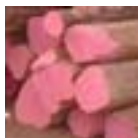




# Sustainable biomass: some practical experience

Dr Ruth Nussbaum  
ProForest



# ProForest Activities

- Forests and timber
  - UK Government CPET
  - Standards, certification, small owners
- Agricultural crops
  - RSPO P&C and verification facilitation
  - RTRS P&C and certification facilitation
- Biofuels (RTFO)
- Conservation planning
- Private sector
  - Implementing sustainable purchasing and investment policies



# Sustainability in practice

- Sustainability of feedstocks
- Three key questions
  - What is ‘sustainable’?
  - Is it being implemented in practice?
  - Is the product I am buying from the ‘sustainable’ source?



# What is 'sustainable'?

- Recommendations
  - Carbon emission reductions
  - Biodiversity protection
  - Environmental protection (soil, water, chemicals)

# What is 'sustainable'?

- Most standards don't yet include carbon but recognise importance
- Biodiversity:
  - Experience shows need clear definition of what must be protected
  - 'Intact ecosystems' alone not appropriate (indicator of development not biodiversity)
  - Several mechanisms exist:
    - most widely emerging approach is High Conservation Value Framework.
    - Conversion of any natural ecosystem



## What is 'sustainable'?

- Most definitions go beyond biodiversity and soil/water/agrochemicals
  - Compliance with the law
  - Long-term productivity including management planning and health
  - Wider social concerns

## What is sustainable: social issues

- Clear that this is more difficult than biodiversity
- A lot of discussion ongoing with respect to:
  - European Parliament
  - Timber procurement policies
  - REDD (Reduced emissions for deforestation and forest degradation)
  - Biofuels reporting requirements



## Is my product sustainable

- Requires checking the source and linking the product to that source
- Where supply chains are long or opaque difficult to do without certification
  - Timber may be bought and sold several times
  - Many agricultural products are traded

# Making voluntary certification 'compulsory'

- Voluntary certification is frequently used in a compulsory context
  - 'Voluntary' used to distinguish from a legal requirement *per se*
  - No inconsistency about using a voluntary mechanism to deliver legal requirements
  - Necessary to allow 'equivalent' alternatives



## Voluntary certification

- Only addresses direct impacts with any certainty
- Displacement and competition is not controlled. No easy answer but:
  - Policy environment may be influenced
  - Some emerging systems may consider ways to address this issue



## Other issues

- Requirements versus reporting
  - Don't underestimate the impact of having to put data in the public domain
- Impact of European demand
  - Won't solve all the problems but may create a driver that can influence wider policy thinking and development
- Costs
  - Cost of verification versus cost of avoiding unsustainable sources



Thank you

[www.ProForest.net](http://www.ProForest.net)