

DRAFT 7/10/03

Meeting of The Forests Dialogue on

Keys to Successful Biodiversity Conservation Outcomes in Mixed Forest Regions

Dates: October 9-11, 2003

Location: Porto Seguro, Bahia, Brazil

Background: Most stakeholders would agree that the conservation of biodiversity in forested systems, wherever possible, is a good thing and something that we should all strive to achieve. Beyond this, there may be little consensus or agreement on this issue. Most stakeholders have their own definitions and preferred means to achieve biodiversity conservation. The conservation community has held numerous meetings to try to collectively develop an agreeable definition with some success. Their means of measurement and processes they use to implement tend to be unique to the organization.

In recent years the conservation community and forest industry have made strides to work together on this issue. There are many examples of collaborative partnerships among stakeholders for specific projects that have moved beyond partner expectations. But the wholesale adoption of integrated or discrete conservation projects has not occurred. One reason may be that it is somewhat distracting and an inefficient use of resources for many different entities to pursue disparate means to achieve relatively common objectives. To be most effective should we attempt to apply common conservation principles to all land, simply choose to focus on unique systems in peril, it a mix or site specific? There is also much disagreement over what is “possible” economically, socially, and environmentally. Oftentimes the criterion one uses to make this assessment is not always based on the best data. How do we get policy makers or reluctant companies to understand the value of forest conservation? These questions underscore the challenges we face as we try to expand the number of hectares “conserved”.

Objective: There is a real need to bring the stakeholders involved in this debate together. There is some common agreement in some sectors but certainly not a common voice. There are many other stakeholders in this debate who don’t generally have a voice at all. This dialogue will bring together a broad group of stakeholders/leaders on this issue. We will briefly review cases where true conservation of biodiversity has occurred, discuss the commonalities and debate the obstacles that prevent wider acceptance and implementation of conservation projects. More specifically the dialogue will seek agreement among meeting participants on what key factors are needed to achieve biodiversity conservation outcomes – habitat protected, corridors created, extinctions avoided -- through forest land use and management choices.

Dialogue Theme: The focus will be primarily, but not exclusively, on ecological regions featuring a mix of existing forest management regimes ranging from intensive fiber plantations to strictly protected natural forest reserves. The discussion will be organized around several factors that are widely recognized as keys to successful biodiversity conservation outcomes. An initial list of these topics includes good science and technology (data, GIS, maps), functioning institutions (governments, markets, industry –NGO partnerships, conservation initiatives), agreement on geographic priorities, effective tools for measuring outcomes, and available incentives or compensation mechanisms to help finance conservation efforts (*e.g.*, tax benefits, cost sharing, carbon credits). Selected case studies will illustrate examples of where the

convergence of these factors has yielded measurable biodiversity benefits. The general dialogue and the case studies will provide a basis for recommended actions to replicate successful models and, as necessary, fill gaps or remove obstacles to larger scale achievement of biodiversity conservation outcomes in mixed forest regions.

Purpose: The dialogue will provide a structured forum for exchange of information and ideas that can be applied to biodiversity conservation efforts undertaken by forest stakeholders such as governments, certification systems, individual landowners, communities, manufacturers, retailers, consumers, NGOs and foundations. Potential applications include: regional conservation planning; forest management; corporate decisions on investment or divestiture; marketing and procurement of raw materials and finished products; certification standards; and funding for conservation projects.

Products: A report summarizing the major conclusions of the dialogue, follow-up TFD activities, and desired measurable outcomes. Background papers and case study presentations will be compiled as appendices to the summary report.

Preparatory reading materials and specific participant assignments will be distributed at least one month prior to the dialogue, and will include:

- Global gap analysis being prepared for the September 2003 World Parks Congress¹
- Compilation of other global-scale forest biodiversity mapping and priority-setting efforts
 - WRI Frontier Forests
 - CI biodiversity hotspots and major tropical wilderness areas
 - WWF “Focal 25” ecoregions
 - (Other)
- Compilation of provisions of major certification systems specifically related to biodiversity conservation (ATF, CERFLOR, CSA, FSC, PEFC, SFI, (other))
- Definitions of biodiversity
- Compilation of biodiversity conservation policies adopted by companies and industry trade associations
- (Other)

Format: Two days devoted to dialogue, with presentations of four to six case studies interspersed throughout the meeting agenda. One-day field trip immediately before or after the dialogue to visit natural forest and plantation fiber sites in the Atlantic Forest region of Brazil. (Field trip likely to be hosted by Veracel.)

Participants: Maximum 35 participants representing TFD member organizations and other stakeholders. Participant list will include selected conservation data and mapping specialists from NGOs, industry, and academic and research organizations.

Meeting Planning and Coordination: Small committee consisting initially of Cassie Phillips, Justin Ward and Gary Dunning has developed this concept paper. This group along with other TFD SC members and local partners (Aracruz, Veracel, and Instituto BioAtlantica) will take the lead in coordinating the arrangements in Brazil. A Yale Forestry Master’s Candidate (Irene Angeletti) will help manage meeting preparations and compilation of reading materials.

¹ Map of existing protected areas overlaid with terrestrial vertebrate distributions; assessment of species not adequately protected; and recommendations on locations for new protected areas for missing species, considering viability and feasibility and calibrated to reduce false positive results.

Case Studies: A small number of case studies will be selected to illustrate and enrich the dialogue on key topics within the meeting agenda. The case studies and the dialogue agenda will be structured to highlight: diverse locations in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres; the use of different criteria and methodologies in biodiversity science; a variety of strategies employed to achieve conservation outcomes; and the roles of different participants involved in forest conservation, management, and certification.

Case studies may be retrospective or works in progress. In addition to the basic case study, we will briefly address a set of key questions, including:

- How do you define your biodiversity objectives (i.e., how do you define biodiversity, and what expertise do you use?)
- At what scale has the project been conceived and implemented?
- How do you set priorities (why did you choose this project)?
- What is the role of information technology, and what kind do you use, if any?
- What role, if any, does government play (e.g., land use planning, regulation, compensation, tax incentives)? Markets (e.g., certification, customers)? NGOs or foundations (e.g., activists, source of funds, organizer)? Other institutions? What is the relative importance, and the strengths and weaknesses, of each institution?
- How do you communicate about the project to stakeholders? How do you gain the support of affected landowners, communities, and other stakeholders?
- How do you ensure implementation of the project (i.e., compliance with a plan) (e.g., government regulation, independent certification, contracts with or data from participants, NGO participation and oversight)?
- How do you measure effectiveness in terms of biodiversity and other outcomes, both short- and long-term?
- How did you form the partnership necessary to create and implement the project?
- How was the project financed?

Initial List of Possible Case Study Topics

1. Brazilian Atlantic Forest conservation reserves (Aracruz, CI, Instituto BioAtlantica, other)
 - Southern hemisphere; biodiversity hotspot; plantation management and natural forest conservation; private initiative; ENGO involvement
2. British Columbia Central Coast Initiative (Great Bear Rainforest)
 - Northern hemisphere; old-growth forest; active roles of companies, government, and NGOs; certification in background; use of science
3. Swedish biotopes
 - Northern hemisphere; boreal forest; informal, distributed protected areas; FSC certification
4. U.S. industry protection of critically imperiled and imperiled (G1/G2) species and plant communities
 - Northern hemisphere; intensive management; informal, distributed protected areas; SFI certification; NGO involvement
5. European/Nordic family forest example (look for PEFC)
6. U.S. family forest example
7. Conservation concessions and easements
8. Central Africa example of NGO engagement with European forest products companies
9. Indonesian example (*e.g.*, WWF engagement with pulp and paper industry in Sumatra; TNC initiatives in East Kalimantan)
10. Russian example (*e.g.*, Greenpeace-Russia/Global Forest Watch report)