

Oregon Roundtable on Sustainable Forests Preliminary Evaluation of Indicator of Sustainable Forest Management



Indicator A.a.: *Ability to measure and report on all other Oregon sustainable forest management indicators*

Current desired trend/target: Data for all Oregon indicators are increasingly current, complete, and reliable.

This is a summary of the Oregon Roundtable on Sustainable Forests discussion and conclusions regarding the staff report on an Oregon Indicator of Sustainable Forests Management. This evaluation summary is organized around nine questions identified by the Roundtable as being central to evaluations of all 19 indicators. It reflects the input from Roundtable participants who attended the May 10, 2011 meeting where the indicator was discussed. The summary is based on interpretation of the Roundtable discussions by the six-person Roundtable Leadership Group, with the assistance of Oregon Department of Forestry staff. For context, readers are encouraged to first become familiar with the full set of Oregon indicators and particularly the report for Indicator A.a. on which this evaluation is based. This evaluation and a follow-up staff response will be posted on both the Roundtable and Indicator A.a. web pages. The current data report for this indicator can be accessed at: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/indicators/indicatorAa.shtml>

Evaluation Summary: ¹

Key Roundtable findings

- The online report needs to more clearly spell out up front what the basis is for condition and trend rating determinations. This information was provided in the presentation and it would be helpful to also appear in the report.
- The current protocol is subjective at this point.
- Consider assigning a point scale to the four information quality sub-categories
- Change condition to “poor” with the ratings basis for “poor” ratings changed to when less than half of the indicators have adequate information quality.
- More formal interagency coordination for indicator data collection and reporting is needed.

¹ *Conclusions may not have been reached by the Roundtable for every evaluation question. The summary should not be considered as expressing a consensus of the meeting participants or the Roundtable in general. However, this information will be immediately useful to the technical staff working to implement and improve future indicator data collection and reporting and to the Board of Forestry and other Oregonians desiring to use the indicator as one tool in assessing Oregon's progress towards sustainable forest management.*

It is anticipated that the Roundtable will proceed with discussions on all the indicators and will then discuss the body of indicators as a whole – looking for common themes and synthesizing conclusions about the indicators project. Therefore, Roundtable conclusions for this indicator may be revisited and revised at a later date.

Additional Roundtable comments organized by indicator evaluation questions

1. Is the purpose and intent for the indicator clear?

- No additional comments.

2. b. Is the protocol for indicator data collection clear and technically sound?

- Consider a more developed technical (mathematical) integration of information for the other 18 indicators.

3. Are indicator data being reported at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales?

- This evaluation question is not really relevant for Indicator A.a. Each of the other 18 indicators has different embedded temporal and spatial relationships. Should they be more uniform than they are currently?
- Need to change reported data frequency for Indicator D.b. The staff response for that indicator provides little hope for continued monitoring. The Indicator D.b. data frequency rating in Indicator A.a. should be less than optimal.
- Make sure the online report symbols are current.

4. Has the Department appropriately assessed the quality of the indicator information?

Original indicator report conclusion
Information = Partial



Conclusion following Roundtable evaluation
Information = Partial



- It is a clear repeatable process for developing conclusions but a primitive basis so far.
- Some are not satisfied with information rating and believe it should be changed to “inadequate.”
- Three indicators still are unreported. So the data set is incomplete.

5. Has the Department appropriately assessed the conditions measured by the indicator?

Original indicator report conclusion
Condition = Mixed or Fair



Conclusion following Roundtable evaluation
Condition = Poor



- No additional comments

6. Has the Department appropriately assessed the current trend measured by the indicator, when compared to the Desired Trend Statement?

Original indicator report conclusion
Trend = Uncertain



Conclusion following Roundtable evaluation
Trend = Uncertain



- There is no data series available to assess trend.
- 7. Can a case be made that other technical information should be considered as a supplement or an alternative to the information already provided for the indicator?**
- Not applicable for this indicator.
- 8. Do you believe there is an adequate level of institutional commitment and resources allocated for continued full implementation and reporting of this indicator into the future?**
- Yes, but the challenge remains to provide capacity to maintain the other 18 indicators.
- 9. What improvements would you like to see in future reporting for the indicator?**
- Indicator should also address data relevance as it is not covered by other four information sub-categories but it came up in the evaluations for some of the other 18 indicators.
 - Can low ratings help focus better cooperation and coordination on data collection in those areas? Illuminating those gaps is one purpose of the indicator framework. If a high priority is placed on informing the indicators, there may be an opportunity to restore budgets for this kind of work.
 - Consider scoring of data sources.
 - Data is drawn from sources not designed specifically for the indicators.

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Ability to measure and report on all other Oregon sustainable forest management indicators

May 31, 2011 Draft – Subject to further Roundtable discussion and revision

- Better tie indicators to required statewide forest assessments like the northeast states have done.
- Learn from what other states have done or work at larger and smaller scales, especially where they have succeeded in reporting high quality indicator data. If indicators were compared both within Oregon and across other regions we could compare and learn about how different approaches yield different results.
- Look towards building common western states indicators.
- Consider addressing the importance of forests to people in a future indicator.

Oregon indicators of sustainable forest management ratings explanations

Indicator Condition:



Good

Desired trend or target is being achieved



Mixed or Fair

Conflicting factors are affecting the status in both positive and negative ways



Poor

Desired trend or target is not being achieved

Indicator Trend:



Improving

Current status is an improvement compared to previous data



Mixed, Uncertain, or No Change

There are either conflicting (mixed) trends, trend direction is uncertain, or there is no significant change compared to previous data



Deteriorating

Current status is a deterioration compared to previous data

Quality of Indicator Information:



Adequate

Data coverage, frequency, currency, sources, and reliability are sufficient to draw conclusions with high confidence



Partial

Data coverage, frequency, currency, sources, and reliability are of mixed quality which affects the ability to draw conclusions



Inadequate

Data coverage, frequency, currency, sources, and reliability are of insufficient quality to draw conclusions