Monitoring and Evaluation of the Institute of Sustainable Forestry's Smartwood® Program

Daniel Resnik
Thomas Laird
Envs 310
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Introduction

Recent recognition of global climate change coupled with unsustainable rates of worldwide deforestation, specifically in the tropics, has prompted change in the way logging is taking place. What began as a grassroots movement has quickly become internationally recognized and continues to grow at an unprecedented rate.

> "Over the past 10 years, forest conservation has become an increasingly high-priority issue for both policy makers and the general public throughout the world. Initial concern focused on tropical forests and the activities of the timber industry. In the mid-1980s, two international initiatives were launched to lessen the industry's impact on tropical forests: the Tropical Forestry Action Program (TFAP) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)." (Elliot, 1996).

Since the formation of the ITTO and TFAP the focus of deforestation concerns has expanded beyond the tropics. As a result of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, deforestation of boreal and temperate forests is now recognized by the general public as well as the policy makers as a serious global concern.

Since 1992 Forest Product Certification (FPC) has increasingly been expanding and will change the way timber is harvested throughout the world in the new millenium. According to Chris Elliot, co-author of *Certification of Forest Products- Issues and Perspectives* (1996), "Already the first signs of a viable market-driven certification systems are emerging".

Established in 1993, one of the largest and first FPC programs is the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The FSC created by the Woodworkers Alliance for Rainforest Protection, leads the world in accrediting certifiers of forest products. As of April 30, 2000, over 43,321,000 acres of forests throughout the world have been certified according to the principles and criteria set up by the FSC (Appendix A). In the U.S., Smartwood is one example of the certifying agencies accredited by the FSC. In California there are two certifying agencies that use the FSC principles and guidelines. Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) and the Institute of Sustainable Forestry (ISF). The ISF is a non-profit agency that uses specific Smartwood guidelines to certify forests and chain-of-custody certifiers.

Although there are many other FPC programs in the U.S. and throughout the world, the focus of this report is to find out what specific portions of the general public in the Arcata-Eureka area know about FPC and specifically ISF/Smartwood, the willingness to purchase sustainably harvested forest products and the general interest in these products.

Methods

We began this project with the intent of relaying information to ISF that would be beneficial to their marketing branch. Initial duties to accomplish this task required research about FPC and specifically Smartwood/ISF. After obtaining the necessary background information, a meeting was conducted on February 11, 2000 with representatives from Smartwood, Douglas Fir, the Environmental Science Practicum Professor, Richard Hansis and us, Thomas Laird and Daniel Resnik. We obtained useful information at the meeting to produce goals, objectives and alternatives for the project.

The next step was to define the problem and write a proposal for the project, including the goals, objectives, and problem solving alternatives. These can be found in the appendix.

After weighing the alternatives, we decided that alternative 1, a survey, was the best way to accomplish the goal. .we then began an evaluation of possible questions that would satisfy this alternative. The results of our evaluation and the questions we decided would be most satisfactory for the survey is attached at the end of this report. (See Appendix). Upon completion of the questionnaire, we E-mailed it to the local marketing director for Smartwood, Mr. Kirk Cohune, for his input. After receiving his valued response, we incorporated his ideas into the survey, and discussed the implementation plan. We decided to survey the Farmers Market and the Co-op in Arcata for a survey of a specific population of the area that may be more interested in certified forest products than the general public. We also chose to survey people at Piersons in Eureka and Copeland in Arcata to get a portion of a specific group of people who are more likely to purchase forest products than the general public.

Originally we had planned to take 200 surveys but due to lack of response and time constraints only 175 were completed. To randomize the survey approximately every tenth person, who walked into one of the stores, was asked to participate in the survey. At the Farmers Market, approximately every fifteenth person to walk by the surveyor was asked to participate.

After conducting the survey the data was tabulated and results were calculated. The results are discussed in the following section.

Results and Discussion

As previously mentioned surveys were used at four different places to complete the goals and objectives of the project. For ease of calculations and lack of varied response surveys conducted at Piersons and Copeland were combined. Table 1. shows the break down of where

Table 1. Surveys conducted at specific locations on the knowledge and interest of a select group of the general public about certified forest products in Arcata and Eureka, Ca.

Survey location	number of surveys
Piersons/Copeland	100
Co-op	32
Farmers	43
Total	175

the surveys were taken and how many were completed at each location. All surveys were conducted on the weekend of April 28, 29 and 30. After tabulating the data from each survey point separately a conclusion was drawn that there was no significant difference in the results from different survey points and for ease of communication, all data could be considered together. Approximately 50 percent of those asked to participate in the survey agreed to fill it out. This could lead to some error in the results because maybe a large portion of those who filled out the survey also have an interest in the products. The biases and possible errors of the survey will be discussed at the end of this section.

Figure 1. shows the percent of people surveyed who know about certified forest products. This result is encouraging because it shows that more than half of those surveyed had heard of one or more of the certified forest products listed. Furthermore, 58 percent of the people surveyed had heard of certified forest products and of those 73.3 percent had also heard specifically of Smartwood (Table 2.).

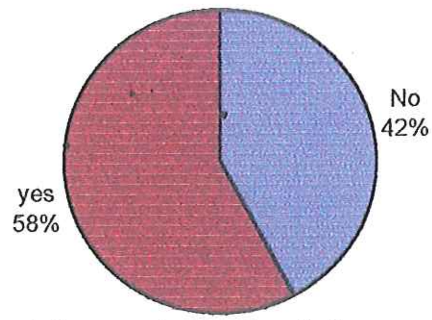

Figure 1. Answers to question 1. Have you heard of certified forest products?

Table 2. Answers to question 1, survey conducted in Arcata and Eureka, Ca. at the Co-op (Arcata), Farmers Market (Arcata) , Piersons (Eureka), and Copeland (Arcata) on April 28, 29, and 30, 2000.

Question	Answer	number of surveys	percent of total
1) Have You heard of certified forest products	No	74	42.3
	yes	101	57.7
	Total	175	100.0
1a) If you have heard of certified forest products, which products are you familiar with?	Tree farm	9	8.9
	ISO-1400	8	7.9
	SFI	12	11.9
	Greentag	16	15.8
	Smartwood	74	73.3
	Unsure	8	7.9
	Total	127	125.7[a]
1b) Where did you first hear of this product?	Other	23	22.8
	At work	13	12.9
	Advertisement/ media	31	30.7
	Friend	34	33.7
	Total	101	100.0

Note:
a. This total is greater than 100 percent because some people have heard of more than one of these products.

The responses of Question 1b. were varied (Table 2). Many of the responses, 22 percent, answered this question in the other category. Some of these "other" responses included at school, on the internet, through research, and at the Arcata community forest (which is smartwood certified). Many people had heard of these products from a friend or through the media. Only about 13 percent responded in the "At work" category.

Only 8 percent of the respondents had purchased any of these products in the past, but of those who had purchased Certified Forest products (CFP), most had purchased Smartwood. Overall, the reasons for not purchasing CFP were no need, unavailable, and unfamiliar with product. Of those who had heard of CFP, most responded with no need, 18 percent, or unavailable, 33 percent. Answers such as these are important because it shows that many people are willing to purchase Smartwood or other CFP but that they are not readily available.

Figure 2. shows a combination of responses to questions 3 and 4. Question 3. asked: If sustainably harvested wood products were available locally and comparitively priced, would you

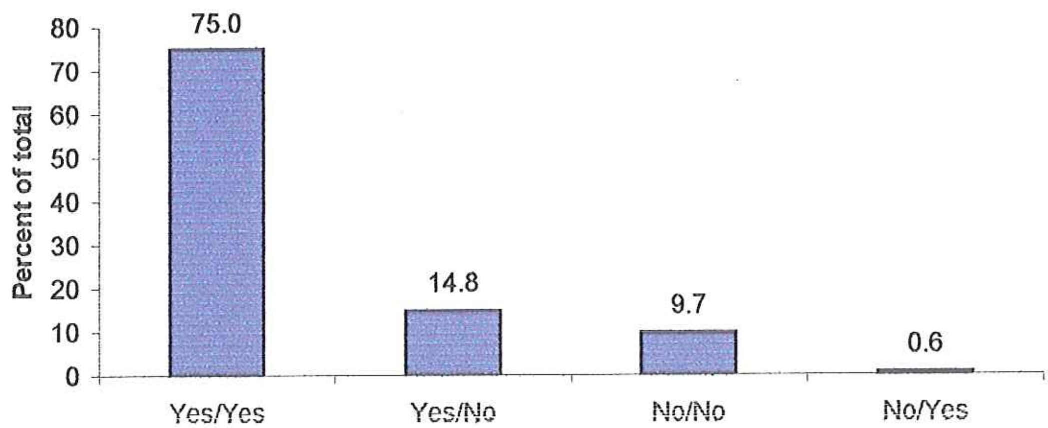

Figure 2. Responses to questions 3 and 4 which are: Question 3. If sustainably harvested wood products were available locally and comparitively priced, would you be interested in purchasing them? Question 4. If you could buy a sustainably harvested wood product locally would you be willing to pay more for it?

be interested in purchase them? Question 4 asked: If you could buy a sustainably harvested wood product locally would you be willing to pay more for it? The overwhelming response to these questions were yes to both questions. The next category Yes/No shows people willing to purchase these products but not willing to pay more. The No/No category shows those who have no interest in these products. The last category shows the response of one person who we assume would not purchase these products unless the price is increased. This response may also have been a mistake. In general of those who were willing to spend more, we found that most people were willing to spend about 5 to 15 percent above the standard. Figure 3 shows these responses.

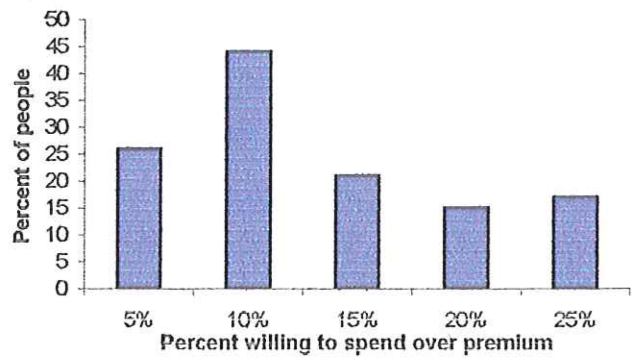

Figure 3. Percent of people willing to spend more for a certfied sustainable wood product and the percent they are willing to spend above the going price for non-certfied

Question 5 asked: How well can you explain the difference between first, second, and third party certification? This question is relevant to the survey because these differences are huge. As shown in Figure 4. over 82 percent of those surveyed answered that they had either never heard of it or heard of it but can't really explain it. This shows that although people are more than willing to buy CFP, few of them know the difference between types of certification.

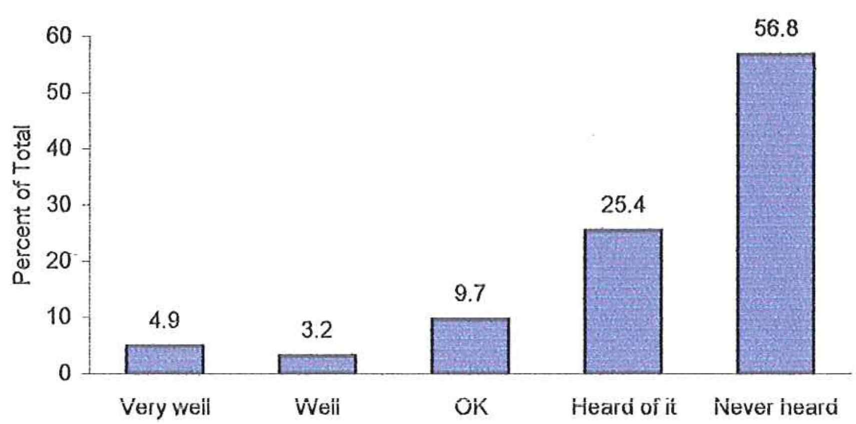

Figure 4. Responses to Question 5: How well can you explain the difference between first, second, and third party certification?

Question 6: Where are you from was omitted from the analysis because it was decided that this question was too ambiguous and did not seem very relevant. Question 7: How much do you spend on lumber/forest products annually? was asked because we wanted to know if those who were willing to buy these products actually spent any money on CFP. We found that the majority of people spent very little but there were also a few big spenders who were also interested in purchasing CFP, specifically Smartwood (Figure 5).

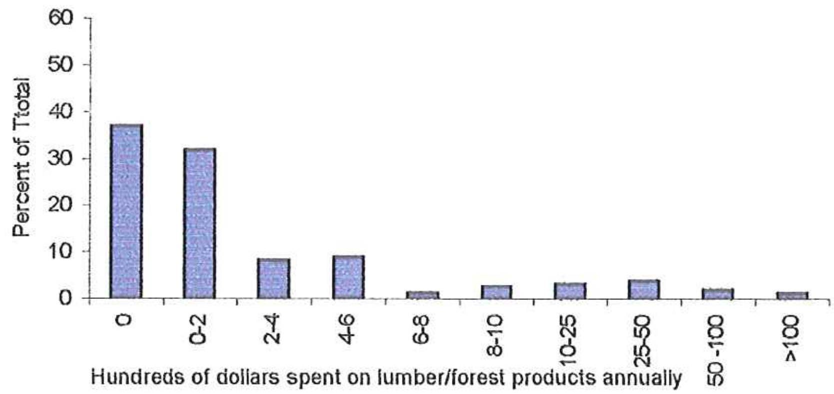

Figure 5. Answer to question 7: Approximately how much do you spend on lumber/forest products annually?

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although the information provided by this project may prove to be useful to the ISF and Smartwood, it should be noted that the populations surveyed are severely biased and that this is not a survey of the general population. It should also be noted that we attempted to randomize the population surveyed, however, I found myself targeting the college age group. I felt it was pointless to ask "little old ladies" about how many wood products they purchased per year. Also, as previously mentioned, approximately half of those asked to participate in the survey refused. Again I think this probably biased this report and increased the number of those who might be interested or know something about CFP of the groups surveyed.

After analysis of the data collected we have concluded with the following points and recommend the following:

1. Out of the specific populations of people surveyed we found an interest in Certified Forest Products but that it was unavailable.

References

Elliot, C., et al. 1996. Certification of Forest Products- Issues and Perspectives. Island Press, Washington D.C.

Appendix A. FSCs Principles of Forest Stewardship

1. Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.
2. Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented, and legally established.
3. The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.
4. Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.
5. Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.
6. Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.
7. A management plan — appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations — shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.
8. Monitoring shall be conducted — appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management — to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.
9. Primary forests, well-developed secondary forests, and sites of major environmental, social, or cultural significance shall be maintained, conserved and/or restored. Management activities shall not significantly modify the character and function of the forest, nor significantly degrade the structure or ecological complexity of the forest ecosystem.
10. Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1-9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the worlds* needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

Appendix B

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Institute of Sustainable Forestry's Smartwood® program

Problem Statement

1) How effective is the ISF outreach in promoting SmartWood ~~and~~ to what is the comprehension and interest of the groups involved? i.e. consumers, contractors, retailers, distributors.
2) How can ISF be monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness at reaching the objectives as outlined in the ISF draft strategic plan? — this seems to be evaluating everything about ISF.

Proposed by Daniel Resnik and Thomas Laird for Envs 310 and ISF, February 29, 2000

Appendix e

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Institute of Sustainable Forestry's Smartwood® program

Objectives:

1. To determine public attitudes/interest of certified forest products.
2. Quantify data/findings into a meaningful report.

Proposed by Daniel Resnik and Thomas Laird for Envs 310 and ISF, April 1, 2000

Appendix D

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Institute of Sustainable Forestry's Smartwood® program

Weighing the alternatives:

1. Develop a questionnaire to determine public attitudes/interest of certified forest products.
2. Determine amount of certified forest product used in recent local construction of public facilities and/or private facilities.
3. Question local construction companies to determine any personal or professional dedication to using certified forest products.
4. Question local lumber/timber companies to determine any personal or professional dedication to producing certified forest products.
5. Question producers of certified forest products to determine amount of certified forest product sold to local distributor.
6. Question local lumberyards to determine amount of certified forest product sold locally.
7. Question local woodworkers, craft people, etc. to determine attitudes/interest in and use of certified forest products.

Alternative # 1 best meets the criteria set up by the objectives. Although the most thorough investigation of attitudes/interests towards certified forest products in this area would combine all of the alternatives to produce a more comprehensive study, Alternative #1 will best meet the objectives given time and money constraints. Alternative #2 requires too much research given time restraints and the research done thus far indicates few local projects have used certified forest products. Alternatives #3 and #4 could be useful in meeting objectives for a similar project done in the future but for the purposes of this project these alternatives did not seem feasible. Alternatives #5 and #6 would not lead to satisfactory results because currently there are no local distributors or local lumberyards that carry certified forest products. Alternative #7 could best be used along with alternative #1 to meet the objectives and would allow for a more comprehensive report. However, due to limited time and resources alternative #7 is not a necessary component and therefore will not be used in this study.

Proposed by Daniel Resnik and Thomas Laird for Envs 310 and ISF, April 10, 2000

Appendix E

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you heard of Certified Forest Products? Y N
   a. If YES, which of the following are you familiar with:
      a. Smartwood®/FSC
      b. Green Tag®
      c. ISO 14000®
      d. Tree Farm®
      e. SFI®
      f. Other ______________________
   b. Where did you first hear of this product?
      a. Friend
      b. At work
      c. Advertisement / media. where or what ad / media ____________
      d. Other ______________________
2. Have you purchased any of these products in the past? Y N
   a. If YES,
      A. Which ones? ______________________
      B. Where? ______________________
      C. How often do you purchase them? ______________________
   b. If NO, why not?
      a. Cost
      b. Unfamiliar with the product
      c. I would like to buy it , but it is unavailable
      d. No interest
      e. Other ______________________
3. If sustainably harvested wood product were available locally and comparably priced would you be interested in purchasing them? Y N
4. If you could buy a certified sustainable wood product locally, would you be willing to pay more for it? Y N
   a. If YES, how much more would you be willing to pay?

      a. 5% ——— 10% ——— 15% ——— 20% ——— 25%
5. How well can you explain the difference between first, second and third party certification?
   a. very well
   b. well
   c. O.K.
   d. Heard of it but can't really explain it
   e. Never heard of it
6. Where are you from? ______________________
7. Approximately how much do you spend on lumber/ forest products annually? __________