

7th Executive Forest Policy Course, 12 – 23 May 2014 | Nadi, Fiji

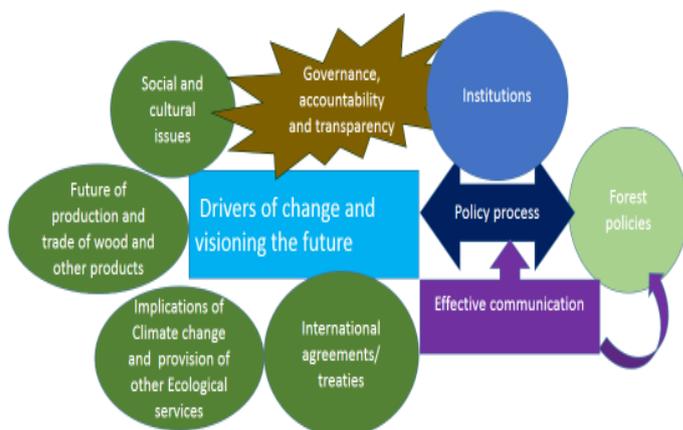
PEOPLE, LAND USE AND FORESTRY IN THE PACIFIC: POLICY CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

COURSE MODULES

INTRODUCTION

Drawing upon the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission’s Forestry Sector Outlook Study, in particular the Pacific Sub regional outlook report and various other initiatives spearheaded by countries/ territories and bilateral and multilateral agencies, the Seventh Executive Forest Policy Course aims to provide a unique opportunity to discuss and debate the emerging challenges facing forests and forestry in the Pacific countries. Participation in the course will help sharpen policy analysis capability through providing in-depth understanding of critical economic, social and environmental issues at the national, regional and global levels. Participants will become familiar with the recent developments in a wide array of areas impacting land use in general and forestry in particular. The course has been particularly designed to address some of the specific conditions in the Pacific such as:

- Preponderance of customary land ownership;
- Need to adopt a landscape approach ensuring close integration of forest and trees with other land uses, especially agriculture;
- Direct and indirect implications of climate change, in particular the increasing frequency and severity of extreme climatic events on land use and forestry; and
- The impact of globalization on the economy in general and forestry in particular.



The overall framework of the course will be as given in the diagram. While the issues relating to a given topic will be introduced by an expert, much of the thrust will be to capitalize on the varied experience of the participants through seminars, group work, role playing and debates. Participants attending the course will be required to undertake advance preparations from their home countries.

Once nomination is received the course coordinator will get in touch with the participants requesting them to prepare for seminars, debates and group discussion on specific topics based on their experience/ expertise.

MODULE 1: THE UNFOLDING FUTURE: SOCIETAL CHANGES, LAND USE AND FORESTRY IN THE PACIFIC

Background

A major challenge confronting forestry is the need to adapt it to the changing needs of society. Being a long term investment maintaining a balance between long term stability in policies and the need to respond to the rapidly changing needs requires a clear understanding about the overall direction of societal change. The needs of pre-agrarian, agrarian, industrial and post-industrial societies differ significantly and often most of the conflicts in the use of land and forests stem from such differences. Crafting land use policies therefore requires a clear understanding of how the society is changing, the divergent needs of different segments in society and how to balance the differing perceptions, priorities and needs. Most often policies are formulated without giving due consideration to the future changes and consequently many policies become ineffective or outdated within a very short period. It is in this context that this module aims to provide an opportunity to examine how the future is unfolding for the people in the Pacific and what it really means for land use in general and forestry in particular.

Objectives of the module:

- Examine key drivers of change and help to visualize how these may transform society in the Pacific in the next two decades and beyond;
- Analyze how the larger societal changes will impact land use in general and forestry in particular in the Pacific countries;
- Discuss probable scenarios for forestry and how these may be factored in the formulation of forest policies.

Issues proposed to be discussed:

Some of the main issues/ questions proposed to be discussed under this module are listed below. These are not exhaustive and many others may emerge during the discussions:

- What will be collective impact of the different drivers – demographic, economic, environmental, technological and political – on the larger society in the Pacific countries? What will be the broad differences in the situation between countries?
- What will be the differences between the large and small island countries as regards the long term economic situation?
- In what way the larger changes in the global economy will impact the Pacific economies and how these impacts will affect land use and forestry? What will be the future of land use and what will be the direction of change as regards dependence on land?

- Will climate change related events be a major factor that will impact land use in the Pacific countries and what will be capacity of countries to respond to the risks and uncertainties involved?
- To what extent technological developments have impacted land use/ forestry and what could we expect in the coming decades?
- Visualizing the emerging changes in society in the coming decades, what factors and considerations need to be taken into account in the process of crafting land use/ forest policies to ensure that they remain relevant to the needs of a dynamic society?

MODULE 2: THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION: CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURAL DISASTERS AND LAND USE/ FOREST POLICIES

Background:

Environmental issues, especially climate change, are of foremost importance for all the Pacific countries. Undoubtedly climate change will remain an over-arching issue for all Pacific countries especially as extreme climatic events like cyclones, storm surges, etc. start affecting the lives of people adversely. Issues like loss of biodiversity and changes in water supply are also becoming critical. For a number of countries protecting the landscape is critical especially to support the tourism industry. Environmental concerns will have to be built into land use/ forest policies and there are several ongoing initiatives aimed to mainstream environmental concerns in national economic and land use policies. This module is intended to assess how the countries have been addressing the environmental issues, what will be the critical environmental issues in the coming decades and what more needs to be done to deal with the emerging challenges

Objectives:

- Provide an opportunity to discuss and debate how environmental issues, especially climate change will directly and indirectly impact the Pacific economies and how these needs to be addressed in land use/ forest policies.
- Analyze the experience in mainstreaming environmental concerns in land use/ forest policies and their effectiveness.
- Assess the potentials and limitations of market driven approaches in addressing environmental issues.

Issues to be addressed:

Presentations, discussions and debates under this module are aimed to address key society-environment issues that are impacting land use specifically focusing on the following:

- What will be the emerging environmental scenarios for the Pacific countries and to what extent these are taken into account in the land use/ forest policies?
- How effective have been the efforts hitherto to address the environmental issues, in particular climate change? Are these efforts taking the countries towards a more environment friendly scenario?

- What are the mechanisms to develop a balance between production and environmental objectives in land use and forest policies? How is this being accepted by society at large?
- Considering the preponderance of customary ownership of land what are the challenges in dealing with key problems like climate change mitigation and adaptation, loss of biodiversity and watershed degradation? What are the mechanisms available to ensure a balance between meeting the development aspirations of local communities and at the same time enhancing the provision of global public goods like combating climate change and protecting biodiversity?
- What are the linkages between environmental policies and legislation with land use/ forest policies? Are they complementary/ synergistic?
- What are the lessons from the experience hitherto as regards market focused approaches like PES within and outside the Pacific region? Considering the larger changes in society, including the willingness and ability to pay for environmental services (or willingness to bear the direct and indirect costs of environmental protection) what are the long term prospects for market based interventions?
- What are the long term scenarios for REDD+ in the Pacific countries? What should be done to address the different challenges in making REDD+ operational on the ground?

MODULE 3: PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF WOOD AND OTHER PRODUCTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC: LEGALITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND EMERGING UNCERTAINTIES.

Background

Historically wood production has been the main focus of forest management in most of the forest rich Pacific countries, especially Melanesia. While most countries have resorted to logging natural forests catering to the regional and global demand for timber, only a few countries have embarked on a planted forests programme to ensure long term sustainability of wood production. Sustainability of wood production and forest law enforcement and governance issues have become key concerns for a number of countries. Countries in the region will also have to address the long term changes in global demand for wood and wood products including changes in the competitiveness of wood production. Further the countries will have to identify the opportunities and challenges as regards the production, trade and consumption of other products, including woodfuel and non-wood forest products. This module is geared to analyze the diverse issues as regards the production, trade and use of key forest products and to what extent policies have accommodated the emerging challenges of production forestry.

Objectives:

1. Provide an overview of production, trade and consumption of wood and wood products in the Pacific countries and the various scenarios as regards wood production and trade especially focusing on probable changes in global and regional markets including the impact of climate change policies.
2. Analyze the challenges in forest law enforcement and improving legality and accountability in timber production and trade.
3. Assess the future of woodfuel and non-wood forest products in bolstering local economies.
4. Examine how production objectives are accommodated in land use/ forest policies and how trade-offs have been established.

Issues proposed to be addressed

Discussions and debates under this module will focus attention on the efficiency and sustainability dimensions of production of wood and other products and how production and trade are contributing to the economic well-being of people. Some of the important questions/ issues that will be addressed include:

- What are the long term trends in the demand for wood and wood products and the current and potential contribution of Pacific forests? Could we visualize a very different scenario than what is manifesting now?
- What should be the appropriate strategy for sustainable timber production in the forest rich countries in the Pacific? Should they adopt a strategy of fully taking advantage of the present demand for tropical timber irrespective of what happens in the future or ensure long term sustainability?
- What should be done to improve governance and legality in timber production? What are the lessons that can be learnt from the FLEGT experience hitherto?
- What are the long term opportunities for production, processing and trade of non-wood forest products that are unique to the Region?
- What are the probable scenarios for biomass energy production and use in the Pacific countries?
- To what extent current policies on land/ forests reflect the long term issues relating to production, trade and consumption of wood and other products?

MODULE 4: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF FORESTRY: EQUITY, POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Background

With the exception of Australia and New Zealand most of the large island countries are predominantly rural and forests fulfill a number of social and cultural functions. In particular forests contribute to rural employment and poverty alleviation and the cultural ties of traditional communities with forests are very strong. A key issue therefore is the future role of forests in meeting the social and cultural needs of the local communities and to what extent they are able to alleviate rural poverty and enhance social inclusion. Of particular concern is the gender aspects of forestry and how changes in forestry practices impact women, who along with others tend to be marginalized in the context of current approaches to forest management. There are very divergent views on this. One school believes that as society becomes richer the dependence of people on forests tends to decline and the alleged role of forests in poverty alleviation is at best transient. There are others who believe that forests could play an important role in poverty alleviation and improving the livelihood of local communities. It is important to examine what will be the future role of forests in contributing to social objectives and how these should be reflected in the forest policies.

Objectives

- Analyze the social and cultural significance of forests including their role in food security, poverty alleviation and improving the livelihood of rural communities.

- Roles of traditional/ customary institutions as part of the socio-cultural practices of forest management.
- Discuss how the relevance of these functions will change and visualize the probable scenarios as regards the social and cultural roles of forests in the coming decades.
- Assess the gender dimensions of current forestry practices and how women and other marginalized groups are affected
- Examine how the probable changes may be reflected in policies relating to land use/ forestry

Issues to be addressed

This module will address key social and cultural aspects of land use in the context of the Pacific countries particularly considering the relevance of these in the context of a dynamic society. In particular the following issues/ questions need to be addressed:

- Importance of forests in poverty alleviation and improving the livelihood of rural communities. How relevant is forestry in poverty alleviation in the Pacific island countries and to what extent this differs between countries?
- How is the livelihood role of forests perceived by local communities? Or is this a perception influenced by external players?
- How important is the gender dimension of land use in the Pacific context and how this has changed during the recent decades? Considering the larger changes in society, what are the likely issues that may become important in the next few decades?
- What are the key cultural dimensions that land use policies have to take cognizance of in the Pacific countries context? Will there be any changes in the cultural relevance of forests considering the larger changes in society?
- To what extent land use/ forest policies have accommodated the social and cultural specificities of the population?

MODULE 5: BUILDING RESPONSIVE/ PROACTIVE INSTITUTIONS

Background:

Institutions form the core of all societal actions. As demands on resources increase managing them require highly effective institutions that are able to visualize emerging changes and take a proactive approach to create a future that society aspires for. Yet this remains a neglected area especially in the forest sector and many of the problems of poor policy delivery stems from weak and outdated institutional framework. There have been several efforts to reform and reinvent forest sector institutions, especially government forestry departments, to make them more responsive to the larger changes. However the experience has been somewhat mixed and most often institutional reinvention has been an extremely slow and tortuous process. This module will focus on sharing the experience of institutional reform, the lessons that have been learnt and what more need to be done in the Pacific context.

Objectives

- Provide an overview of the changes in the institutional framework dealing with land use/ forestry in the Pacific, specifically outlining how functions and structures of public institutions have responded to the changing needs of society.
- Discuss how emerging changes are likely to impact public, private and community institutions and what needs to be done to make them relevant and responsive.
- Analyze the experience of institutional reforms in land/ forestry sectors within and outside the Pacific countries and how the lessons thereof could be taken into account while embarking on such reforms.

Issues to be addressed

This module is designed to address the following issues/ topics:

- How the institutional landscape in the forest sector has changed/ is changing in the Pacific countries and outside and how the different institutions are adapting (or not) to the larger changes.
- How do we assess the performance of public sector institutions and what are the measures to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness?
- What should be done to create a better institutional landscape in support of sustainable management of land/ forests?
- What should be the appropriate realms of operation for a pluralistic institutional system that accommodates the interests of communities, individual land managers, investors and governments?
- What should be done to take advantage of the comparative advantage of different institutions and what needs be done to develop synergy?

MODULE 6: GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE FOREST SECTOR

Background

Although some of the governance issues will be dealt under the module on institutions, there is need for a more detailed consideration in view of its critical importance in managing forests on a sustainable basis. Governance failures are particularly severe in the forest sector resulting in widespread corruption and consequent loss to society through illegal extraction and trade of forest products. Often transactions taking place in the illegal domain are much more than what happens in the formal domain creating a powerful parallel economy. This module will focus on some of the key issues relating to improving governance in the forest sector, how the larger governance situation is affecting forests and share the ongoing efforts to enhance transparency and accountability.

Objectives:

- Provide an overview of the governance situation in the forest sector particularly focusing on the government departments and customary institutions.
- Outline ongoing efforts to improve governance, in particular forest law enforcement and measures being taken to improve transparency and accountability.

- Assess how some of the initiatives like FLEGT and legislations like Lacey Act. EU Timber Regulations are impacting forest management in the Pacific countries.
- Role of non-governmental organizations and other non-state actors in improving governance in the forest sector, especially as an integral part of the “checks –and-balances system”
- Discuss the future governance scenarios in the Pacific countries and how these may impact land use/ forestry.

Issues to be addressed

- What are the fundamental causes of governance failure and how societies are coping up with the problem?
- Why the forest sector is particularly prone to governance failures?
- What are the principles and components of good governance in forestry?
- What has been done to address governance failures in the forest sector (including government forestry agencies, customary institutions) in the Pacific countries, e.g. policy measures? How effective these have been?
- What are the major national and international initiatives to improve governance in the forest sector? To what extent these have helped to improve the situation in the Pacific countries?
- What should be done to enhance governance especially transparency and accountability in the forest sector?

MODULE 7: CHANGING INTERNATIONAL SCENE: IMPLICATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON NATIONAL LAND USE/ FOREST POLICIES

Background

In a globalized world what happens to the economy and environment in one country tends to have an impact on human well-being elsewhere. In many cases isolated action by individual countries may not help to address the problems, especially considering their trans-boundary character. Addressing the problem of climate change is a typical example of a global problem that requires collective action by all countries. It is in this context that global community has crafted a number of agreements/ conventions/ treaties that have a direct and indirect bearing on land use, in particular forests. In addition to those that are directly related to environment (for example UNFCCC, UNCBD) and forests (for example the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests - NLBI) there are others related to trade, indigenous people, etc. that influence national policies. The purpose of the module is to provide an overview of the evolution of various international agreements that have directly and indirectly impacted forests and how these have been accommodated in the national policies and programmes. A major challenge on pursuing global action will be how the costs and benefits are distributed among and within the countries.

Objectives

- Provide an overview of the evolution of various international agreements, conventions and treaties that impact forest sector, including the new SDGs and the importance of forests in the future SDGS;
- Examine how Pacific countries adopt or apply those agreements into forestry sectors

- Analyze how these have impacted land use/ forestry in the Pacific countries.
- Identify challenges in implementing international agreements / conventions in particular the implications of fragmenting the forestry agenda in a multitude of agreements and conventions.
- Examine the costs and benefits involved in implementing the various agreements and

Issues to be addressed

- What have been the positive and negative implications of implementing the various international agreements/ conventions/ treaties as regards forests in the Pacific countries?
- To what extent national policies and legislation relating to land use/ forestry have factored the commitment of the countries to implement the various agreements?
- What are the institutional arrangements required to ensure that international agreements are mainstreamed effectively in the national land use/ forestry policies?
- What is the overall willingness to meet the costs of implementing the various international agreements? Is this dependent on significant resource transfers?
- What will be the long term scenario as regards implementation of international agreements? Is there a decline of interest globally and nationally in the context of a slowing down of the global economy?
- How do we analyze the pros and cons of the various global initiatives?

MODULE 8: THE POLICY PROCESS

In theory land use/ forest policies should be formulated as an iterative process with the full involvement of all the important stakeholders. However in practice the policy process on the ground varies enormously and often it is driven by dominant interest groups, often undermining the interests of the less vocal/ influential segments in society. Consequently the commitment to implement policies also differs significantly among the different groups. Diversity in demand on forests leads to severe conflicts and most often formulation and implementation of forest policies come under the category of “wicked problems” with no easy solutions. Drawing upon the discussions during the previous modules this module will critically assess the processes adopted in policy formulation and implementation in the Pacific countries.

Objectives

- Provide an overview of the policy process focusing on the entire cycle of formulation, implementation and review and how practice diverges from theory;
- Outline the different approaches to policy formulation – bottom up, top down and various combinations – and their pros and cons;
- Analyze how the process of policy formulation addresses resource use conflicts and acceptable trade-offs are established.

Issues to be addressed:

- To what extent the actual process of forest policy formulation and implementation differs from theory in the Pacific countries?

- What is the process involved in ensuring local community involvement especially considering the preponderance of customary landownership? How effective is the process in the countries in the Pacific?
- How are linkages with other sectors taken into account in the policy formulation process? Are they effective in resolving intersectoral conflicts?
- What are the major conflicts involved in articulating land use/ forest policies in the region? How is the collective vs individual interests/ priorities resolved during the policy formulation phase?
- Compare and contrast the differences in policy formulation and implementation process and how this is reflected in the condition of forests and the goods and services provided by forests.

MODULE 9: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

With multiple stakeholders with differing perceptions and priorities effective communication becomes very critical element new opportunities have emerged and this is clearly reflected in the fact that the younger generation is much better informed than their predecessors. Unfortunately forestry institutions, especially public sector forestry departments still living in the “command and control era” have not fully tapped into new concepts, ideas and tools of communications. In many countries social networking has become particularly influential among the younger generation and there are instances where mass mobilization has been accomplished through social networks. What happens to forests in the future will largely depend on how effectively the need for sustainable management is communicated.

Objectives:

- Analyze the present system of communication in the forest sector and its effectiveness.
- Outline key elements of effective communication and how this can be put into practice in the Pacific context?
- Assess the emergence of new communication technologies, including the spread of social networking media, and discuss how these may impact the forest sector.

Issues to be discussed:

- What are the basic approaches adopted for communication with stakeholders in the forest sector and how have the “command and control framework” of the forest departments shaped the system of communication?
- What are the key elements of an effective communication strategy? To what extent forest policies have taken on board the essentials of successful communications in crafting forest policies?
- To what extent the emergence of new technologies have created new opportunities and challenges? And how are the forestry institutions coping up with the developments? Is there any reluctance to embrace new technologies?

MODULE 10: ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL LAND USE/ FOREST POLICIES

Having discussed and debated the different dimensions to be considered in forest policies and the processes to be pursued, this module will focus on analysis of national forest policies and how they

are catering to the different challenges facing the forest sector. Selected policies will be subjected to in-depth assessment including SWOT analysis and group work will focus on how policies could be redrafted addressing the deficiencies identified.

- Case studies on forest policies in the Pacific
- Case studies on forest policies in other countries
- Group work - redrafting policies