

Minutes of Working Group 2 Meeting in Sopron (Hungary), 28-29 June 2002

(provisional version)

Participants: Peter Glück, Karl Hogl, Johannes Voitleithner, Cristina Montiel Molina, Inocência Seita Coelho, David Humphreys, Américo M. S. Carvalho Mendes and Attila Lengyel

Moderator: Américo M. S. Carvalho Mendes

Minutes by: Johannes Voitleithner, David Humphreys, Américo M. S. Carvalho Mendes

Agenda

Topics: Land tenure, multi-level governance and advocacy coalitions

FRIDAY, 28TH JUNE

9h00-9h15:

1. Opening and agenda

- Opening
- Discussion and adoption of the agenda

2. Paper presentations

- Patterns of Multi-level Co-ordination for NFP-Processes (Karl Hogl)
- Land tenure as influence factor on National Forest Programmes (Attila Lengyel)
- Land tenure as an influence factor on National/Regional Forest Programmes in Spain (Cristina Montiel Molina)
- Land Tenure as an Influence Factor on the Portuguese Forest Policy (Inocência Seita Coelho)

12h30-14h15: *Lunch*

14h15-14h30:

2. Paper presentations (continuation)

- Potential effects of "Advocacy coalitions" on National Forest Programmes Processes (Karl Hogl)

14h30-18h30:

3. Discussion of the presentations and drafting list of propositions

SATURDAY, 29TH JUNE

9h-11h:

3. Discussion of the presentations and drafting list of propositions (continuation)

Minutes

In spite of the small number of participants due to tight budget constraints, it was a very good and fruitful meeting, nicely hosted by Attila Lengyel. Besides the presentations mentioned in the agenda given by their authors, there was also a useful written contribution on the topic of advocacy coalitions sent by Berit Aasen who could not attend the meeting.

From these presentations and the subsequent discussions it was possible to draw the propositions presented hereafter, organised according to the three topics on the agenda: land tenure, multilevel governance and advocacy coalitions.

Propositions

I. LAND TENURE

A. General propositions

1. Land tenure is not a supporting or impeding factor of NFPs **in itself**. The impact of a given land tenure arrangement on an NFP will depend on its interrelationships with other factors.

2. For NFPs to be significant they should take into account property rights issues. In particular, they have to contribute to the **specification** and **securing** of those rights. Otherwise, they will be an impeding factor of NFPs.

3. A given land tenure regime tends to be associated with a certain **socio-political and cultural context**. Land tenure arrangements change over time, but such changes usually happen as part of a slow historical processes. The socio-political and cultural context influences the distribution of political power and other social factors which have effects on the way land tenure relates to the forest policy process. In order to be effective, NFPs should be sensitive to any changes to the dominant land tenure regime and/or the prevailing socio-political and cultural context.

B. Propositions about the complex structure of land tenure regimes

4. **Forest ownership** and **forest land use** don't necessarily pertain to the same people. So there is here a potential for **conflicts**, one of the most frequent ones being between production and recreational/environmental uses. This calls for voluntary conflict resolution schemes, or for public intervention. If conflict resolution schemes or interventions are absent, the differentiation of those rights and continuing conflict may be an impeding factor for NFPs.

5. **Participation** becomes organisationally more difficult where property rights and forest land use are **differentiated** across different regional levels, different layers of government, and different groups of people. In such cases participation can only be assured through the establishment of a "participative forum". The forms of participation will vary according to national **political culture and socio-economic conditions**.

6. A **diversity** of property regimes calls for more **coordination** and more **participation**. If these are achieved in a balanced way, that diversity can be a supporting factor for NFPs. Without that coordination and participation, there is a tendency for forest owners to follow their narrow self-interest, thus impeding NFPs.

C. Propositions about the territorial dimension of land tenure regimes

7. Land tenure regimes have a **strong territorial dimension** which tends to be regionally differentiated. This regional pattern matters for the type of influence (supporting or impeding) that land tenure has on NFPs. In particular, Forest owners' **participation** in NFP processes may

Working Group 2

become difficult when **strong regional differentiations** in land tenure regimes have consequences in terms of lack of unified representation of forest owners at the national level.

8. However, if that territorial differentiation is accompanied by strong **decentralisation** this may improve forest owners' management capacity, and therefore the effect on their **participation** in NFP processes may be positive.

9. **Conflicts** between timber harvesting and environmental/recreational coalitions over forest land use tends stronger at the **national** than at the **local** level. At the local level more compromises are possible.

D. Propositions about the main types of land tenure regimes

10. The more **private forest ownership** is **fragmented**, the less is the owner's interest in its SFM and the less is his **participation** in the NFP process.

11. The way **private forest ownership fragmentation** influences on NFP's core elements depends on the degree of **collective organisation** of forest owners. The more they are collectively organised, the more they are likely to **participate** in the NFP process. In the absence of such collective organisation the NFP lead agency should aim to promote it, if the NFP is meaningfully to incorporate key stakeholders.

12. Some degree of **governmental oversight on private forest regimes** is necessary if SFM is to be achieved. The degree to which this is necessary will depend upon the previous record of private forest owners in promoting SFM; the degree to which the political culture accepts or rejects governmental intervention on the private sector; and the demands of the general public for recreation and other services provided by forests.

13. **State forest property** in countries with a dominant private forest regime tends to support **intersectoral coordination** and **participation**, as well as **long term iterative planning**.

14. In situations where **state property** was predominant, **privatisation** of forest lands accompanied by adequate oversight of private forest owners is a supporting factor to NFPs.

14. A **state forest property** regime which is slow or unable to adjust to society's changes may become an impeding factor to NFPs.

15. **Common property regimes** are defined by the institution of commonly agreed rules, and therefore such regimes have built in forms of **participation**. Therefore a common property regime may contribute positively to other forms of participation in the forest policy process.

II. MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE

16. Policy-making striving to co-ordinate increasing numbers of levels and arenas runs the risk of getting caught in **pitfalls**.

17. The **likelihood of deadlock** can be reduced by allowing actors who are not purely oriented on interest and party politics to **participate** and act as policy brokers/policy entrepreneurs.

18. One pattern of linking levels which may prevent deadlock is "**hierarchical-sequential ordering**" of negotiation processes, either following a top-down approach (centralisation) or a bottom-up approach (decentralisation).

19. Sequential ordering assumes that the overall task can be broken down into **sub-tasks**, apply a separation decision-making procedure distinguishing different stages or aspects of decision-making (about principles, institutional design, budgeting, programming, implementation, e.g.), distributive from factual aspects or regional entities e.g.

20. Another pattern promising to evade deadlock is to co-ordinate simultaneously operation arenas by the exchange of information and persuasion ("**loose coupling**", "**policy brokers**") instead of hierarchical direction.

21. The "**procedures of open co-ordination**" establish a recursive process of inter-level co-ordination, comprising joint problem analysis, goal setting and benchmarking as well as monitoring and evaluation.

22. These procedures can also provide a strategy to prevent deadlock and negative effects of "**systems competition**".

23. The possibility of making "**package deals**" may very much extend the common win-set. Thus, the probability of agreements on substantive results depends of the levels of governance and sectors involved in the processes.

24. Embedding NFPs in the multi-level - rural development context may require to implement the "**partnership principle**" with its devolutionary implications, i.e. the formal involvement of sub-national actors and social partners in decision making.

25. More general, **Reg. 1257/1999** stipulates goals, elements and procedures which closely correspond to our current understanding of the NFP concept, i.e. the modern concept of SFM, inter-sectoral and mul-level - co-ordination, participation of private and sub-national actors, a medium range planning horizon, and recurring monitoring and evaluation.

26. To take full advantage of **cross-border policy learning**, not the international liaison officials, but the actors in charge of national forest policy formulation and implementation should be actively involved in international co-ordination and exchange.

27. **Strong vertical sectoral linkages and professional fraternities** provide channels for successful multi-level - co-ordination, but entail the dominance of one leading sector at the expense of inter-sectoral - co-ordination.

28. **Politicisation** of an issue may activate actors who are less worried about the consequences of non-agreement, entailing a reduced overall win-set.

29. Multi-level systems provide **new points of access** to actors who could not participate or influence national policy processes.

30. The willingness to co-operate at decentralised levels often strongly depends on the "stimulating effect" of **funding** from the central levels.

31. The readiness for inter-sectoral co-ordination is often higher at the **lower levels** of government, where worries about the effects on the clients come to the fore. The political dimensions are especially significant at the higher levels in the course of agenda setting and policy formation.

32. Multi-level - co-ordination processes comprising supranational and sub-national levels requires **actors able to act**. The task of participating in decision-making on multiple levels favours those actors with the resources to finance such participation.

33. In connection to the problems of participation, multi-level governance arrangements often face serious problems with regard to:

- **representation** (the more distant the level of decision-making is from those who are affected);
- **transparency** (actors at one level blame those from another for policy failure; difficulties to follow processes and to hold decision-makers accountable, e.g.).

III. ADVOCACY COALITIONS AND OTHER FORMS OF COLLABORATIVE POLICY MAKING

A) Propositions pertaining to advocacy coalitions

34. Advocacy coalitions are networks of actors from various parts of society that **share core beliefs systems** from which emerge common goals and **co-ordinated actions over a long period of time**, namely with respect to participation in the public policy processes. Those belief systems have a **hierarchical structure** where there is a "**deep core**", a "**policy core**" and "**secondary aspects**".

Actors in an advocacy coalition will show substantial consensus on issues pertaining to the policy core, although less so on secondary aspects.

35. An actor (or coalition) will give up **secondary aspects** of his (its) belief system before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core (ibid.).

36. According to IS, P (?????), "On major controversies within a mature policy subsystem when policy core beliefs are in dispute, the line-up of allies and opponents tends to be rather stable over periods of a decade or so."

37. While **policy-oriented learning** is an important aspect of policy change and can often alter secondary aspects of a coalition's belief system, the policy core attributes of a governmental program are unlikely to be significantly revised as long as the subsystem advocacy coalition which instituted the program remains in power.

38. Significant **perturbations external** to the subsystem (e.g. changes in socio-economic conditions, public opinion, system-wide governing coalition, or policy outputs from other subsystems) are a necessary, but not sufficient, cause of change in the policy core attributes of a governmental program.

39. **Policy-oriented learning** across belief systems is most likely when there is an intermediate level of informed conflict between the two coalitions. This requires that:

- each have the technical resources to engage in such a debate; and that
- the conflict be between secondary aspects of the belief system and core elements of the other or, alternatively, between important secondary aspects of the two belief systems.

40. Problems for which **accepted quantitative data** and theory exist (e.g. problems involving natural systems) are more conducive to policy-oriented learning across belief systems than those in which data and theory are generally qualitative, quite subjective, or altogether lacking.

41. **Policy-oriented learning** across belief systems is most likely when there exists a forum that is:

- prestigious enough to force professionals from different coalitions to participate; and
- dominated by professional norms.

42. In order for **scientists** with quite different points of view to come to **consensus** and for that consensus to be accepted by the major coalitions, the technical advisory committee should include:

- scientists clearly associated with each of the major coalitions;
- neutral scientists.

The chair should come from the latter. Consistently with the very concept of a professional forum, however, only professionals with established reputations should be involved in the forum.

43. **Funding** must come from an institution which is not perceived as being controlled by a single coalition. This will usually require funding either by (a) a legislative body on which all the coalitions are well represented or (b) multiple agencies representing the various coalitions.

44. A **forum** should meet at least a half-dozen times over a year or so.

45. A forum will be successful only in a context of **policy stalemate**, i.e. when each of the coalitions views a continuation of the status quo as unacceptable.

B) Propositions pertaining to other forms of collaborative policy making

46. Stakeholder coalitions in forest policy processes may not always meet the criteria for being "advocacy coalitions". They may simply be diverse forms of **partnerships** with internal conflicts (latent or obvious), without sharing a strong core of common beliefs from the start. However, in spite of not being as strong and as enduring as advocacy coalitions, they may play a non negligible role in forest policy processes. It is not possible to state in general what is the direction (supporting or impeding) of that influence. In some cases those partnerships may arise to block policy changes which are detrimental to the interest of the corresponding stakeholders. In other cases those partnerships may promote participation and intersectoral coordination among stakeholders which otherwise would be left out of the process.

47. The feasibility, stability and duration of stakeholder coalitions depend, among other things, on the nature of the policy issues at stake, the possibilities of strategic interdependencies among stakeholders and on the structure of the payoffs for each stakeholder corresponding to each strategy profile (i.e. combination of stakeholders' individual strategies). Examples of major types of strategic interdependence patterns arising often in forest policy making are the following:

a) "**prisoner's dilemmas**", or "**co-operation problems**" (e.g. provision of forest **public goods**), that is, situations where, without repeated interaction among stakeholders, they tend to behave according to their narrow self-interest when there are possibilities for co-operation which would make everyone better off;

b) "**battles of sexes**" or "**co-ordination problems**", that is, situations where all stakeholders have interest in collaborating with each other, but there are multiple possibilities to do so which don't have the same individual benefits for each stakeholder (e.g. **setting common criteria and indicators** for SFM).

In these and other examples of strategic interdependence in collaborative policy making, theory and empirical evidence show that **participative** and **iterative procedures** are likely to contribute positively to stable co-operation or coordination among stakeholders.