

Sustainability in the forest sector

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Through a paradigm shift in the past decades our notion of sustainability has become multi-dimensional and the sustainable forest management includes ecological, economic and social sustainability. Our session will examine the different aspects of sustainability and how they are demonstrated in different parts of the forest sector. As the forests are increasingly affected by corporations and institutions along the supply-chain, we discuss the economic sustainability in terms of the potential impact of the recent consolidation and globalization in forest industry, as well as the profitability of forest industry companies on global forest resources. Highlighting the role of environmental sustainability, we will examine the role environmental analysis plays in forest-based economic development, and how that analysis may focus research and forest resource modeling. The environmental analyses prepared for forest-based capital investments and associated projects increasingly require attention to a wide range of forest characteristics. They typically examine forest dynamics over long time horizons and the linkages of proposed developments to important forest resources, notably wildlife. Such analyses are very demanding in terms of integrating data and information from various sources and model synthesis, scenario development, impact assessment, public comment, and the time frame for reporting findings. Social sustainability is discussed through rural development issues and challenges such as rural out-migration to urban areas, a change in occupation/industries into service-based economies (post-industrial economies) and cultural changes (urbanization of the rural lifestyle). Forestry has had a focus on rural development issues for a long time, but we still see few examples where forestry has managed to play a role and instead the traditional forestry generally has been steadily marginalizing. Therefore, discussion on issues like potential need for increasing cooperation with other rural actors, and the role of forestry in the post-industrial societies is vital.