

Abstract

Keywords

1. Introduction

2. Method

2.1. Questionnaire survey

2.2. Forestry project description

2.3. Activities of market actors

2.4. Decision criteria for engagement

2.5. Selection of market actors

Table 1

2.6. Criteria allocation

2.7. Analysis methods

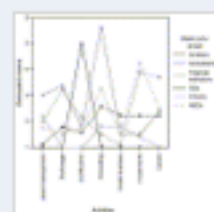
3. Results

3.1. Response rate, participants

3.2. Market actors' activities

Table 2

Table 3



3.3. Criteria nominations

Table 4

3.4. Criteria of European and Latin American sample



Abstract

Converting the environmental services of tropical forests from public goods to tradable services is a promising approach to sustaining tropical forests' ecosystem functions and services. We hypothesize that the development of markets for these environmental services will substantially depend on compliance with requirements of key market actors representing supply and demand sides. This paper analyzes market actors' decision criteria related to engagement in tropical forestry projects that provide environmental services. In a questionnaire survey, 45 experts from Latin America and Europe representing key market actor groups, i.e., certifiers, consulting companies, financial institutions, governmental organizations, industrial companies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), were asked to name and weight criteria that tropical forestry projects should meet in order to attract their institution's engagement. Many of these 45 institutions are already involved in several market activities related to tropical forestry projects and environmental services, including asset management, certification, consultancy, credit business, investments, project ownership and trade/brokerage. The collected criteria cover a variety of topics that clearly go beyond frequently applied sustainability dimensions in forestry related multi-criteria based decision making, i.e., social, environmental and economic dimensions. For example, relatively many criteria involve topics such as project management, risk management or marketing. While differences in criteria weighting among market actor groups are not significant, we found a significant interaction between criteria weights and the provenance of participants, indicating that Latin American and European market actors nominate and weight single decision criteria differently. The five criteria with highest mean weights in the European sample are social benefits, legal compliance, sustainability, environmental benefits and stakeholder participation. The Latin American market actors weighted highest expertise and capacity building, financial resources, political aspects, information management and markets. Generally, Latin American market actors emphasize criteria related to markets and information/knowledge management, whereas European participants tend to assign importance to social and environmental benefits and sustainability. The survey provides preliminary insights into bottom-up defined decision criteria relevant for key-actors in the market of tropical forestry-based environmental services, and compiles information for further multi-criteria based assessments of tropical forestry projects providing environmental services.

Keywords

Decision criteria; Environmental services; Market actors; Tropical forestry; Multi-criteria decision making

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