



Elements of a successful tenure system

Enabling environment: Sustainable forest management and poverty alleviation must be government policy priorities and the forestry sector must be committed to tenure reform. Forest management institutions must receive capacity building for their new responsibilities, and sufficient funds must be allocated to implementing and sustaining the changes.

Incentives: The proceeds of forest management should be fully retained by or shared with forest communities through clearly defined distribution channels. Governments can make investment in local development a condition for granting forest concessions, and offer tax breaks for doing so.

Diverse tenure systems: Different tenure systems should be envisaged and applied according to what is most appropriate for the specific case and to rally all existing capacities. All forest tenure and use regulations must be harmonized to avoid contradictions and confusion.

Information flows: Information must reach all stakeholders, including remote forest communities. Good communications' enhance communities' capacities to manage resources profitably and sustainably, and help governments to ensure that new policies and laws bring the expected positive results.

Equity of access: Governments should ensure that community involvement is not limited to traditionally powerful community members, but that all social groups are included, including women, the young, the elderly, the landless and the very poor.

Phased implementation: A gradual handover of responsibilities ensures that administrators and implementers acquire the necessary skills to carry out their new tasks effectively and successfully, and helps build communities' or other stakeholders' sense of ownership over forest resources.

Involvement of other sectors: Other sectors have a valuable role to play in, for example, forest ecotourism, control of illegal activities, and production and marketing for income-generating activities. Sectors that have already undergone reforms can also provide useful lessons for reformers of the forestry sector.