A BIODIVERSITY SCORECARD FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY: SIMPLIFYING COMPLEXITY

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Maintaining biodiversity is a fundamental goal of sustainable forestry certification. But how do we know if "life in all its forms" is being maintained? Biodiversity can seem overwhelmingly complex. A quandary arises: the number of species and all their potential interactions simply cannot be quantified, and yet something that is not being measured cannot be managed. The only practical approach to assessing life in all its forms is to measure a relatively few components of the forest system (e.g., species, processes, stressors) that are correlated with as many other components of the system as possible—in essence, indicators. Most sustainable forestry indicators are called "policy response" indicators. That is, the indicator itself is the implementation of a company policy that is supposed to maintain biodiversity. Policy response indicators do not actually tell you *how* biodiversity is doing. We are developing a Biodiversity Scorecard for sustainable forestry. The Scorecard will be comprised of 8-12 "condition" indicators that inform the land managers about the status of biodiversity on their landbase. The Scorecard approach integrates the values of stakeholders into the indicator selection process to give the indicators social legitimacy. At the same time, condition indicators must be practical and affordable to measure by the land manager. This presentation will discuss the process for selecting condition indicators, and present some of the first indicators in the Scorecard. With quantitative indicators that reflect specific biodiversity values, landowners can actually link the results of the indicators with their decision making (i.e., they can make real decisions with the results). Condition indicators will begin to move sustainable forestry into the realm of quantitative science.