

## **ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTS**

### **DRAFT**

Meeting Summary  
February 24, 1999  
Washington, D.C.

### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Tim Mealey of the Meridian Institute, welcomed participants to the fourth meeting of the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests (the Roundtable). (Attachment A contains a list of the attendees.) He turned to Phil Janik, Deputy Chief, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Department of Agriculture, for opening remarks.

Phil began by initiating a round of introductions. He welcomed newcomers as well as returning Roundtable participants. He stated that those participating in the Roundtable process did so because they wanted to. Phil explained that the Roundtable was an evolving and somewhat loosely structured process that was seen by all as a meaningful forum to help advance the implementation of the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators (C&I) as a means of measuring progress toward the overarching goal of achieving sustainable forests on public and private lands throughout the U.S.

To provide newcomers with a sense of how the Roundtable developed and the level of importance placed on it by the federal government, Phil referenced the 12/17/99 letter to federal participants in the Roundtable from Michael Dombeck, Chief of the USFS (see Attachment B) requesting a renewal of their support of the Roundtable process. He also commented on the level of interest in the process as indicated by Secretary Glickman's presence and supportive comments at the kick-off meeting of the Roundtable process on 7/14/98. Phil touched on the diversity of parties involved in the process including federal agencies, states, non-governmental organizations, and others, and expressed the commitment of all involved to continue with a forum like the Roundtable to help empower every one to advance the notion of sustainable forests across the U.S. He also noted the separate but related and ongoing international activities taking place in the Montreal Process, where the C&I were initially developed, and for which Rob Hendricks, USFS, can serve as a liaison and resource.

Phil clarified that, while the USFS was asked to initiate a forum to insure C&I implementation, the Roundtable process is premised on the notion of shared leadership and is open to all. He commented that the focus of the Roundtable is to make a difference "on the ground" and noted that Roundtable participants identified several action items at the last meeting that will be discussed at this meeting. Phil emphasized the need for action soon to help maintain the level of interest required for C&I implementation.

Phil advised the group of his new title and responsibilities, Chief Operating Officer, and assured every one of his plans to continue his involvement in the Roundtable process. He then asked the new participants to introduce themselves.

Gary Dunning explained that he was from the Yale Forest Forum and he was interested in all aspects of forestry including conservation management in the U.S. and in other countries. He commented that his program has sponsored events and researched sustainable forestry and is interested in C&I implementation. Dr. Dunning stated that he was present to listen and learn and share some of the ideas developed in the Yale Forest Forum.

Nicole Hillman introduced herself as representing the National Association of State Foresters and the Manager of the First Approximation Assessment Project (FAAP). She explained that, over the next nine months, she would be studying and reporting on how C&I are measured by different states. Ms. Hillman referred participants to a description of her project for additional details (see Attachment C).

Larry Jahn, National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs, stated that he was deeply involved in forest management. He explained that he had recently spent two days discussing the use of a watershed approach as a framework to reach agreement on practices to achieve consistent management practices in regions of mixed land ownership. He commented that the focus was on a cooperative approach that was similar to approaches used in other countries like the Netherlands and Sweden.

Keith Agrow, National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA), stated that he represented non-industrial landowners that may be influenced by C&I implementation. He commented that, while this group is not opposed to C&I implementation, they are concerned about how property rights may be impacted in the process. He added that C&I implementation may also have an effect on forest certifications.

Larry Neilsen, The Pennsylvania State University, explained that he represents the Sustainable Forestry Partnership, a cooperative partnership on sustainable forestry cooperative between Pennsylvania State University and Oregon State University, and a growing number of other universities. He commented that the SFP offers technical assistance, educational programs, and other opportunities to inform people about sustainable forestry.

### **Agenda Review**

Following the opening remarks and introductions, Mr. Mealey reviewed the agenda for the meeting. He explained that the agenda revolved around the tasks identified at the 11/16/98 meeting of the Roundtable. These included: 1) an update on the efforts to renew the commitment of federal agencies to C&I implementation through what was referred to as a "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);" 2) a preliminary report on identifying data and institutional gaps within the federal government; and 3) a summary of activities taking place outside of the federal government that could potentially play a role in C&I implementation. As part of the discussion on activities outside of the federal government, he added that the group would hear a more detailed overview of the NASF's efforts. Mr. Mealey explained that the group would then hear a report on a proposed strategy for Roundtable communication and outreach activities, followed by a discussion on shared leadership and the need for ongoing support of the Roundtable process and a summary of next steps. Mr. Mealey added that group

would also hear a reports on a compilation of agreements/commitments of the U.S., other than those entered into in the Montreal Process, and “satellite” efforts on the use of sustainability C&I for rangelands and/or other sectors. He then turned to Phil Janik for a report on the efforts to solidify the commitment of federal agencies to C&I implementation.

### **Development of the Statement of Support for Federal Agencies**

Phil began his presentation by reminding the Roundtable participants that a “Statement of Support” was a circulated for signatures as a symbol of commitment at the 7/14/98 “Chief’s Roundtable” meeting which kicked off the Roundtable process. Since that time, the Roundtable has held two additional meetings and, after a lot of deliberation, the purpose and intent of the group has been captured in the “Charter for the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests.” He explained that the Forest Service still believes it is appropriate to use a device such as a “Statement of Support” to solidify the commitment of federal agencies to C&I implementation, rather than a formal Memorandum of Understanding, as the term was used at the November 16, 1998 Roundtable meeting. Phil noted that a final copy of the Charter and the original Statement of Support were referenced and attached to a letter to federal participants in the Roundtable process from Mike Dombek dated 2/17/99. He stated that he, as a representative of USDA and the Forest Service, has signed the SOS, and that Paul Geissler intended to seek similar support from the USGS. Phil invited other federal participants to circulate the Charter in their organizations and to consider signing the SOS.

Phil also took the opportunity to reference his 2/24/99 letter to Daniel Hall, Director of American Lands Alliance (ALA) (included as Attachment D), in which he addressed the ALA’s concerns about what they understood to be the USFS’s plans to certify sustainable practices on public lands. He clarified that, while it was true that the USFS was discussing public land certification, they had no formal position on certification and did not intend to embrace the notion of certifying public lands at this time.

### **Additional Commitments of U.S. Government**

Following Phil Janik’s presentation, Ellen Conway commented briefly on the compilation of agreements/commitments the U.S. Government has entered into, other than the Santiago Declaration of the Montreal Process, that are directly or indirectly related to C&I implementation and sustainable forest management. As referenced in her letter to the Meridian Institute dated 1/28/99 (included as Attachment E), she commented that she provided Meridian with copies of some of the documents and, to save paper, indicated that other related documents were available on the USFS and International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) websites. Ms. Conway stated that C&I implementation is one of other similar international processes in which over 100 countries are involved. Phil Janik thanked Ms. Conway for her work and commented that one of the challenges to the agencies is to help acquaint the professional community with this information.

## **Identification of Data and Institutional Gaps in the Federal Government**

Mr. Mealey then turned to Paul Geissler (USGS) and Bill Sommers (USFS) for an update on the progress of identifying data and institutional gaps within the federal government related to C&I implementation. Mr. Geissler began the presentation with some background on the objectives of the SOS and the Charter. He explained that their group was responsible for coordinating the involvement and input from all relevant federal agencies on:

- conducting an institutional gap analysis to determine what the various federal agencies are currently doing regarding C&I implementation and what the gaps might be; and
- building on prior analyses, complete a “data gap analysis” to determine what C&I-related data are currently being collected by whom; what C&I data might easily be collected with a small additional amount of effort; and what C&I data are currently not being collected that would require new resources to begin collecting.

Mr. Geissler then described the process used to begin to identify data and institutional gaps at the federal level. He stated that the process included sending an e-mail to all federal Roundtable participants to solicit relevant information. Information from the e-mail responses and other resources was compiled and documented in a draft report titled, *Roundtable on Sustainable Forest Federal Information on Criteria and Indicators* which he distributed at the meeting (see Attachment F). In addition to containing a summary of data sources, Mr. Geissler explained that the draft report included matrices showing which of the C&I are addressed by the databases referenced in the draft report. He described how to interpret the data in the matrices and explained that the matrices characterize the status of the federal government’s data sources in relation to each of the C&I as either: a) available; b) available with some effort; c) not available without considerable extra effort and resources; and d) no (current) plans to collect data. He summarized that overall, the availability and quality of the data varies. In addition, there are good databases for the first four criteria, some resources for criteria five and six, and a negligible database for criterion seven. Also, he explained, while there appear to be data for the indicators for criterion five, the availability of data varies for the other indicators. Mr. Geissler then asked Mr. Sommers for a description of the vision and next steps to fulfill the task of federal institutional gap analysis.

Before discussing the next steps in the institutional gap analysis, Mr. Sommers clarified that there were at least two databases for all of the criteria with the exception of criterion seven. He explained that many of the other criteria are characterized by bio-physical questions, whereas criterion seven is an institutional question. As such, many of the indicators for criterion seven are not as readily answered by existing databases. Mr. Sommers added that, based on the initial results of the draft report, a key next step would be to determine how federal and other databases address the 67 indicators. An additional, related challenge would be to characterize the geographic “foot print” of the data (the source or type of land to which the database applies) and determine whether and how to obtain similar information from other forested land within the U.S.

As a next step for the task, Mr. Sommers proposed the formation of a “Technical Work Group” to coordinate one or more technical workshops to be held by the summer of 1999 as a means to

complete the process of identifying and filling data and institutional gaps for presentation to the Roundtable in the fall of 1999. Mr. Geissler added that the Technical Work Group would also be tasked with addressing related technical questions including data compatibility and accessibility, and database linkages. He suggested the Roundtable consider completing the Work Group activities in time for the *National Report on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forests* to be issued in 2003. Mr. Mealey asked Roundtable participants to reflect on the proposal and consider it later in the meeting in the context of the additional information they will hear about the effort to assess data availability from non-federal sources. He then invited clarifying questions on the presentation.

One participant expressed concern about the potential impact on the Roundtable's efforts to focus on U.S. implementation of the full set of 67 indicators flowing from the ongoing debate at the international level on the integrity of the 67 indicators. Ms. Conway responded that the Roundtable would be ill advised to separate any of the indicators based on the ongoing discussions taking place at the international level. She explained that a set of technical notes designed to assist national implementation efforts is being revised and will be published soon. Mr. Hendricks added that the 67 indicators were part of a negotiated set of indicators that characterize the elements of sustainable forest management and are part of the contemporary discussion on sustainability. He noted that the First Approximation Report recognizes that some data will not immediately be available and suggested not getting bogged down in the details for each indicator. Mr. Hendricks added that there is some ambiguity on what most of the indicators measure, and that, while the 13 countries involved in the Montreal Process could not come to agreement on the details of what precisely is being measured with each indicator, they agreed to push forward with implementation first before taking concrete steps to change them. In other words, it is agreed that any further modification to the list of seven criteria and 67 indicators should be informed by concerted efforts to implement the existing set, rather than trying to address and resolve these lingering questions in advance of implementation. Based on this, he advised against trying to modify the indicators. In this regard, it was suggested that the word "ever" be deleted from fourth category in the matrix which, in its original form stated, "d) no plans ever to collect data."

Some participants felt it was important to consider the sensitivity of applying all of the indicators to all types of land, particularly private lands. One participant stated that placing some of the indicators into a category labeled "no plans to collect" was not adequate and there was a need to clarify which of the 67 indicators would apply to which land type. Others reiterated the importance of including all forested land in the U.S. in order to gain a comprehensive picture of national progress toward the shared goal of sustainable forests. Mr. Hendricks recalled that there has been a lot of sensitivity around this issue since it was first raised in 1993. He commented that for this reason, both the method of data collection (e.g., whether indicators are measured on or next to a plot of private land) as well as the scale of data collection (national, regional, or subregional) need to be considered. Another participant observed that this was both a technical issue on how to collect the data on private land, and a social issue on how to respect property rights.

To address these needs, the group discussed ideas including indirect measurement devices, such as analytical tools or modeling, and/or other policy guidance. It was also suggested that it would

be helpful to know for which of the indicators might there be a high degree of sensitivity or concern by private landowners about intrusive data collection by governmental or non-governmental organizations. Keith Agrow, NWOA, offered to provide some input on this question.

Phil Janik commented that gathering new information does not correlate with making a decision. He stated that a focus of the Roundtable is to help gather data that will be useful and cautioned against viewing the process as contributing to making improper decisions.

Mr. Mealey summarized what he heard from the discussion. He stated that Roundtable participants seemed to understand and agree that the 67 indicators will continue to be viewed as an integrated set for purposes of implementation, while also recognizing, from a practical perspective, different amounts of energy and effort will be required to fully implement different indicators. Because resources (time and money) that can be devoted to C&I implementation are limited, this will mean that not all indicators will be implemented to the same level of quality over the same period of time. In addition, the Roundtable process might be used to help prioritize the utilization of the resources that are available for C&I implementation and determine the appropriate scale and methodologies that will be used to collect the data.

Mr. Mealey also observed that, given the amount of forest lands in private ownership in the U.S., Roundtable participants seemed to understand the need for sensitivity to the privacy concerns and property rights of private forest landowners. He noted that the discussion seemed to indicate that at least some of these concerns could be addressed through careful consideration of non—intrusive approaches to the methodologies that are used to collect, compile, and disseminate C&I-related data. He commented that with additional clarity on the indicators that might be of particular concern, the group could focus on the appropriate methodologies.

### **Activities Taking Place Outside of the Federal Government**

Following the presentation on data and institutional gaps within the federal government, Mr. Mealey asked for a status report from Roundtable participants who had volunteered to begin the process of gathering information on activities taking place outside of the federal government that could potentially play a role in C&I implementation. He explained that the volunteers held a conference call in January 1999 which resulted in a preliminary inventory of activities (see Attachment G). This included information from Dominick Della Sala, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Julie Jack, American Forest and Paper Association, and Michael Washburn, Sustainable Forestry Partnership. Mr. Mealey also indicated that Nicole Hillman would take the opportunity to provide a more detailed overview of her work with NASF on the First Approximation Assessment report. He then turned to Michael Washburn for the status report.

Mr. Washburn referred the group to the preliminary summary of non-federal C&I-related activities. He commented that those involved in sustainable forests from outside the federal government struggle with the question of what value they can add in the C&I implementation process because much of the data collection efforts and resources are predominantly in the control of federal agencies and land managers. Mr. Washburn saw the challenge to the non-governmental participants as determining the best place to focus their energy in the C&I data

collection efforts. Mr. Washburn observed that the preliminary list was short because it resulted from a relatively casual collection effort using a series of general questions. He stated that, based on the preliminary summary, it was apparent that the sustainable forest data gathering efforts taking place outside the federal government were occurring at a variety of different scales (e.g., site/forest level, regional level, state level, national level, and global level). Mr. Washburn explained that the group envisioned presenting the information about these efforts broken down by scale and posting the information on the Internet as a means to expand the list and stimulate communication with institutions that might have access to other data sources. In closing, Mr. Washburn asked Roundtable participants to view the list as preliminary, and requested their assistance in gathering additional information. He volunteered to be the conduit for the additional information.

Mr. Mealey added that, on the conference call in preparation for this meeting, the “non-federal” participants discussed the need to develop a consistent format for collecting and reporting information about both federal and non-federal C&I data sources. He noted that the goal was to ensure that collection and presentation of non-federal data sources is done in a manner similar to the inventory of federal data sources. It was suggested that a smaller group, perhaps within the proposed Technical Work Group, might be utilized to determine how best to proceed with the inventory of C&I-related data sources from outside and within the federal government, including addressing sensitivities like data collection on private lands.

### ***Symbolic Equivalents to the Federal SOS***

Tim Mealey also reported that based on the assignments made at the November 16, 1998 meeting, the non-federal Roundtable participants who pulled together the preliminary list of C&I related activities also explored whether it makes sense for their organizations to sign some type of a Memorandum of Understanding or “Statement of Support” similar to the one that was being signed by the federal agency Roundtable participants which Phil Janik reported on earlier in the meeting. He reported that they believed the commitment of state governments and several key non-governmental organizations to C&I implementation had already been clearly articulated in a letter to CEQ and OMB dated March XX, 1998. In addition, they felt that their participation in the Roundtable process was basically their “statement of support.” He reported that they also thought it was premature and not necessary to establish MOUs between either federal and state governments, or between federal agencies and public non-profit and/or private sector non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at this time. Notwithstanding this view, he reported that that they, the small group of non-federal Roundtable participants who had participated in the conference call in preparation for this meeting, thought a mechanism like an MOU might be useful to address the cooperative role specific NGOs might play address clearly identified C&I data gaps in the future.

### ***NASF’s First Approximation Assessment Project***

As an example of data collection efforts outside the federal government, Mr. Mealey turned to Nicole Hillman for a description of the NASF’s First Approximation Assessment Project (FAAP). Ms. Hillman explained that the FAAP was similar to the federal inventory with an emphasis on identifying C&I data gaps that could be filled by states. The project will use surveys to identify and characterize the quality of C&I-related data being collected by states.

Ms. Hillman indicated that the project was to be completed in September 1999 and would conclude by posting the results of the surveys on a publicly accessible website including the data and a summary indicating the quality of the data on a state-by-state basis.

One participant inquired whether the surveys would differentiate between state-generated data versus federally-generated data that states have and utilize for their own purposes. Ms. Hillman reiterated that FAAP would only focus on state-generated data and efforts would be made to differentiate between data that state's collect and data that is collected by others. To avoid duplication, it was suggested that efforts be made to coordinate the federal and state C&I data inventory efforts.

Roundtable participants wanted clarification on what comprised state forest resource information (e.g., private land, parks, state fish and game land, etc.) Ms. Hillman explained that the amount and type of land each state measured varied. She stated that the FAAP was a preliminary, short-term effort that will focus on characterizing available information in each state.

Many in the group expressed interest in discussing ideas for broadening the state database, with the understanding that most additional data collection efforts would occur subsequent to the FAAP. In the context of expanding the state databases, several participants recognized the importance of establishing a set of unifying questions and standards to help insure that the databases are reliable and of consistent quality. They viewed these as additional tasks for the proposed "Technical Work Group."

One participant commented that the inventory of state databases could be expanded to include forested lands managed by state fish and game groups if the mechanism used for collecting data from state forested lands was transferable. Several participants considered whether the county governments could be used to expand the availability of C&I-related data through organizations like the Western Governors Association (WGA) and/or the National Association of Counties (NACO). A specific interest was whether tying the effort to the concept of "*Enlibra*," (balance and stewardship approach to land management), would help to engage and gain support from other state agencies. Barbara Wells, from the National Governors Association (NGA), commented that governors would be more interested in how state data collection efforts might tie into the concept of "smart growth" (i.e., promoting growth that is compatible with quality of life), particularly in regards to rural development. Several participants were supportive of this type of connection with an organization like the NGA. Later in the meeting, Ms. Wells distributed a paper describing the focus of the NGA's activities related to "smart growth" (see Attachment INSERT).

Mr. Mealey added that it was helpful to hear from Ms. Hillman that the NASF project was still in its preliminary staged and suggested that it may serve as a catalyst for additional state-level C&I implementation and coordination efforts. He noted that at the last meeting, Robin Grove, National Governors Association (NGA) also indicated that governors could play an important role in C&I implementation. He encouraged the continued involvement of NGA in the process.

### ***“Satellite” Efforts on the Use of Sustainability C&I***

Mr. Mealey invited Robert Hendricks to provide the group with an overview of his summary of “satellite” efforts on the use of sustainability C&I for rangelands and/or other ecosystem sectors. For context, Mr. Hendricks recalled that, at the 11/16/98 Roundtable meeting, the group grappled with the issue of including rangelands and other ecosystem sectors as part of the Roundtable process. The group decided to focus on forests but supported parallel processes on rangelands, minerals and energy, and other ecosystem sectors because they are all part of sustainable development. They agreed that a listing of “satellite” efforts on the use of sustainability C&I would be useful, consequently, Mr. Hendricks compiled a list of selected “satellite” efforts (see Attachment H.) He noted that the list includes references on C&I for sustainable range management, C&I for energy and minerals, and CIFOR management unit testing of C&I.

Phil Janik added that the Roundtable debated for hours about whether to include rangelands as a focus of the Roundtable. He explained that, at the prompting of Kendall Johnson, Society of Range Management, the group acknowledged there were differences of opinion on where rangelands ended and forests began, and that rangeland interests were under-represented on the Roundtable. Phil stated that Dr. Johnson left the Roundtable with regrets but with the understanding that the “satellite” effort on rangelands would progress and potentially report its progress to the Roundtable in the future.

Mr. Mealey asked Mr. Hendricks to clarify how extensive the list of “satellite” efforts is intended to be and whether the list will include C&I in tropical forests. Mr. Hendricks responded that the list could be greatly expanded, depending upon the requirements established by the Roundtable. To show the group how extensive the list could be, Mr. Hendricks referred the group to a flow diagram (the “scare diagram”) on the USFS perspective of sustainable forest management activity at the international, national and local levels (see Attachment I.)

### **Developing a Communication and Outreach Strategy**

Before presenting the status report on developing a Roundtable communication and outreach strategy, Mr. Mealey explained that the presenter, Bill Banzhaf, Society of American Foresters, was unable to attend the meeting. Instead, with the help of participants from the Communication and Outreach Task Group, Mr. Mealey offered to provide the group with an overview of the memorandum from the Task Group.

In addition to the participation of Bill Banzhaf, Mr. Mealey stated that other participants in the Task Group included Terry Bates, Bill Imbergamo, Paul Geissler, Julie Jack, and Michael Washburn. He explained that the Task Group held a series of conference calls on the communication and outreach plan. On their calls, he explained that the group began by considering a traditional communication plan and ended up with a plan to produce a communication and outreach plan. To produce the plan, they outlined some background assumptions and a series of action steps, which are summarized in their 2/18/99 memorandum to Roundtable participants (see Attachment J.) Mr. Mealey summarized and requested feedback from the following background assumptions: the mix of Roundtable participants; the need to address target audiences to insure a broad and balanced participation so the process is open but

not overwhelming; and the need for the plan to achieve “buy-in” and “ownership” of the C&I through two-way communication.

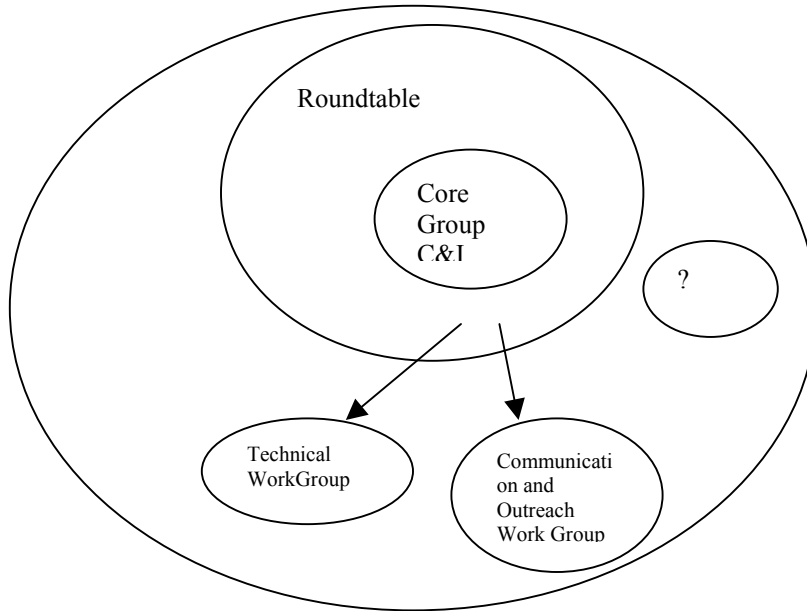
Mr. Mealey then outlined and requested approval from the Roundtable on the four action steps leading up to developing the communication and outreach plan. He began by stating that the plan is a living document that will evolve as determined by the needs of the Roundtable process. The first step will be to establish internal Roundtable communication using conventional methods of communication and electronic mail or a “listserve.” Mr. Mealey indicated that the listserve for the Roundtable will be functional within the next few weeks (*the listserve for the Roundtable is now functioning*) and suggested that the group discuss the groundrules for the listserve and how listserves can be used effectively for the purposes of smaller task groups. He stated that the second step in developing the plan is to identify communication objectives and target audiences. He explained that the Task Group proposed starting with the objectives outlined in the Charter for the Roundtable and the target audiences include those organizations currently represented on the Roundtable. Step three is to begin to develop “generic” and “targeted” communication strategies and messages addressing common information needs to make sure there is a foundation of knowledge on the subject matter. Mr. Mealey described step four as developing the plan based on the “generic” and “targeted” communication strategies and messages.

On behalf of the Task Group, Mr. Mealey then proposed the formation of a Communication and Outreach Work Group as a vehicle through which the Roundtable could initiate a communication and outreach plan and coordinate the Roundtable’s communication and outreach activities. He also asked the Roundtable to consider the idea of a website as a mechanism for accomplishing a number of the “generic” and “targeted” communication needs of the Roundtable related to C&I implementation. The group deferred their comments on the proposals until the discussion on work group formation later in the meeting.

Phil Janik complimented the Task Group on its progress. However, he expressed the need to begin to communicate immediately, and suggested that participants of the Roundtable communicate information on the Charter for the Roundtable to their constituents as soon as possible.

### **Formation of Work Groups**

As a tool to help Roundtable participants envision Roundtable participation and the relationship with potential Work Groups, Mr. Mealey described the relationships as a series of concentric circles shown below. He explained that, with the finalization of the Roundtable Charter, it was possible now to identify a core group of Roundtable participants whose primary focus is on C&I implementation. He added that, knowing that the Roundtable might not go beyond the focus on C&I implementation; the core group may consist of most of the Roundtable participants (and also others who are not actively involved in the Roundtable process.) Also within the Roundtable process, the group may form work groups such as the Technical and Communication and Outreach Work Groups. One large circle including the Roundtable and all of the other components would represent the interested communities outside the Roundtable process.



Phil Janik commented that he was not sure that he agreed with this characterization of the Roundtable relationships.

### ***Technical Work Group***

Following the morning’s discussion on institutional gap analysis, several Roundtable participants attempted to pull some of the group’s ideas together to flesh-out the initial proposal for the formation of a Technical Work Group. Mr. Mealey asked Paul Geissler to describe the more detailed proposal for the Technical Work Group developed based on their suggestions.

Mr. Geissler began with a description of the charge for the Technical Work Group as follows:

- Characterizing and prioritizing C&I data sources by type, quality and scope.
- Identifying C&I-related data gaps and institutional gaps related to the collection and dissemination of C&I-related data.
- Developing recommendations for resolving data compatibility, standardization, definition, and access issues.
- Developing recommendations for methodologies and protocols for the efficient collection and dissemination of C&I-related data, including coordinating database linkages.
- Estimating the potential cost of addressing C&I-related data and institutional gaps.

Mr. Mealey added that, based on the earlier proposal, the Technical Work Group would plan to coordinate one or more workshops to accomplish the Work Group’s objectives. He suggested that the Work Group might use selected criteria to help expand on the issues listed above.

A participant saw the potential need for two technical work groups, one to address the list of issues and data, and a second to work on defining sustainable limits such as “significant” soil erosion. They felt it was necessary to be able to state what the quality of a forest is today and also characterize the level of forest quality in the future. Robert Hendricks cautioned that, based

upon his experience with the Montreal Process, establishing “thresholds” is threatening to stakeholders. He suggested focusing instead on the means to measure progress or trends towards the goal of sustainable forest management. Other participants felt that the question of thresholds was inevitable and that it was helpful to have a target to direct inventory efforts. Several other participants felt that the role of the Work Group was to identify and characterize the data, not to interpret it. Another participant stated that the Work Group should not be put in the position of making judgements and assigning what he felt were “socio-political” limits. To address the concern, Mr. Mealey suggested that the Work Group plan to separate out the value-laden elements of terms like “significant” and focus on the technical dimension of the terms.

Roundtable participants also discussed preliminary ideas about how to structure the workshops to achieve the Work Group objectives. They considered the possibility of using criteria one and two as a launching pad for the technical issues and as a prototype for additional workshops. Some participants felt this would be a good starting point and that trying to cover more of the criteria in one workshop would be overwhelming. Others were concerned that, by separating the discussion on each of the criteria, there was a potential for running out of time and resources to address the remaining criteria. They also indicated that it might be difficult to segregate selected criteria from technical discussions because some of the technical issues apply to more than one criterion. A participant suggested using an approach that would insure that the applicable lessons learned from one workshop are transferred to future workshops to make sure that the technical underpinnings are sound. Another participant proposed considering criteria one through five in one workshop because they all deal with physical factors and addressing criteria six and seven together in a second workshop. As an alternative approach, the group began to consider forming a nucleus of technical specialists for each criterion to evaluate the technical issues specific to the criterion. The smaller technical groups could clarify which issues are applicable to which criterion as a preliminary step to developing the agenda and structure for future workshops.

The group agreed that it would be helpful for a smaller group of Roundtable participants to meet to flesh-out some of these ideas and report back to the Roundtable on potential next steps for the Work Group. The participants who volunteered (or were volunteered) to take part in the Work Group were Paul Geissler, Nicole Hillman, John Stewart, Bureau of Land Management, and Bill Sommers. Dominick Della Sala and Joe Ferrante, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, also volunteered to be participants in the Work Group after the 2/24/99 meeting. The group will propose the number of workshops and the period of time during which they will take place. In addition, the group agreed that the Roundtable would not micromanage the Work Group.

The proposed timeframe for the Work Group was:

- Before the May 19, 1999 Roundtable meeting the Technical Work Group will report on the progress and propose a strategy for Roundtable consideration regarding its plans for one or more workshops.
- By the summer of 1999, ending no later than September 1999, the workshops coordinated by the Technical Work Group will take place.
- By the fall of 1999, and no later than October 30, 1999, the Technical Work Group will compile and report on the results of the workshops to the Roundtable for its consideration at a meeting that will take place in mid-November, 1999.

The nucleus of the Technical Work Group will meet during the next week to begin to flesh-out plans for the workshops.

### ***Communication and Outreach Work Group***

Mr. Mealey asked Roundtable participants to recall the proposals made by the Communication and Outreach in their 2/18/99 memorandum. In particular, he asked Roundtable participants if they supported forming a Communication and Outreach Work Group as a vehicle through which the Roundtable could initiate a communication and outreach plan and coordinate the Roundtable's communication and outreach activities. He also asked if they agreed with the concept of a website as a mechanism for accomplishing a number of the "generic" and "targeted" communication needs of the Roundtable related to C&I implementation. He commented that, if the group were supportive of the website, the intention would be to progress with its development before the May meeting of the Roundtable. The group was supportive of all of the proposals presented in the 2/18/99 memorandum.

One participant viewed the website as a means to provide background on the Roundtable including and explanation of its origin, the Charter, and some general idea of Roundtable plans. Another participant was concerned about the size of the Work Group and felt that a website could attract additional interest in Work Group participation. Mr. Mealey recognized this as a possible challenge in the future and suggested that it might be necessary to manage the level of interest in a way that supports the purposes of the Roundtable. He added that the Work Group would be interested in individuals who are willing to commit time and resources. Phil Janik commented on the importance of the website being open to all.

### **Support and Funding Requirements**

Phil Janik opened the discussion on support and funding requirements for the Roundtable process with the quote, "many hands make the work light." He reiterated that the Roundtable is not a "USFS thing" and, while the USFS was committed to initiating the process, it will take a combined effort to insure that the process continues. Phil asked Roundtable participants for their input on how to fund the Roundtable process collaboratively.

Potential sources identified by the group included "sister" agencies and private sector sources such as foundations. One participant commented that it was important to take care in selecting the source of funding to avoid unnecessary expectations for the process. In addition, it was recognized that each Roundtable participant could potentially contribute according to his or her means and that few at the table actually have the authority to commit resources. However, it was hoped that Roundtable participants could provide ideas and follow-up on potential sources of funding. It was also established that participants should have a clear understanding of the budget and/or a list of needs for the process to assist them in their evaluation of which "piece" of the budget they could potentially support. Phil indicated that the USFS could generate a budget for this purpose. In this context, several participants commented that, while they might not be able to commit funds to the process, they could provide in-kind services such as sponsoring research or a website.

In their discussion, the group also noted that there were both Roundtable process and implementation costs. One participant observed that process costs could be readily estimated but determining the cost of implementation would require additional work. They suggested that the Technical Work Group could help to clarify implementation costs. In addition, as information on implementation evolves through the efforts of the Roundtable or the Technical Work Group, it could be provided to the appropriate agencies to factor into their agendas.

### **Next Steps**

***Technical Work Group*** – A small group comprising the nucleus of the Technical Work Group will meet during the next week to further develop the plans for the Technical Work Group. The group will develop a proposal for a series of one or more workshops to be held before or by the fall of 1999 for consideration at the next Roundtable meeting on 5/19/99.

***Communication and Outreach Work Group*** – The Communication and Outreach Work Group will continue to develop the Communication and Outreach Plan based on the strategy outlined in their 2/18/99 memorandum. In addition, the group will continue with plans to initiate a website sometime prior to the May 19, 1999 Roundtable meeting to begin to accomplish generic and targeted communication needs.

***Funding and Support*** – The USFS will coordinate efforts to develop a budget and/or a list of needs for the Roundtable process to share with Roundtable participants for their evaluation of potential resources or in-kind services their organization might provide for the continuation of the Roundtable process.

***Attachments are not available.***