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## STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING EVALUATION CRITERIA OF FOREST ROAD OPTIONS IN ROMANIA

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### Abstract

Transparent and participatory decision making in solving complex forest management problems are fostered by numerous forest policies. Thus, all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the process of evaluating forest road options from the early stages of planning. However, participatory tools are not yet used as a matter of course in the Romanian forest sector. This study aimed to stress the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in decision making in the forest sector. A survey (n=27) was conducted for prioritizing stakeholders' preferences on criteria and sub-criteria used in the assessment of forest road options. ANOVA and post-hoc tests were performed for analysing the statistical significance of responses and possible patterns of stakeholders' behaviour. Accessibility for performing forest works, protection of ecologically important areas and road construction costs were identified as the most relevant evaluation sub-criteria. The results showed stakeholders are aware of the environmental impacts of forest roads, while they show yet little concern for risks of accidents and other social factors. In respect to certain criteria, a tendency of homogenous clustering of expertise groups' opinions was noted, the groups with forestry backgrounds behaving differently than those with environmental or tourism backgrounds. The outcomes of this study are useful for practitioners willing to approach complex decision problems like forest road network planning or selection of timber harvesting systems from a multidimensional perspective.

*Key words:* corporate social responsibility, decision support, forest roads, forest operations, multiple criteria decision making

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