ensure management intent is secured within a legal framework.

- define property rights; separate them out;
- establish system for securing management of particular rights;
- secure the management intent into the future;
- just terms for loss of property rights.

Consider appropriate legislative cover to be given to SFM (9 principals).

Adopt consistent approaches to the protection of biological and cultural values covering consultation; financial arrangements; legislation and review - Indigenous people must be involved in Indigenous cultural issues.

### **Management of Processes**

Legislation is not the sole solution.

Confusion over responsibility for process.

Process does not include or recognise all who should be involved.

Unclear responsibility for communication of the process, participation and consultation.

Confusion over what the process is, and scale of application.

*Solution:*

There is no single solution - There are many ways to remove the dermis of a *Felis cattus*.

Be clear about who is to be involved in the process or how they participate.

Legally binding codes of practice.

Clearly define who has the responsibility for communicating outcomes to stakeholders.

### **Social Indicators and Criteria**

Lack of appropriate models for assessing adaptability of communities to social change.

The indicators do not address indigenous issues (social, cultural, economic).

Lack of communication at the grass roots.

Lack of input of communities in developing criteria and indicators.

Criteria do not cover workers rights.

*Solution:*

Social indicators and criteria should be included in any legal and institutional framework.

Research to develop models, with data to be included in SFM.

Involve communities in development of criteria and indicators.

Develop specific indicators covering training, safety etc.

## WORKSHOP 2A - MANAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT

No specific endorsement of MIG/ESFM process was sought but (once explained) it formed the basis for positive discussions of issues to be considered during implementation.

### (I) Multiple-use public native forest - issues and uncertainties with ESFM assessments (MIG process)

#### (a) Initial assessment (as part of CRA)

- Must consider all uses not just timber.
- Accept that not all objectives can be maximised in all places at all times.
- Indicators have not been finalised at this point in time.
- Not clear how priorities for action will be set.
- Provide adequate stakeholder (including indigenous) input.
- Assess impacts based on bio-geographic regions.
- Specify agreed monitoring protocols from the start, ie define roles, responsibilities, funding and stakeholder input interim phase assessments.

#### (b) Interim phase (years 1-4)

- Not clear how overall audit compliance with RFA will occur (who?).
- Periodic independent audit should be built around existing compliance systems. These include Regional Management Plans, Strategic Plans, Reviews, Codes of Practice, other legislation and regulations. The audit system must not jeopardise those processes.

#### (c) Review/Continuous improvement (year 5)

- Review objectives and milestones based on trend data from indicators (with stakeholder input, including indigenous people).

### (II) Issues needing to be addressed across different land tenures specifically

#### *Some private land issues:*

- Issues will vary with scale of operation.
- Emphasis on particular criteria and relevance of specific indicators will vary with the owners overall intention for land management.
- The method of assessment of indicators need not vary across tenure and should be done at a regional level.
- The costs of internal management and self assessment to agreed standards might well be borne by the owner.
- Owners might seek specific **public** audit for special cases/issues.
- Representatives of owners/growers to be involved in establishing goals and targets.

RESERVES WERE NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED DUE ONLY TO LACK OF TIME

### (III) Framework for review mechanism for ESFM

- The aims of the ESFM review should include:
  - ensure continued support by government/ community / and industry;
  - identify improvements.
- Mechanism to be determined by the policy framework within each RFA but
  - need clear specifications of issues such as timing, methodology, funding and participation.
  - needs on-going data collection and dissemination by the parties to the RFA.
  - only the agreed criteria and indicators to be used but review should examine their efficacy.
  - outcomes of the ESFM review should be publicly available.

- other consultation should be based upon appropriate industry/  
community/conservation/indigenous reference groups established either at state or regional  
level
  - .. membership determined by relevant group.
- At the national level, consultation should be conducted by RFA parties with nationally established stakeholder forums.
- Funding for NGO participation and the administration, implementation and review of the ESFM program should be prescribed in the RFA, recognising the relative level of responsibility of federal and state governments and industry.

## WORKSHOP 2b - MANAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT

Management and Assessment SFM has to address the twin strands of world class conservation practice and an internationally competitive sustainable forest industry.

Management and assessment should involve:

- planning and implementation
- assessment
- review

This involves consideration of the who, what and how of SFM.

### 1. Who

The process should ensure that adequate, transparent stakeholder **participation** occurs at regional and national levels. The wishes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities regarding involvement in processes needs to be respected.

The key elements are:

- involvement from the start
- adequate resourcing of involvement
- involvement must be ongoing
- involvement should be planned and structured to clearly specify where input involves consultation, decision making or active participation (for example, data collection by community groups)

### 2. What

**Assessment** of SFM in RFAs, and non RFA areas, across all tenures

The key elements are:

- land use allocation and management intent
- C&I (imported from workshop groups 1a, 1b and 1c) are needed
- performance standards (benchmarks) are needed
- assessment of adequacy of management systems (which varies by tenure) is needed, and should include
  - policy commitment
  - planning system
  - implementation system
  - environmental (and other) monitoring and compliance auditing
  - review/improvement feedback loop
- assessments will need to build on measurements and systems that occur at different scales: patch, local, regional, state, national.

### 3. HOW (to deliver SFM), WHEN and WHERE

Forest planning and management processes needed to **implement** SFM as it applies to conservation forests and multiple use forests are as follows.

A regional strategy to deliver complementary management across tenures is needed. This may be an RFA. This would use the assessment methodology (in 2 above) and would be underpinned by:

- management planning/systems (for each tenure) that involve (at appropriate scales)
  - inventory
  - zoning
  - action plans



- codes of practice (relevant to the use or practice on the particular tenure)
- data collection/monitoring/reporting (using criteria, indicators and standards)
  - this may involve staged implementation depending on priorities, and knowledge
  - a key issue is who pays and cost
- benchmarking
  - existing system is the starting point for establishing benchmarks
  - to reflect global and regional variation.

The above elements should be based on science and include a research component. There is a need for continued improvement in accordance with review milestones.

### *Delivery issues*

- Social/cultural/economic issues (including employment and OH&S)
- private land (including leasehold)
  - property/existing use rights (including expectations of use)
  - codes of practice
    - .. access rights within a SFM framework
    - .. existing restrictions (eg soil/landcare)
    - .. not used as a defacto landuse decision
  - relation to other land uses
  - contribution to CAR reserve system (how, cost, compensation)
- cost effectiveness, especially with respect to C&I
- cooperation across all tenures and agencies to achieve agreed SFM aims, objectives and targets
  - including intensity/conservation tradeoffs (eg silviculture intensity, complementary off-reserve, burning, recreation, zoning)
- plantations
  - definition
  - same rules as for native forests or as for an agricultural crop
    - .. it was agreed codes of practice should apply
    - .. and a subset of Montreal Process C&I
- role of Commonwealth
  - periodic review in accordance with RFA outcomes
  - international reporting/representation
  - State of the Forest reporting
- Aboriginal issues including:
  - involvement of the relevant Aboriginal community
  - IBRA regions not being consistent with clan areas

## **WORKSHOP 3 - CERTIFICATION, LABELLING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Outcomes**

- We are limiting discussion to certification of forests as being sustainably or well managed
- There is a place for C&L in Australia at two levels:
  - compulsory compliance, reflecting public policy (eg via RFA)
  - voluntary, market driven system (eg ISO, FSC, independent auditing)
- The voluntary systems do not need to be dissected by this Conference as their implementation is market driven and a forest owner will choose the system which best suits
- RFA has the potential to facilitate certification; use the data gathered for the RFA, and any additional data required by the relevant voluntary certification system - other arrangements need to be made for non-RFA forests
- RFA may include a commitment to identify regional indicators based on Montreal etc, and performance standards to facilitate certification (these to be developed over time after the RFA is signed off)
- Certification provides a basis for labelling: voluntary for market benefit
- Chain of custody issues can increase the complexity of labelling in some cases
- Certification and labelling systems are likely to be most effective if based on an internationally recognised system
- There is potential to link RFA, Montreal etc, certification, labelling and non-RFA forests as in Figure 1. The success of this process may be impacted by stakeholder acceptance of the RFA (see unresolved issues)

### **Process to Further Develop C&L in Australia**

1. Complete the RFAs ( including provision for developing indicators and performance standards (non-prescriptive and/or prescriptive)
  - with stakeholder consultation
2. Develop a mechanism for effective stakeholder involvement in development of indicators and performance standards (based on Montreal, modified as necessary) at regional level
3. Market the outcome of the RFA to the market and wider public
4. Implement a trial to test durability, effectiveness and credibility of the first RFA so that information can be fed into the ongoing RFAs; this could be extended to develop and test the applicability of the RFA systems for proceeding to the voluntary certification schemes
5. Implement a research program which includes:
  - a cost/benefit analysis of certification (the voluntary system)
  - identification of suitable Montreal etc based indicators and standards at the regional and forest unit level
  - identify suitable, cost-effective measurement and monitoring processes
  - an assessment of models to improve the public participatory and decision making processes, now and in the future

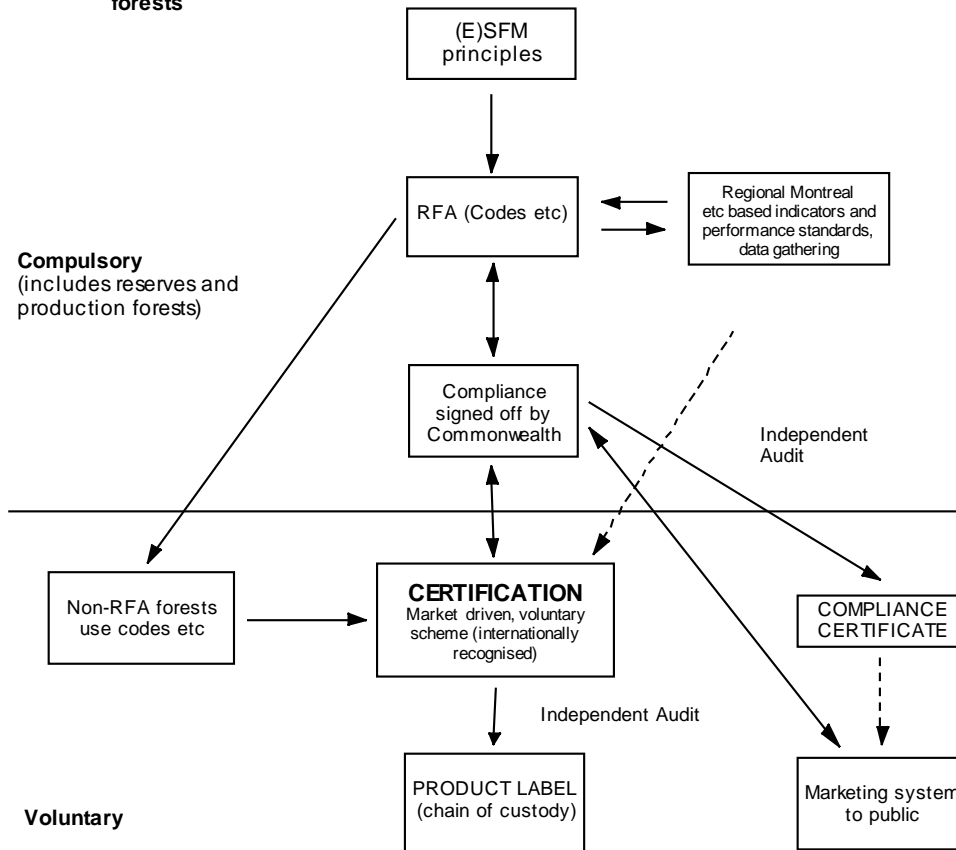
### Key Attributes of a C&L System

ATTRIBUTE	CERTIFICATION (including compliance and voluntary)	PRODUCT LABELLING
Credibility - in target market, domestic an international (requires stakeholder involvement in process development)	y	y
Cost effective	y	y
Realistic	y	
Voluntary (at the compliance stage this refers only to the final step of obtaining a certificate of compliance from an independent party)	y	y
Harmonised with other processes (eg a compulsory compliance system should provide a basis for harmonisation with any voluntary scheme)	y	
Secure - not subject to fraud	Y	y
Recognisable domestically and internationally	y	y
Chain of custody (issues of cost, complexity and market demand/credibility are important)		y

### Issues for Further Consideration

1. process for non-RFA and private growers
  - special consideration in regulatory process
2. who are the stakeholders
3. transparency of process
4. stakeholder participation in indicator/standard development post RFA
5. how to deal with stakeholder discontent with an RFA
6. at what level should certification occur

**Figure 1 Potential linkage between RFA, Montreal, certification, labelling and non-RFA forests**



This figure identifies the linkages between the compliance level of certification, using RFA, and the voluntary, market driven processes which lead to product labelling. A Montreal framework can be used within the RFA process and this data used as a basis for voluntary certification and product labelling. The role of the commonwealth is to facilitate audit at the compliance level.

The role of the growers is to ensure processes and standards are in place. They can seek external audit and voluntary certification if they wish.