

Breakout 3D: Developing and Using Measurement Systems In Biodiversity Markets & Incentive Programs

Panelists:

- Sara Vickerman, *Defenders of Wildlife*, member of the American Forest Foundation Board of Trustees
- Wayne White, *Wildlands, Inc*
- Paul Souza, *US Fish and Wildlife Service*
- Peter Hoar, *Marstel-Day*
- Nicole Maness, *Oregon State University*

Abstract:

Emerging biodiversity markets and existing incentive programs have the potential to make effective contributions to conservation, but we know little about how these programs quantify environmental benefits. Across the country, programs and metrics are being designed and implemented in a somewhat ad hoc manner. There has been little evaluation of the science used in these biodiversity metrics and currently, there are no national standards for developing or using them in voluntary or regulated markets or in payment for ecosystem services schemes.

A recent USDA-funded report examining biodiversity measurement systems around the world has come up with a set of guidelines for metrics including development standards and national level policy options. The panel will discuss how and why different federal, state and private organizations need to integrate planning processes and pool resources in order to come up with a reasonably consistent, standardized and multi-purpose metric system for use in the US.

1. Brief description about what each panelist covered in their respective discussions

- Vickerman: No current biodiversity language; focus on habitat rather than animals. Pick indicators taxonomy. Consider key disturbances; consider landscapes; many agencies should contribute; involved many stakeholders.
- White: No current biodiversity law; described many metrics for ecosystem services, offset markets.
- Ginger: FWS not part of the biodiversity conservation effort because dealing with populations, low budgets, decrease control.

2. Overarching themes and key takeaways

- Hoar: How to establish baselined and historical state how to set objectives relative to reference, conduct remediation, measure outcomes
- Maness: Reviewed biodiversity markets, found best practices for measuring biodiversity, and found best policy improvements for supply markets. See report, "Measuring Up", for details

3. The most surprising finding or discussion
 - That the FWS is so far removed from efforts to promote biodiversity

4. Finding or discussion that had the most audience consensus
 - Biodiversity laws are a long way off in the U.S., so Biodiversity markets are even further off. We are just at the beginning

5. What didn't get answered?
 - Is biodiversity a tradable service? Is it an input or outcome in a traditional ecosystem service framework?

6. How this panel outlines (or contributes) to where we might go (as ecosystem services/markets professionals) from here
 - We are at the beginning of a long road, preparing for a day when society decides to truly value biodiversity through legislation