“Desolation Row: Sustainability for the Oft-Forgotten”
Expanding the scope of sustainability policy and practice to include the underclass, natural hazards victims, the oppressed, refugees, and the poorest of the poor.

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210 ASB (Aline Skaggs Biology Bldg.)
Abstract
Sustainability policy and practice at the community, region, and national scales has made only modest progress at integrating social justice into sustainable development. Efforts to advance sustainability by governments, NGOs, and the private sector have oft forgotten the needs of specific classes of persons, in particular the underclass, natural hazards victims, the oppressed, refugees, and the poorest of the poor. As a locus of desolation, these classes of persons may require distinctive and targeted approaches to sustainability. As a fault line in development practices, this issue is both rising in urgency and open to analysis. In this presentation, we examine the implications of explicitly considering these categories of persons in sustainability practice at multiple scales and in multiple sectors. For each category of persons, we: 1) briefly review the conditions linking them to sustainability concerns, 2) provide specific examples from North America, Africa, and Asia, and 3) propose potential remedies to expand the scope of sustainability policy and practice to include the oft forgotten. Attention to the oft forgotten can significantly advance more comprehensive and just forms of sustainability.

Bio
Dr. Gary Machlis is Professor of Environmental Sustainability at Clemson University, and co-leads the Department of the Interior’s Strategic Sciences Group, which conducts scientific assessments during major environmental crises, most recently Hurricane Sandy. He is also Science Advisor to the Director, National Park Service, the first scientist to be appointed to that position. Dr. Machlis has published widely on issues of sustainability, conservation, human ecology, and science policy. His co-edited book Warfare Ecology: A New Synthesis for Peace and Security (2011) helped launch this emerging subfield; his most recent co-authored book on the ecology of cities, The Baltimore School of Urban Ecology, will be published in October 2015. His international work has included the Giant Panda Project in China, research in the Galapagos Islands, co-leading the AAAS effort to help to rebuild science capacity in Haiti after that nation’s devastating 2010 earthquake, and collaborations with Cuban environmental scientists and park managers. He currently co-leads the North American Sustainability Sciences Project, which aims to develop a guiding document for sustainability in North American universities 2015-2025. Machlis received his Ph.D. from Yale University, and is a Fellow of the AAAS.