

6.11.05 and 6.11.04 Joint Session

IUFRO Division VI Symposium
Integrative Science for Integrative Management
August 14-20, 2007 in Saariselkä, Finland

Session Title: “Integrating Ecology, Society, and Economy for Sustainable Forest Management”

Session Organizers:

David N. Bengston, Coordinator, IUFRO Unit 6.11.05, “Ecological Economics in Forestry” (dbengston@fs.fed.us)

Jo Ellen Force, Coordinator, IUFRO Unit 6.11.04, “Integration of Sociological Research with Forest Management” (joellen@uidaho.edu)

Posters (not all of the posters are specifically associated with this session):

- 1. Mervi Kasanen** (Univ. of Oulu, Oulu, Finland; mervi.kasanen@mail.suomi.net):
“Differing strategies of forest management”

Abstract: The study focuses on decision making concerning different forest management strategies, especially even-aged management and traditional selective logging methods – continuous cover forestry. According to my interviews in Northern Ostrobothnia, Finland, similar goals, e.g. economic efficiency and biodiversity, were found from different forest management strategies, but the premises were different and the reasoning lead to different management outcome. The proponents of different management strategies were not conscious of each others premises. Thus, there are knowledge differences especially between experts and non-professionals in forestry, which leads to a poor communication between expert and local levels. In addition, the power differences sustain mutual distrust, and conflicts and debates tend to go on unresolved. The missing agent seems to be the interpreter between knowledge systems. The study aims at improving the flexibility and applicability of expert management systems and increasing the forest owners’ commitment to the efforts of forestry management. By analysing the knowledge differences, and the way these differences affect the rules of forest management, the study will support collaborative planning and socioculturally sustainable forest management. Effective resource management becomes possible by making the reasoning transparent. This will be done by participating on-site silvicultural practices, which will help to understand the context bound, real world decision making. The theoretical background utilises the approach of political ecology, which means considering the local adaptation as an interplay between sub- and supra-local influences. The methodology consists of further interviews and participatory action research (PAR). Interviewees will represent different forest management strategies and different private and community

forest owner groups according to age, gender and professional status from Northern Ostrobothnia. In addition, other relevant land uses, e.g. tourism or reindeer herding will be studied. Finally, local reasoning will be compared to the reasoning of foresters (official forestry paradigms) in an effort to enhance mutual understanding.

- 2. Viviane Simon-Brown** (Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR, USA; viviane.simon-brown@oregonstate.edu): “Managing natural resources, managing ourselves: A values approach to natural resource decision-making”

Abstract: In a 1995 national telephone survey in the USA by the Merck Family Fund, 67 % of the respondents acknowledged that “Americans cause many of the world’s environmental problems because we consume more resources and produce more waste than anyone else in the world.” And 88 % of Americans agreed “protecting the environment will require most of us to make major changes in the way we live. But the same survey showed that Americans really don’t know what the specific ecological implications of their lifestyles are, and don’t know precisely what to change.

At Oregon State University and other land-grant institutions, we focus our educational efforts on teaching students to professionally manage natural resources. However, as population, economic and consumption pressures increase, helping consumers take a thoughtful approach to understanding their cultural, economic and environmental ethics and addressing their responsibilities as consumers of natural resources, become viable educational tools.

Managing ourselves means making intelligent consumer decisions about natural resources. This requires understanding the personal values, ethics and beliefs that underlie decision-making. Other integral components are considering the barriers to living sustainably, examining national trends, and determining personal priorities. Since 1998, we have been offering intelligent consumption decision-making workshops for typical American adults and older youth. Over 7,500 people have participated in workshops, and over a half million browsers have visited the website <http://www.cof.orst.edu/cof/extended/sustain/>. In 2004, we expanded this programming by creating a national network of 45 Extension professionals at 24 land-grant universities.

- 3. K.K. Kaushal** (Harur, District Dharmapuri, Tamilnadu, India; kkaushal@eth.net): “Village Forest Councils: Emerging Rural Institutions for Integration of Ecology, Society, and Economy in Tamilnadu State of India”

Abstract: Tamilnadu, the southern state of India, has embarked upon community involvement process to restock its forests through an Indian version of community forestry called Joint Forest Management. The peoples participation is structured through specially established local representative institutions called Village Forest Councils. This paper seeks to present a full account of the concept, working, and effectiveness of the Village Forest Councils in Tamilnadu. Further, it attempts to analyze the growth of Village Forest Councils into important local institutions for integration of ecology, society, and economy.

4. **David N. Bengston** (Northern Research Station, USDA Forest Service, St. Paul, MN, USA; dbengston@fs.fed.us), **Michele Schermann, MaiKia Moua, and Tou Thai Lee** (University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, USA): “Listening to Neglected Voices: Hmong and Public Lands in Minnesota and Wisconsin, USA”

Abstract: Natural resource managers need to understand the cultures and concerns of ethnic communities in order to serve them effectively. The Hmong are an Asian ethnic group that is heavily involved in natural resource-related activities but has been largely overlooked by social scientists. We conducted a series of five focus groups with Hmong Americans in Minnesota and Wisconsin, USA, exploring their experiences and perspectives on public lands, including: activities, positive and negative experiences, needs and concerns, special needs of new refugees, and suggestions for improvement. Our participants revealed deep cultural and personal connections with the natural world and the importance of public lands to many Hmong. But we also heard about profound problems and concerns. Perceptions of racism, discrimination, and harassment from public land managers and other agency personnel, recreationists, and private landowners are common. Participants had many suggestions for improvement and insights regarding the special needs of new refugees who arrived in the United States in recent years.