

# EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Wednesday, April 7, 2004

Schoolcraft College ~ Livonia, Michigan

## Evaluation Workshop Agenda Topics

The day-long *Measuring Progress* evaluation workshop consists of a variety of interactive lectures and activities. It is led by faculty and staff from the Ecosystem Management Initiative (EMI), a research and training group in the School of Natural Resources & Environment at the University of Michigan. The workshop agenda includes:

### Purpose and Benefits of Evaluation

- Discussion of the value of evaluation within the context of GreenWays Initiative projects
- Introduction of the main concepts & ideas of evaluation

### Challenges of Evaluation

- Interactive exploration of the barriers to evaluation; and problems that occur when groups fail to measure their progress

### EMI-Developed Evaluation Process

- Introduction to EMI's four-stage approach to an evaluation process

### Stage A: Situation Mapping

- Introduction to situation mapping as a tool for understanding a project's purpose and developing key questions for evaluation
- Construction of individual situation maps to clarify the relationship between project goals, threats and assets, and strategies

*Lunch (provided)*

### Stage A: Situation Mapping Debrief/ Discussion

### Stage B: Identifying Evaluation Metrics - Questions and Indicators

- Using a situation map to develop evaluation questions, indicators and comparisons
- Applying criteria to selecting useful questions and indicators

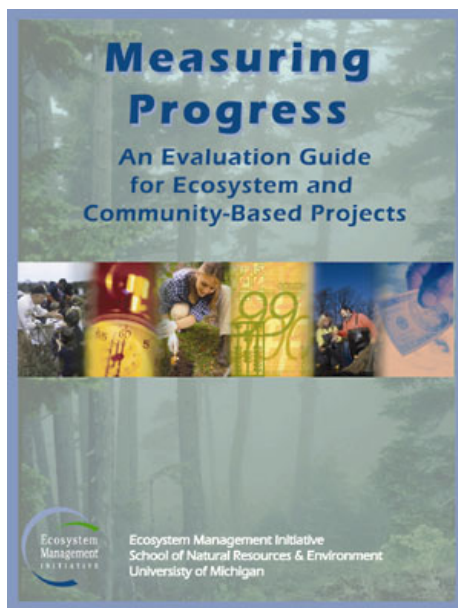
### Stages C and D: Measuring and Managing Evaluation Findings

- Developing a plan for collecting information, including existing data sources and simple yet effective data collection approaches
- Linking results to decision-making: trigger points and adaptive management

### Next Steps

- How can groups imagine applying these ideas and methods, or portions of them, to their projects?
- What would be the limits to doing this, and how might these limits be dealt with?

Workshop participants are given the *Measuring Progress* guide, worksheets, and access to web resources. In addition, tools drafted during the workshop can help groups jump-start the process on their own.



The cover of the *Measuring Progress* evaluation guide. It features four stages, each consisting of a series of manageable steps. Worksheets are provided to help develop the products of each stage.

## The Training Team

from the Ecosystem Management Initiative,  
School of Natural Resources & Environment,  
University of Michigan  
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### Dr. Steven Yaffee

*Theodore Roosevelt Professor of Ecosystem Management  
Director of the Ecosystem Management Initiative*

### Dr. Sheila Schueller

*Ecologist and EMI Post-Doctoral Research Fellow*

### Steven Higgs

*Research Fellow*

# Measuring Progress Evaluation Workshop

## A New Way of Approaching Evaluation

### Why Evaluate?

Many collaborative community- and ecosystem-based projects are asking a set of hard questions, spurred on by government agencies and funders that are being more strategic in their support and investments: Is our project being as effective as it can be in moving toward objectives? Are we organized efficiently? Are we having an impact?

Measuring impact and managing adaptively are becoming necessary elements of strategic planning, fundraising and day-to-

day project management. In this workshop, you will learn how to integrate evaluation into your project's ongoing activities, instead of viewing it as an "end-of-the-pipe" process.

By carrying out evaluation activities, you can better document success and determine necessary direction, while improving your project's "process." By doing so, you can increase the likelihood of achieving on-the-ground ecological and socioeconomic change.



Workshop participants learn new ways to choose indicators based on the needs of their project's situation.

## The Evaluation Process in a Nutshell

### Useable and Multi-metric

The EMI-developed evaluation process pulls together a diverse set of ideas drawn from current literature and the experiences of on-the-ground project managers into a compact and useable evaluation process.

This process includes a multi-metric approach to evaluation. Guidance is provided not only for measuring *ecological* objectives, but also *socioeconomic* objectives, as well as issues related to *process* – how projects make

decisions, communicate and carry out activities. You will also learn how to measure progress on many levels, from the *implementation of strategies* to *intermediate impacts* to ultimate *outcomes*.

### Four Stages of the Evaluation Process

The tools of each stage can be used and re-used throughout the life of your project.

In **Stage A**, you ask yourself the following questions:

- What are your goals and objectives?
- What are the threats and assets affecting your project?
- What are your strategies and activities?

In **Stage B**, you use the products of Stage A to consider:

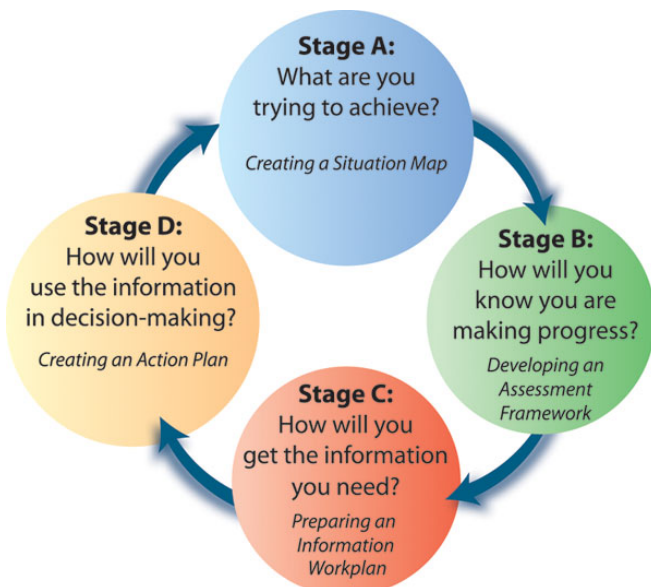
- What evaluation questions will you ask?
- What indicators and comparisons will you use to assess progress?

In **Stage C**, you prepare for the logistics of doing your evaluation plan. This includes thinking about:

- Where will data come from?
- How will you process and analyze data?
- Who will be responsible for these activities?

In **Stage D**, you tie information back to decision-making by asking:

- What will be your trigger points?
- What actions might you take based on your trigger points?



The *Measuring Progress* evaluation cycle showing the series of stages and products.