

Listening Session Forest Products Society: Visioning and Strategic Planning November 6, 2010

The Forest Products Society (FPS) Board held a "listening session" on November 6, 2010 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Forest Products Laboratory, in Madison, Wisconsin. The objectives of the listening session are listed below (*Attachment 1 – Meeting Agenda*).

Objectives:

1. Reach consensus on a working draft of the vision and mission statements.
2. Identify preliminary strategic directions for the Forest Products Society.
3. Provide other advice to the FPS Board as they continue the visioning and strategic planning process.

The meeting also included several online participants who were able to view the meeting on camera and participate by providing written comments via chat, online polling, and by offering verbal comments via phone connection (*Attachment 2 -- Chat History*).

After the President welcomed the participants and made introductory comments, the meeting facilitator reviewed the objectives and agenda for the meeting. The facilitator also reviewed the guidelines for meeting participation which were used during the listening session in June (*Attachment 3 -- Participation Guidelines*), and offered a working definition of consensus (*Attachment 4 -- Group Consensus Decision-Making*). The group indicated agreement with the guidelines and the working definition of consensus.

Presentation of draft vision and mission

The facilitator explained that alternative vision and mission statements were drafted, based on the results of the June listening session. He presented the two draft statements, showing how the seven key vision elements and other ideas gathered in June were incorporated into the drafts (*Attachment 5 -- Alternative Vision and Mission Statements*).

Draft Alternative Vision and Mission Statements Based on Results of the June Listening Session	
Vision	Mission
Global commitment to the sustainable use of biomaterials	Promote the environmental and economic benefits of biomaterials by facilitating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global exchange of research & technical information; • Practical applications across industries; and • Public policy favorable to sustainability.

The facilitator explained that the planning group that planned the listening session generally liked the alternatives but wanted to gather more feedback regarding some of the alternative wording used in the draft. For example, there were differing views regarding the use of "biomaterials" as a substitute for "wood and other fiber resources."

Terminology and rebranding

Prior to the November listening session, planning group members provided a listing of alternate terms that could be used to define the scope of the Society's work. The following is the compilation of terms collected.

Compilation of Terms From Strategic Planning Committee	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable wood resource • Renewable materials • Forest biomaterials • Sustainable products and energy • Green materials and bioenergy • Green products and technology • Renewable wood resources for sustainable products • Renewable forest raw materials • Renewable forest-based, natural materials • Green raw materials • Forest-based raw materials for green, sustainable products • Natural materials • Natural products • Renewable natural products • Naturally derived renewable resources • Renewable resources • Natural resources • Forest Bioproducts and Operations • Business Management for Forest Resources • Green Entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Operations Management • Forest Business Operations and Management • Forest Products and Operations Management • Forest Products Supply Chain Management • Forest Bioproducts Supply Chain • Forest Bioindustry Management • Bioindustry Production • Forest Bioproducts, Entrepreneurship, and Bioenergy • Green Building Materials • Green Building and Bioenergy • Forest Biomaterials, Entrepreneurship, and Supply Chain Management • Forest Biomaterials Production and Management • Forest Biomaterials • Forest Biomaterials: Business, Operations, and Management • Forest Biomaterials and Bioenergy • Sustainable Biomaterials and Bioenergy

The group made the following observations about the list:

- The list has several recurring terms, including:
 - Renewable
 - Green
 - Sustainable
 - Natural
- Some terms are used infrequently, such as:
 - Wood
 - Forest
- The term "bio" is listed frequently and it was noted that the term "bio" is already "taken" and in use by medical sciences and technology groups. Some suggested the term "bio" is too broad while others noted that "forest" is too narrow.
- The terms "materials", "products", and "industry" and "energy" are often used in conjunction with the term "bio."
- "Products" could be used to include "chemicals, fuels, and energy."

The facilitator asked which terms are preferred. The comments included:

- We need a term that captures the idea that the society is focused on linking wood and other "environmentally preferable" materials.
- We need to avoid "subjective" terms (such as "green") and use more objective terminology.
- Sustainability may connote "minimum" when we want to reach for "superior" economic, social, and environmental benefits.
- It is hard to know what terms are best until we know our target audience, competition, and key partners.

Members of the group were then given 12 stickers each, and instructed to go to the wall and put a sticker on the terms they preferred. They were told they could use their stickers however they liked, including voting for one term several times. The online participants used polling technology and chat to express their preferences. The results were called the "Greatest Hits" and are as follows:

1. Environmentally preferable products (31 stickers)
2. Renewable wood resources for sustainable products (29 stickers)
3. Renewable materials (27 stickers) (29% of online poll and 3 chat votes)
4. Sustainable biomaterials and bioenergy (17 stickers) (5 chat votes)
5. Forest bioproducts and supply chain (13 stickers)
6. Sustainable forest and bioproducts (43% of online poll and 4 chat votes)
7. Renewable-based products (29% on online poll and 4 chat votes)

Three "write-in" candidate terms included:

1. Environmentally sustainable bioproducts and bioenergy (11 stickers)
2. Science (scientific) credibility resource (12 stickers)
3. Forest bioproducts and operations (4 stickers)

The group discussed the draft vision and mission statement to consider changes. During the lunch break, two teams drafted vision and mission statements, and then presented them to the large group.

	Vision	Mission
Group A:	To foster improvement globally of environmental, social, and economic benefits from the use of renewable materials, including wood, for bioproducts and bioenergy.	To further progress toward a healthy, sustainable society through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International exchange of scientific research and technical information regarding renewable materials, including wood, for bioproducts and bioenergy. • Interpret scientific information for use in practical application across all sectors. • Advocate for use of science in environmental decision making.
Group B:	To be an international leader for the enhancement of the sustainable use of wood, bioenergy and other renewable bio-products.	Enhance the benefits of wood, bioenergy and other renewable bioproducts by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting the sustainable (environmental, social, economic) use of the renewable wood resource. 2. Facilitating the international exchange of scientific research and technical knowledge among key stakeholders. 3. Engaging in public policy to enhance sustainability.
Group B: (Alternate Mission)		Enhance the intelligent use of wood and other renewable materials to meet the future needs of society.

The group agreed that the Strategic Planning Committee would merge the two proposals into a working draft that would be shared with FPS members and others to gain feedback before the Executive Board settles on a working draft in February, 2011.

Identify preliminary strategic directions

Before breaking into small groups, the large group discussed possible criteria for developing strategic directions. The following key "aspirations" were suggested.

1. FPS could shape policy (be a major force!!!)
2. Members (especially industrial) would see the benefits;
3. FPS would fill a vital and valuable role by bringing together expertise from a broad array of sources;
4. Information and expertise would be accessible and appreciated!

5. FPS would have the potential to change negative perceptions.
6. There would be a HUGE new demand for education and training; and
7. FPS would truly have a global reach!!!

It was also suggested that individuals tend to join organizations and become members of an organization for one of the two following reasons:

1. To promote professional identity and enjoy the benefits of affiliation; or
2. To have access to a suite of services that the organization provides for its members.

The group broke into small groups of three to generate ideas for strategic directions (*Attachment 6 -- Identifying preliminary strategic directions*). Each group then wrote their best ideas onto half-sheets of paper and gave them to the facilitator. The facilitator read and posted each idea on a large sheet with adhesive so that the ideas could be repositioned during the discussion. Once all the ideas were posted, participants categorized the ideas into main groupings and labeled each grouping. (*Attachment 7 -- Preliminary Strategic Directions*).

Reflection and additional comments

In discussing the results, the group highlighted the need to:

1. Excite members;
2. Facilitate multiple kinds of connections (professionally, globally, or around issues);
3. Organize FPS to achieve the vision, mission, and strategic directions.
4. Identify what info is needed by whom;
5. Broker scientific research, knowledge, and expertise; and
6. Provide information resource to meet consumer need.

The group also discussed the need to reconcile the goals to "grow membership" and to "enhance influence" since these two goals may, at times, be in conflict.

Next steps

In discussing next steps, the group agreed more work was needed to clarify the strategic directions. In particular, the columns labeled "Organize to Promote Professional Identity" and "Being a Selective Knowledge Broker" needed to be further developed and refined. It was also noted that the category titled "Expand and Define Customer Base" is an especially important precursor to developing strategic goals and tactics.

The group reiterated the agreement to have the Strategic Planning Committee merge the two proposals into a working draft that would be shared with FPS members and others to gain feedback before the Executive Board settles on a working draft of the vision and mission statements in February, 2011.

Adjourn

The President then thanked the participants for their time and hard work and wished them safe travels. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1

Listening Session

Forest Products Society: Visioning and Strategic Planning

November 6, 2010

8:00 a.m. -- 3:30 p.m.

Centennial Research Facility

Forest Products Laboratory Campus.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Reach consensus on a working draft of the vision and mission statements.
2. Identify preliminary strategic directions for the Forest Products Society.
3. Provide other advice to the FPS Board as they continue the visioning and strategic planning process.

AGENDA:

1. Welcome and introductions (Barry Goodell, Chair)
2. Overview of objectives and agenda (Ryan Church, Facilitator)
3. Present draft vision and mission (Ryan Church, Facilitator)
4. Discuss terminology and rebranding (Group Discussion)

LUNCH *

5. Identify preliminary strategic directions (Group Discussion)
6. Reflection and additional comments (Group Discussion)
7. Next steps (Ryan Church, Facilitator)
8. Adjourn (Barry Goodell, Chair)

ATTACHMENT 2

Forest Product Society Strategic Planning Listening Session November 6, 2010

Online Chat History

Brian Brashaw: All - *4 allows you to mute and unmute your phone.

Forest Products Lab: just *4

Brian Brashaw: Again - the facilitator is Ryan Church. He is clear on my end, up here in Duluth.

Shri Ramaswamy: how about introducing on-line participants?

Brian Brashaw: All - I tried to get all the names of the in room folks - I heard John Shelly, Barry Goodell, Paul Merrick, Jeff Howe, Jim Bowyer, Bob Ross, Ryan Church, Stefan Bergmann and others...

Brian Brashaw: I agree. Steve, please ask for an opportunity for on-line introductions.

Brian Brashaw: Same order as on the form starting with Alan.

Brian Brashaw: Thanks!

Brian Brashaw: All - you can select the full screen toggle to see it better.

Brian Brashaw: Susan Diehl has joined the online group.

Brian Brashaw: Can everyone see this list?

Steve Quarles: what was it about "bio" that was disagreeable to people?

Question for Patrice ...

Brian Brashaw: You should be able to move down through the list.

Brian Brashaw: Great job of jumping in Steve. So far this combination of in room and online is working good. Knock on "Wood".

Forest Products Lab: You can unmute to make a comment

Brian Brashaw: Interesting changes. When I joined UMD in 1991, we had a division of BioProducts, including wood, ag, and peat. We modified the name back to Wood or Forest Products in 1996 based on our Advisory Board's recommendation. Roy Adams championed the BioProducts name twenty years back! I think that a combination of terms allow everyone to feel at home; forest or wood, biomaterials or bioproducts, bioenergy.

Brian Brashaw: Please remember to mute your line after talking since we can hear typing.

Brian Brashaw: No cords online!

Brian Brashaw: Nice comments Shri and Ian.

Shri Ramaswamy: You are welcome!

Brian Brashaw: Thinking back to when I was studying with Tom Maloney, he was always thinking about how to create an identity. The WSU program prior to the late 80's was the Wood Technology Section. Then they transitioned to Wood Materials & Engineering Laboratory, allowing folks to identify with Wood, Materials, and Engineering separately or also in a combined fashion, linking all 3.

Brian Brashaw: WSU - Washington State University; sorry.

Steve Quarles: Have we lost ability to define "green"? LEED uses the term and wood isn't always there.

Brian Brashaw: And now I think the WSU is referred to as the Composite Materials and Engineering Center; with a focus on wood and natural materials, cementitious materials, polymeric materials and engineering.

Alan Preston: My concern with these discussions remains that in my opinion the real issue with FPS is that it has lost membership more because it is too broad in what it does, and not good enough at these. The two key things FPS does are the FPJ and the Annual Meeting. FPJ has low ratings because it is perceived as not having enough excellent science, and the Annual Meeting is no longer attractive to many as it provides a compelling reason to be for too few in the membership. While broadening may be great, making the organization more efficient and the best it can be in focus and attractiveness may be more important.

Alan Preston: Absolutely

Shri Ramaswamy: Broad does not have to preclude quality; it can be both.
or we can strive to be both.

Alan Preston: I agree with that completely.

Brian Brashaw: So far the sound volume seems ok up here in Duluth.

Brian Brashaw: How's everyone else?

Steve Quarles: fine for me.

Susan Diehl: Sound is fine here in MS

Shri Ramaswamy: Based on what we are hearing, not leaving what we are good at, and embracing a broader scope and including importance on sustainability, I suggest to consider

Shri Ramaswamy: Sustainable Forest (and?) Bioproducts

Steve Quarles: can't hear now

Brian Brashaw: The afternoon session will be available just for chat, video camera. There will be less interaction with the online group. And I will be out in my deerstand. Steve Schmieding is handling all this from the Madison and will be "in charge" this afternoon.

Ian de la Roche: speak up

Alan Preston: One comment I made to Stefan a few weeks back was that from an industry viewpoint, what the people who run Friday Offcuts have done for "Forest Products" information and news and relevancy is a model worth looking at that the Society might adopt as a model to improve relevancy on that side of the coin. Improving the FPJ can only come about by pro-actively seeking excellent papers and rejecting chaff or putting it in a different journal or format. Incidentally, I am all for electronic format publications.

Brian Brashaw: Comments noted, thanks! The key is moving the mike and people speaking up!

Brian Brashaw: We're doing our best to remind them to speak up!

Ian de la Roche: Are we making strategic choices for the future direction of FPS or wordsmithing a vision statement???

Steve Quarles: Are "sustainable and forest bioproducts" all "renewable products"?

Brian Brashaw: Added the last 2 as 37 and 38.

Shri Ramaswamy: Steve - if we use renewable resources - I think should involve use or utilization, as we are about using; I think

Brian Brashaw: 37 is environmentally preferable products; 38 is sustainable forest and bioproducts

Ian de la Roche: Bioproducts is inclusive for bioenergy biochemicals and biomaterials.

Shri Ramaswamy: I agree

Shri Ramaswamy: Hello all, I need to leave for a BBE SneakPeek with about 30 prospective students and parents; I would love to continue to be here and may be back after my talk and discussion

Steve Quarles: "Environmentally Preferable" seems very subjective.

Brian Brashaw: I'm sorry - but the online poll will only allow you to pick one of these. I think Ryan is going to allow those in person to make multiple selections. One way to do this is to send in a chat with your multiple picks, by sending in the number, not the name.

Alan Preston: Is all this aimed at inclusion in a vision statement (all are fine) or in re-naming the Society, which requires considerably more thought.

Shri Ramaswamy: what about economic considerations? I think industry would like to have economics and environmental considerations

Sheldon Shi: How about renewable based products (or material)?

Brian Brashaw: Looks like we added Sheldon Shi! Welcome Sheldon!

Shri Ramaswamy: I am not able to choose more than one at a time - any ideas how?

Sheldon Shi: Sorry, I am late!

Ian de la Roche: Agree with Alan

Sheldon Shi: i LIKE THE WORD "RENEWABLE", if we use "based", that will address Mike's comment on some non renewable component

Brian Brashaw: All - the online poll will only allow one choice - if the facilitator asks for more than one choice, you may type the selected numbers into the chat box and we will add them.

Brian Brashaw: Please remember to mute your lines when not speaking as we can hear typing. *4

Brian Brashaw: Whoever is typing, please mute your line!

Brian Brashaw: Use *4 to mute or if you have a mute button on your phone, please use it.

Brian Brashaw: This is Jeff Howe speaking.

Brian Brashaw: I hope the online option was a good one for all so far! It's a challenge but I think it is working.

Steve Quarles: how many choices (dots)?

Brian Brashaw:12 choices

Alan Preston:38, 18,

Brian Brashaw: Type the numbers into the chat box.

Brian Brashaw: Please put your number one choice on the poll. Then send in all the others into the chat box. By number ok.

Steve Quarles:38, 39, 36

JanelleLeafblad: _, 39, 29, 32, 7, 36

Susan Diehl: My first choice I put in the poll (38) and my other selections are 7 & 39

Sheldon Shi: first choice: 39, others: 36

Brian Brashaw: Anything else?

Brian Brashaw: Here's the total frequency by number of all the choices from our on-line group.

Brian Brashaw: 3 (1), 4 (1), 7 (2), 18 (4), 28 (1), 29 (1), 31 (1), 32 (1), 33 (3), 34 (1), 35 (2), 36 (5), 37 (1), 38 (4), 39 (4) and one vote for 40, Forest Biomaterials and Bioproducts

Brian Brashaw: Back in two minutes

Xinfeng Xie: Hi Brian, is the voting for terminology still going on

Brian Brashaw: Yes.

Brian Brashaw: Can you have them repeat the results by number of the choice, not the name.

Brian Brashaw: No by the number of the choice

Forest Products Lab: Brian - can you please give us a white board?

Brian Brashaw: As on-line participants, we need to be patient as we don't want to slow down the in-room group.

Brian Brashaw: We'll add the results to the left note pad so you can see how the results worked out.

Alan Preston: From what I can see the people in the room have chosen rather differently from those online. Is that correct?

Brian Brashaw: I'll add them in.

Ian de la Roche: Sustainable is good because it is broader than environmental and includes economic and social aspects

Ian de la Roche: also bioproducts is inclusive of energy chemicals and materials

Alan Preston: Actually my comment was more an observation, if correct, that there are some rather different views depending on???

Brian Brashaw: All - I added some of the voting tallies on the left note 5.

Brian Brashaw: The poll below results just show the online votes.

Brian Brashaw: And only the primary vote.

Alan Preston: Thanks Brian

Ian de la Roche: we are beyond "wood is good"

Xinfeng Xie: wood is one of the very few sustainable resources on earth

Brian Brashaw: No need

Brian Brashaw: No need for online comments right now!

Alan Preston: It seems to me that very few members of any society actually know what the vision statement or mission statement is, rather members know what the organization does and what it does for them. An all encompassing vision statement would surely be fine, and then the organization needs to excel in delivering its services, that's what really matters, in my view.

Forest Products Lab: Please keep sending comments. We will review them all after the meeting and consider them as we move forward.

Brian Brashaw: If folks want to make a verbal comment, please add that to your comments. The facilitator will provide opportunities for you to jump in.

Brian Brashaw: All - you can select full screen to see it better.

Ian de la Roche: Thanks FPL, some of the chat comments are meant for the record and not necessarily to be an entry for immediate oral input to the meeting. we don't want to slow or hinder the flow around the table.

Brian Brashaw: Please remember to mute your phone lines, folks. I am hearing all sorts of noise. *4

Brian Brashaw: Please mute your lines.

Forest Products Lab: PLEASE mute phones

Alan Preston: Okay, maybe I'm missing something here, but coming back to my earlier comment about the very successful Friday Offcuts and the information on this whole arena that it delivers every Friday, does anyone know or care what their mission statement is?

Ian de la Roche: could we substitute benefits with values?

Brian Brashaw: Online folks - I am hearing female voices in the background. Please make SURE you are on mute or we will MUTE all the lines for you.

Brian Brashaw: Please check where you are and make sure that you are in a quiet location.

Ian de la Roche: jim is right with customers, retention is always easier than recruitment

Brian Brashaw: Easier to grow an existing business than starting a new one - as well.

Ian de la Roche: Brian agree fully

Alan Preston: Thanks for putting up with me, have a great weekend.
Alan

Brian Brashaw: Thanks for all your feedback folks. We are going to disconnect the conference call and redial in at 12:00.

Brian Brashaw: Duluth - OUT!

Forest Products Lab: We are back

JanelleLeafblad: yes

Forest Products Lab: We will be in small groups till 1:15 OR 1:30

Forest Products Lab: Anything to comment?

Forest Products Lab: are you still both on the conference call line?

Xinfeng Xie: yes, I am.

JanelleLeafblad: i'm only listening peripherally as they move things around

Forest Products Lab: Thank you

JanelleLeafblad: most of the comments are too low to hear - ryan's is the clearest

Forest Products Lab: he is closest to microphone for this afternoon he did not pass around mic we could do this If you want

JanelleLeafblad: probably not necessary

JanelleLeafblad: what worked for me about today's session: i was glad to see energy in the room, ideas start to shake out, and for me - it was a chance to listen and internalize how i feel about what my role with FPS has been and where it has the potential to go

JanelleLeafblad: this would be a good time to be passing the mic around!>

Xinfeng Xie: Since I am in my early career in wood science and technology, this is very help to me to unstanding those important issues and potentials for the future of forest industry. Have to think big.

Xinfeng Xie: no comment from me.

Forest Products Lab: good day

Xinfeng Xie: thanks a lot for facilitating this, have a good one

ATTACHMENT 3

Guidelines for participation

1. Contribute your ideas.
2. Listen to understand.
3. Disagree by stating your idea.
4. Work on behalf of the whole group – build on any and all points of agreement.
5. One person speak at a time – keep the conversation on track.

Group Consensus Decision-Making

Consensus can be defined as “the sense of the group.” Unanimous agreement is not necessary, but the group strives for a decision that all members can support even though they may not agree 100%. (70% comfortable, but can “live with the decision” and willing to support 100%).

Consensus can often be achieved if communications have been open, the group climate has been supportive, and everyone has felt that he or she has had their chance to influence the decision. It is important for any opposition to be fully expressed so that all members have the opportunity to truly understand the opposition view.