Section IV: Synthesis

“Our understanding of ecosystems has been enhanced by expanding the scope of variables used to monitor restoration success. In the case of salt marshes, ecological functions such as wildlife species survivorship, biomass productivity, and ability to sequester water-borne pollutants are being used to evaluate restoration. Social variables, however, are generally excluded from ecological analysis. This is unfortunate, because excellent methods exist for including humans in ecosystem analysis. This final paper draws on the research presented throughout this Bulletin to present methods for using restoration to expand our knowledge of the relationship between humans and ecosystems.”

– from The Human Component of Ecosystems, Stephen Boyden

“Improved understanding, not only among academics, but across the community at large, of human situations in terms of culture-nature interplay may well be a prerequisite for ecological sustainability and, hence, for the survival of the human species.”