



“Intelligent” Forest Policies

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Forest Trends



A panorama of disillusioning forest policies

The forest sector is one of the most regulated sectors by the government

- **But it is also among those with the most disillusioning records:**

- **Continuous deforestation**
- **Illegal activities predominate**
- **Corruption**
- **Discrimination against the poorest**

The Importance of Forests to Combat Poverty

About thousands of millions of those who live on less than \$ 1 per day depend in one way or another on forests for survival

Tendencies that Affect Governance

- **The growing importance of the private sector**
- **The growing importance of the communities that depend on forests**
 - **The proportion of forest lands in developing countries that communities legally own is close to 22 percent, three times the area owned by firms and other private enterprises.**
 - **This proportion has duplicated in the last decade and a half**
- **It is hoped that by 2020 half the forests of the world will be in the possession of private actors, the majority of which will be communities**

Pressures Over Governance

- **The typical reaction has been: more regulations and laws. More efforts to impose the law through police actions: “order and control”**
- **But the problem goes beyond simple application of the law**
- **Often, laws and policies have defects**
 - **The law is not feasible, it can't be accomplished**
 - **The law is not just, not very equitable, discriminatory**
 - **The law is inefficient**
- **The state can't administer and control hundreds of thousands of forest actors**

The Necessity of Reforming Government Policies

Three fundamental principles:

- **The state should only do that which nobody else can do**
- **The state should create favorable conditions so that other actors can operate under conditions compatible with national priorities: incentives and usage of markets instead of “order and control.”**
- **Carefully establish action priorities**

1. Re-evaluate the Role of Government

- **Responsibility for the creation of a favorable environment to reach national priorities, fight poverty, environmental quality, productivity...**
- **Compensate for “market failures”:
outside forces**
- **Impose order and enforce the laws**

2. Creation of Favorable Conditions

- **Ensure property rights**
- **Officially recognize usage rights of local communities**
- **Eliminate excessive regulation**
- **Eliminate arbitrary decision-making powers**
- **Increase transparency in decisions**

Creation of Favorable Conditions

- **Reduce uncertainty : create a stable environment**
- **Promote auto regulation: codes of conduct**
- **Promote certification**
- **Reform the institutional framework: Decentralization?**
- **Promote markets that are more free and competitive**

Creation of Favorable Conditions

- **Proportion services of extension and training**
- **Create strategic associations**

3. Priorities

- **Concentration in more important themes**
- **In more important and critical places**
- **In more relevant actors**