

**§8876-A. Forest sustainability**

The director shall establish a process to assess forest sustainability. In developing this process, the director shall build on the principles of sustainability developed by the Northern Forest Lands Council established by Congress in 1990 and the criteria developed by the Maine Council on Sustainable Forest Management pursuant to Executive Order #11 dated April 25, 1995. [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

**1. Standards.** Standards must be established to assess each of the criteria listed in this subsection by January 1st of the year indicated. The following standards must be specific, measurable and understandable by both forest managers and the general public:

- A. Soil productivity by 2001; [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- B. Water quality, wetlands and riparian zones by 1999; [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- C. Timber supply and quality by 1999; [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- D. Aesthetic impacts of timber harvesting by 2003; [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- E. Biological diversity by 2002; [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- F. Public accountability of forest owners and managers by 1999; and [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]
- G. Traditional recreation by 2003. [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

[PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

**2. Process.** The director shall identify individuals with scientific background and practical experience in each of the criteria areas listed in subsection 1 and convene technical working groups. In the development of standards pursuant to subsection 1, the director and working groups shall assess current status and trends, the desired objectives and actions to reach the objectives. Each working group shall identify a range of alternative standards and recommend a set of standards based on a comprehensive review of available information and an assessment of the economic impacts of implementing the standards. The director shall coordinate the efforts of each working group and provide an opportunity for public comment on the recommended standards prior to final adoption. [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

**3. Report.** The director shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over forestry matters with a recommendation for each set of standards and an articulated goal for each criterion by the date specified in subsection 1. At the time of the report, the director shall indicate the recommended timetable for revisiting the particular criterion and standards. [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

**4. Monitoring.** As each set of standards is adopted, the director shall develop a system to monitor statewide progress in achieving those standards and begin monitoring. Standards and monitoring systems must be in place for all criteria by July 1, 2004. [PL 1997, c. 720, §10 (NEW).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1997, c. 720, §§10,11 (NEW).

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