

Session 022: Cross-sectoral policy linkages in the forestry sector

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The objectives of the session were to review the state-of-the-art knowledge, report on some country examples and results of on-going research, and identify future actions. Five verbal and six poster presentations were prepared for this session.

The dominating role of cross-sectoral effects on forest cover were confirmed. This conclusion arose from a multi-year eight-country study of trade, macroeconomics, sectoral land-use structure, forest impacts as well as on the results from a decade of CIFOR research on the underlying causes of deforestation. However, it was cautioned that some partial effects can change switch from negative to positive according to the scenario context in which they occur, producing counter-intuitive results that are critical to informing policy and management.

Global trends and agreements are the main reasons why improved cross-sectoral policy planning is important for the forest sector. Increasing the capacity of public agencies to manage complex political networks through the use of forestry accounts is a feasible goal. Forestry accounts can be a powerful tool for cross-sectoral policy analysis.

Experience and results of applying the FAO manual for environmental and economic accounting for forestry in the Jilin Province of China were reported. Findings showed that environmental services accounted for as much as two-thirds of the total forest value. Also, the problem of the data availability and the need for capacity building were stressed.

Noting that cross-sectoral linkages have always been implicit, different approaches used in the United States of America to assess forest resources and their related linkages were briefly reviewed, highlighting their respective strengths and weaknesses. It was concluded that natural resource accounting represented a promising framework to analyze cross-sectoral policy impacts despite the difficulty of finding the required data.

Preliminary results of a survey in Netherlands and Austria aiming at understanding sector definition and coordination were reported. They pointed to the importance of focusing on different actors' objectives and their coordination with a view to improving governance.

A brainstorming discussion followed verbal presentations where participants were asked to try to answer in small groups the following question: what are the actions needed to improve cross-sectoral policy planning in forestry? They identified these actions:

- To include cross-sectoral analysis in forestry curricula;
- To promote non-sector specific funding of public program;
- To identify actions for research;
- To identify actors and relations (e.g. problem definition);
- To link sector specific models as well as resource and discipline specific models;
- To define clearly what is the forestry sector and its functions;
- To encourage foresters to change their mentality and open up to other sectors.

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