

National Forest Programmes as a Holistic Approach to Address Inter Sectoral Impacts on Forests

Øistad, K.¹, and Trømborg, E.²
¹Ministry of Agriculture, Norway
²Prevista As, Norway

Abstract

The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests' fourth session provides the agreed principles of national forest programmes (nfp). National forest programmes include a wide range of approaches in the effort to towards sustainable forest management. The potential important role of national forest programmes is further emphasised in the work of United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). UNFF recognised that national forest programmes are increasingly taking into account the proposals for action agreed on in the Intergovernmental Panel on Forest and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

Challenges in the development and implementation of national forest programmes are discussed on the basis of some experiences from Norway with a view on how existing system for development of forest policies influences the development and implementation of national forest programmes.

One of the main potential contributions of nfp is the opportunity to address inter-sectoral impacts; decisions outside the traditional mandate of forest policy have impact on forests and forest management practices. National forest programmes have the potential to raise awareness of the importance of the forest sector, its potential to contribute to national development and provision of multiple goods and services. Nfp can by involvement of different parts of government and interest groups build capacity to address the impact of different sectors on sustainable forest management and how forests can contribute to human welfare and national development objectives. Nfp is also an opportunity to focus on issues that tend to fall between different national authorities and to improve the communication of forest policies nationally and internationally. Nfp provides a holistic approach to implement the outcome of international forest related initiatives and conventions. The main challenge in a country with a small forest sector, like Norway, is how to establish sufficient political attention and support on the nfp process and hence motivate for broad participation from stakeholders.

There are conflicting interests and different values related to forest management practices. These values and interests are changing over time. Nfp is a challenging approach to forest sector planning, but provides a framework of addressing different interests and values in the development and implementation of national forest policies. A particular challenge for nfps is how to link it effectively to existing political structures. International exchange of knowledge and experience related to development and implementation of nfp processes is needed in order to further improve the contribution of Nfp on sustainable forest management.