

Socio-Economic Assessment of Sustainable Forestry

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The Plum Line

- Third-Party Auditing
- Consulting
- Training
- Public Service
 - SAF Working Group (E-6)
 - SFI[®] Auditors' Forum
- Partnerships

Goal of Presentation

1. Clarify the existence of a breadth of thinking about the assessment of social issues
2. Point to a tendency toward “either/or” thinking
3. Suggest that our thinking generally asserts a single view in the “either/or” dichotomy
4. Propose a more “both/and” approach that more clearly reflects a breadth of thought
5. Hope to provide (in time) more credible social assessment models

Outline of Presentation

- Credibility of Social Assessment (1)
- Two Views of the Three Legs (2)
- Markets, Politics, & Society (3)
- Social & Economic Standards (1)
- Social & Economic Assessment (1)

Credibility of Social Assessment

- Clear, credible standards
- Clear, credible audit procedures
- Credible auditor credentialing
- Credible auditor & audits
- Backed by a credible worldview

Two Views of the Three Legs

1. Ecologically *sustainable*,
economically *viable*, &
socially (politically) *acceptable*

versus

2. Ecologically, economically,
& socially *sustainable*

Two Views of the Three Legs (2)

View 1 →

- measure ecological sustainability,
- let markets test economically viability, &
- let the politics judge social acceptability

View 2 →

- measure ecological, economical,
& social sustainability

Markets, Politics, & Society

- Markets allocate resources efficiently
 - if markets are fair and open.
- Political systems structure fair markets
 - if political systems are fair & open.
- Society shapes fair political systems
 - if social systems are fair & open.
- Markets provide open social systems
 - if markets are fair and open.

Markets, Politics, & Society (2)

- Efficient markets → efficient outcomes
vs. fair markets → equal outcomes
- Equal access → efficient markets
vs. equal conditions → fair markets
- Free conditions → equal access
vs. participation → equal conditions
- Unfettered action → free conditions
vs. restrained action → participation

Markets, Politics, & Society (3)

- Different public & private forest roles
- (& national, state, & county forest roles)
- (& NIPF & “corporate” forest roles)
- Differences in impacts & expectations of large versus small forests
- Differences if forests are large part of land base, economy, & society

Social & Economic Standards

- Efficiency vs waste
- Fairness vs equity
- Freedom vs participation
- Openness vs autarky

Social & Economic Assessment

- Market structure vs performance
- Non-discrimination vs outcomes
- Rights vs responsibilities
- Freedom vs controls
- *Objectivity vs self-reporting*