

Cultures and Forests: Future Indigenous Peoples Forest Management

APFC's ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY SECTOR OUTLOOK STUDY II
THEMATIC STUDY ON
THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The Future of Forests in Asia and the Pacific: Outlook for 2020
16-18 October 2007
Chiang Mai



Diversity of IPs: Contexts and Concerns

Importance of Indigenous Peoples

- Inheritors of unique cultures and ways to relate with environment
- Contribute to cultural richness

Difficulties in National Society re. Indigenous Peoples

- Diverse cultures with multiple identities
- Diverse livelihoods on public lands; majority live in forest lands
- Dispersed without collective coherence and social presence

Concerns:

1. Remote, geographically and historically, and never been part of the national “system”
2. Lack of social documentation (birth certificate, access to basic services and governance)
3. Lack in economic connectivity
4. Limited recognition of cultural practices
5. Subject to hardships of seasonal disasters



Response to Diversity of IPs

Goal: To incorporate these peoples fairly in society

- ✓ Full recognition of human rights and security
- ✓ Improved land management
- ✓ Community sustainability

Barriers:

- ✗ Lack of time, resources, and political will
- ✗ Institutional limitations: approach and priorities
- ✗ Biases, generalizations and impatience

How shall we act?

- = Listening with respect
- = Collaborating and giving importance to the IPs
- = Strengthening opportunities and providing support



Lessons from the Past

- Struggles and a need to stand up
 - Colonial forces governed top-down
 - People struggled for recognition within dominant cultures and kingdoms
 - States do not easily “give up” ownership and responsibility
- No one-fit-for-all solution
 - Political history impacted differently
 - IPs diversity requires appropriate engagement
 - Needs and insecurities differ
 - Levels of economy call for different goals



IPs' Dependence on Forests

- Historical
 - Colonial inheritance left an emphasis on rural resource extraction with no vision for the peoples
- Geographic
 - Cultural distribution heavily overlaps with forest cover
- Demographic
 - 210-260 million IPs in Asia-Pacific (UN and IFAD), majority of them depending on forests

Forests are:

- Vital source for subsistence and cash benefit
- Self-identity is rooted to the land
- Cultural knowledge and practices are drawn from ecosystems

“The more marginalized, the more dependent IPs are on resources, and the more difficult to shift to new relations”

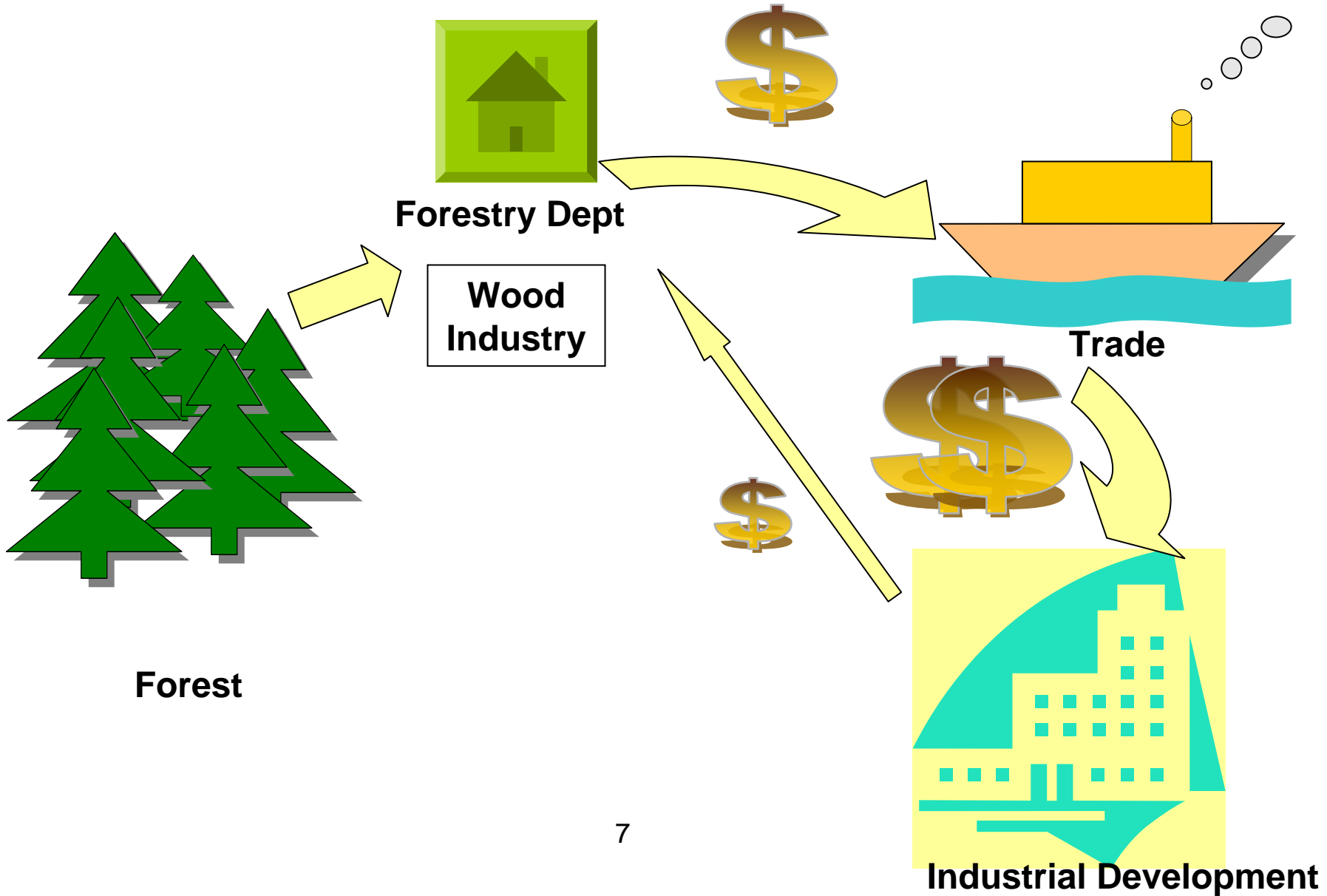


How Forestry Fits in the Livelihood of Indigenous Peoples?

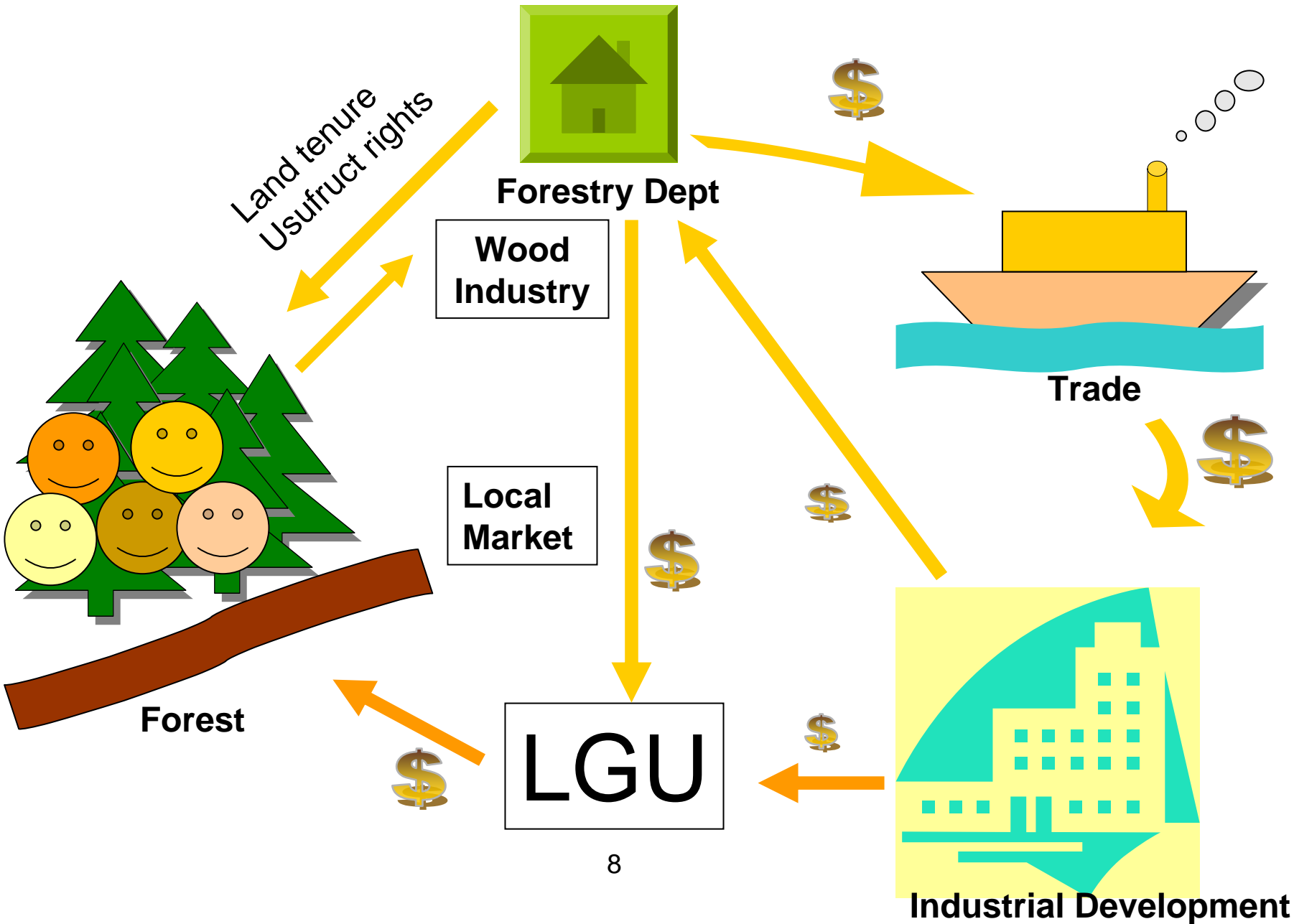
- Why discussion of forestry and indigenous peoples now?
 - Extensive number of people with social needs
 - No other place to go where more secure
 - Increased recognition of presence and impacts of indigenous peoples
 - UN Declaration on the Rights of IPs, 13 Sept 2007
 - Broadened definition of forestry today incorporating peoples
 - National policy is comprehensively defining all resources
 - Need to define resources not only at national but local level
 - National Development Plans for forest lands needs to adequately incorporate local peoples



Traditional Development Model →



Socially Integrated Model →

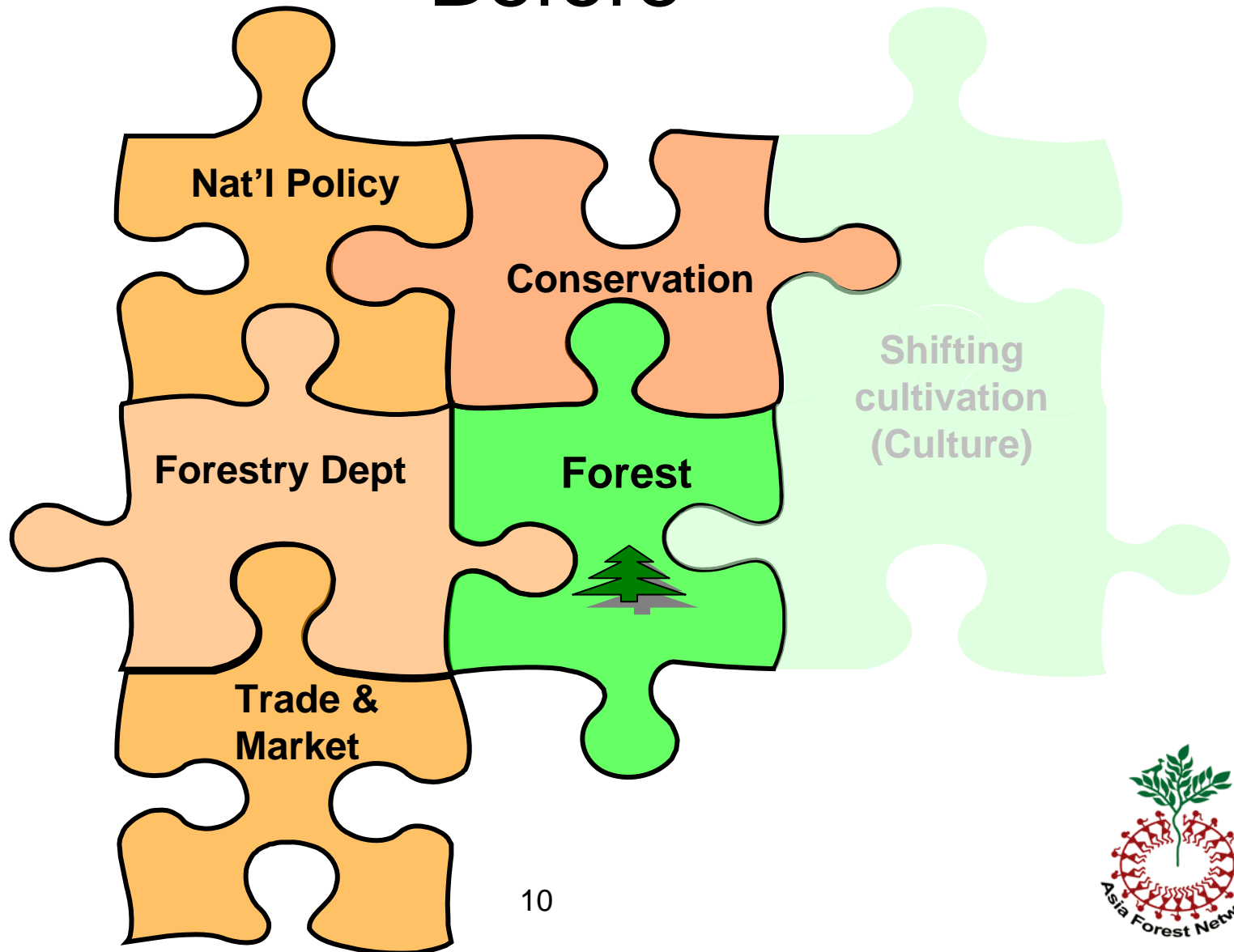


Variability of Rights of Indigenous Communities

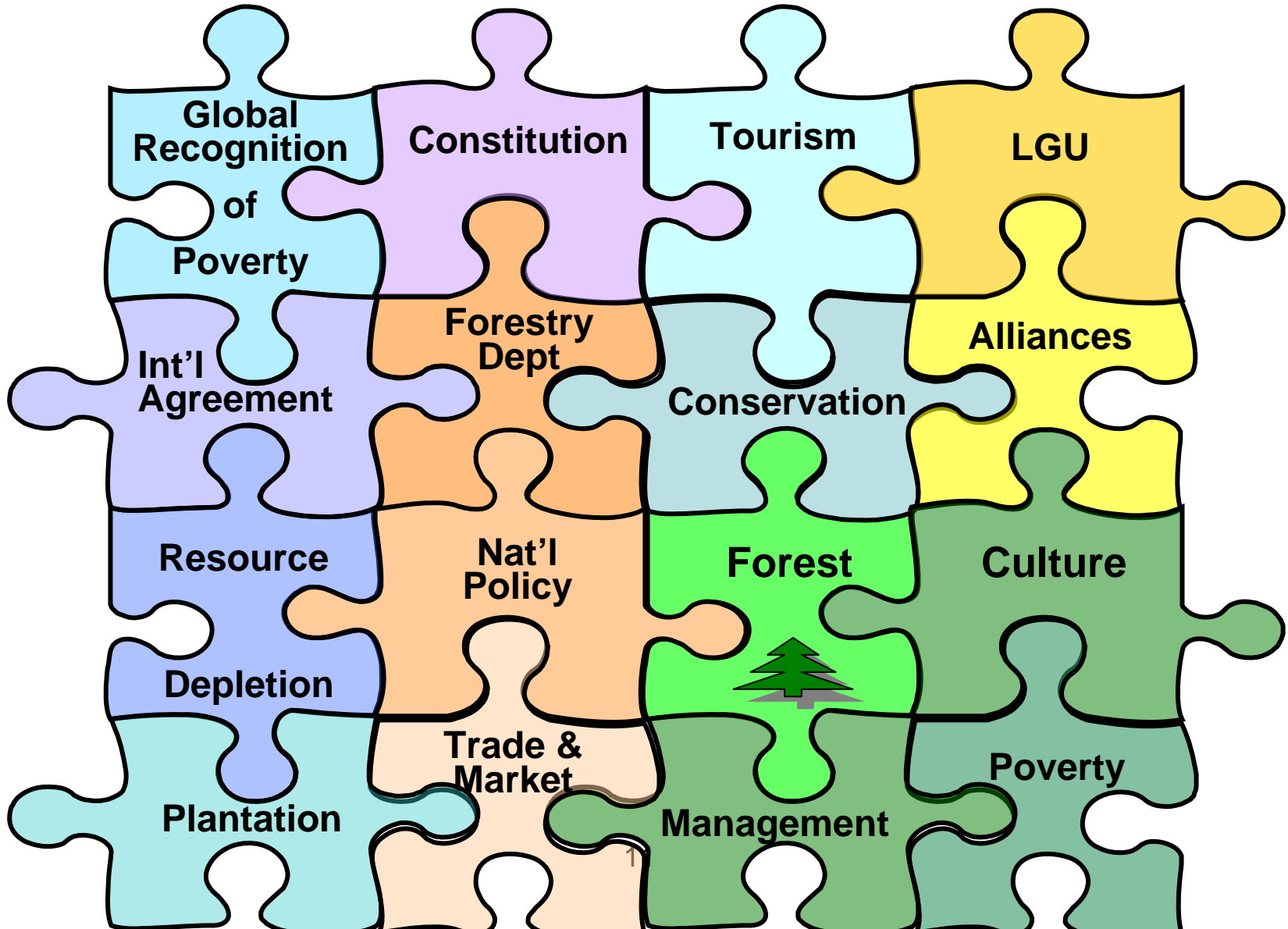
- Current situations vary greatly among countries
- Selected examples in South and SE Asia
 - IP/CF laws involving local government in place
 - National/State laws on IPs in place
 - On their path to recognition
 - Still in struggle for recognition



Drivers of Forest Policies: Before



Drivers of Forest Policies: Today



Key Constraints and Conditions

- Conflicting policies: IPs, conservation, NR extraction policies
 - National government development model
 - ➔ Need for prioritization, not “either-or”
- Capability of IP society
 - Diversity of indigenous communities
 - ➔ Need to assist in capacity and capability
- Condition of forest land
 - Resource-rich
 - National development policy
 - Commercial resource extraction
 - Resource-poor
 - Need to look at process of both resource and system
 - Does not mean taking one away from other
 - ➔ Importance of local action and assisted natural generation
- Potential for management
 - Meeting community capability with government support



Future Scenarios

Scenario A	Resource exploitation for economic development
Scenario B	Internal conflict within the indigenous peoples
Scenario C	Persistent conflict with government and development
Scenario D	Supportive policy and institutional environment for the empowerment of IPs

Future Scenario A

- Resource exploitation for economic development without meeting indigenous peoples' needs
 - Many indigenous cultures lost and IPs displaced for economic development

Policy for IP Rights	Capability of IP Society	Resources Condition	Management Potential
x	x	✓	x

Future Scenario B

- Internal conflict within the indigenous peoples
 - Certain IPs not able to benefit from social changes due to their cultural marginalization and lack of capacity to deal with changes

Policy for IP Rights	Capability of IP Society	Resources Condition	Management Potential
✓	✗	✓ or ✗	✗ → ?

Future Scenario C

- Persistent conflict with government and development
 - IPs continue to struggle for their rights, while gaining broader recognition

Policy for IP Rights	Capability of IP Society	Resources	Management Potential
x → ?	✓	✓	x → ✓

Future Scenario D

- Supportive policy and institutional environment for the empowerment of indigenous peoples
 - Better management for both environment and peoples' livelihood
 - Forest lands increasingly managed by indigenous communities both within and outside of protected areas
 - Threats of losing IPs' identities lessened
 - Government recognizes IPs as national citizens and provides their basic needs

Policy for IP Rights	Capability of IP Society	Resources	Management Potential
✓	✓	✓	→ ✓

Conditions and Scenarios

	Policy for IP Rights	Capability of IP Society	Resources Condition	Management Potential
Scenario A	x	x	✓	x
Scenario B	✓	x	✓ or x	x → ?
Scenario C	x → ?	✓	✓	x → ✓
Scenario D	✓	✓	✓	→ ✓

Future Scenarios: Summary

- These are very broad generalization
- One of the scenarios may dominate in a given country
- Likely to be a patchwork of these scenarios
- For an IP to have positive impact on the forests, the IP has to have its integrity and life vision
- Unless these are articulated, the norm and national economy will override their livelihood
- Need to make space for IPs cultures

