

# Doing policy work

## A1 Introduction

### A1.1 What policy work is, and why it is worth doing

The aim of this Annex is to offer some guidance on approaches and methods for engaging with policy. Here, 'engaging' implies the messy business of 'locking horns', rather than the anticipation of a happy marriage.

The main text of this report urges a wide range of people concerned with forestry and land use to get involved in shaping and implementing better policy (see Sections 2.4, 3.2, 6.3, 6.5). This work cannot be left solely to professional 'policy wonks'<sup>1</sup> partly because there are rather few of them in forestry and land use and they never seem to be around when you need them, and partly because they may have got it wrong anyway!

We have also noted that 'policy' can be described as 'what organisations do', and that further definition of the 'policy content and process that matters' is specific to the context and actors involved, and should be the first task of those who wish to engage with policy. Getting involved in policy – 'doing policy work' – has several possible elements. We offer some working definitions of these elements in Box A1.1.

The main text is full of examples of different sorts of policy work that have been effective in improving policy for forests and people, e.g.:

- Ghana – work with the collaborative forest management unit reinstated the notion that local benefit is what forestry should be for
- Costa Rica – JUNAFORCA's engagement with policy provided compelling evidence that smallholder forestry works, and laid the paths for improved conditions
- Scotland – policy work has stopped excessive upland afforestation and reversed the Forestry Commission's policy on land disposals
- Globally – several landmark policy studies (by individuals, institutions or commissions) had important influence at international level (Section A1.2 below)

---

<sup>1</sup> A term coined in the US for policy obsessives.

### Box A1.1 Defining 'policy work'

Work on policy may involve various different activities. The policy literature is replete with varying definitions of these. For our purposes we use the following definitions:

- *Policy research*: investigation aimed at increasing knowledge useful for policy.<sup>2</sup>
- *Policy analysis*: a type of policy research aimed at examining or tracing the component parts of policy context, content, process and impacts.<sup>3</sup>
- *Policy advocacy*: making a particular argument about how policies should be made or implemented, and/ or about policy content. This may or may not utilise policy research.
- *Policy influence*: having a hand in changing or maintaining policy content and/ or the policy process. This may or may not utilise policy research.

To the above, we add a final over-arching definition:

- *Policy work*: the range of actions which have an explicit link to understanding or influencing policy.

This final definition reflects our recognition that the policy process is broader and more muddled than the focus of much public policy research and analysis would suggest. More actors are involved in policy than just those in government, and some actors are involved in attempting to both research and influence policy. These activities may be carried out with the current *policy-makers* and *policy implementors*, but they may also be carried out with those who are neither. The term '*policy holders*' may thus be used to recognise that power over policy may not lie in policy-making but also in policy-implementing, and that the holders of this power may change over time.

## A1.2 Introducing the policy research literature

Table A1.1 is an attempt to categorise and characterise the literature on policy research concerned with forests.<sup>4</sup> It is also a guide to a few key reference sources on policy research in forestry and on the wider fields of natural resources management policy and development.

Some approaches to policy research are far more prevalent in the literature than others. Although Table A1.1 gives some key references for each of the approaches, it should be noted that 'rational choice' and 'content-focused' analyses dominate in forestry literature, whilst 'pragmatic pluralist' approaches are also gaining ground. The other approaches are, relatively, in short supply, although intersectoral policy analysis is increasing (with accompanying trends for resource valuation). A greater depth and diversity of research using these other approaches is needed.

<sup>2</sup> This is a broader definition than many used in the fields of policy studies. For example, in a book giving guidance on how to do policy research in the social sciences, Majchrzak offers the following definition: the process of conducting research on, or analysis of, a fundamental social problem in order to provide policy-makers with pragmatic, action-oriented recommendations for alleviating the problem (Majchrzak, 1984). This assumes the existence of clear problems and well-defined policy-makers, but this may not be the case. Policy research often aims primarily to enlighten – to help identify and spread understanding – of problems rather than solutions, and may aim to do this among actors who are not policy-makers (but who may influence policy-makers or one day become policy-makers themselves).

<sup>3</sup> Policy studies – mostly concerned with *public* policy analysis – contain a wide range of definitions. 'Classic texts' on public policy analysis include: Dror, 1986; Dye, 1976; Hill, 1997; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Jenkins, 1978; Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993; Wildavsky, 1987. Majchrzak defines policy analysis as: *the study of the policymaking process – the process by which policies are adopted and the effects of those policies once adopted... typically performed by political scientists* (Majchrzak, 1984).

<sup>4</sup> 'Literature' these days is not confined to printed matter, but is also to be found on web-pages and in email, etc.

Table A1.1 Policy research approaches – characteristics and key references

Policy research approach	Characteristics	Key references	
		Forest policy analysts	Natural resource/ development analysts
<b>Rational (public) choice</b>	Promotes development of sectoral policy statements and recommends policy contents and processes	Gane 1987; Westoby 1989; FAO 1987; World Bank 1991; Gluck 1995; Tikkanen and Solberg 1995	WCED 1987, UNCED 1992, World Bank 1992
<b>Instruments/ content-focused</b>	Analyses and recommends only content of policy – its instruments and mechanisms	Repetto and Gillis 1988; Grut <i>et al</i> 1991; Hyde <i>et al</i> 1991; Grayson 1993; Wibe and Jones 1992; Bass and Hearne 1997; Merlo and Paveri 1998	Bresser and Klok 1988; Pearce 1994; Panayotou 1992, 1998
<b>Pragmatic pluralist (process/actor/ networks focused)</b>	Recognises political dimensions, assumes social groupings influence policy, and proposes solutions emphasising participation	Cubbage <i>et al</i> 1993; Sizer and Rice 1995; Barber <i>et al</i> 1994; Cortner <i>et al</i> 1995; Ellefson 1992; Anderson 1998	Grindle and Thomas 1993; Rees 1990; Ascher and Healy 1990; Long and Long 1992; Lee 1993; Röling and Jiggins, 1998
<b>Inter-sectoral</b>	Examines influence on the focal sector of policy in other sectors	Gregerson <i>et al</i> 1993; Kaimowitz and Angelsen 1998, 1999; Contreras 1999	Munasinghe and Cruz 1994; DFID 1998; Dalal-Clayton and Dent 1999
<b>Political economy – structuralist</b>	Emphasises existence of strong political-economic forces determining policy	Dauvergne 1997; Utting 1993; Peluso 1992; Barraclough and Ghimire 1995	Swift 1996; Blaikie 1985; Gadgil and Guha 1995
<b>Anthropology of policy and power</b>	Examines policy discourses, narratives and power of actors	Fairhead and Leach 1996; Filer with Sekhran, 1998	Roe 1994; Hoben 1996; Shore and Wright 1997
<b>Historical</b>	Traces forces and events causing policy change over time	Dargavel <i>et al</i> 1988; Buttoud 1997; Perlin 1989	Grove 1995; Schama 1995

Literature designed *solely to advocate or influence* policy is not generally covered in Table A1.1 This is largely because such literature tends either to be very context-specific, or to include insufficient analysis. Examples of literature produced by groups advocating content or process in forest policy might include:

- campaign literature from a host of international and national NGOs;
- private sector groups' lobbying or campaigning material;
- government documents of various kinds;
- multilateral agency documents, notably in forestry those spelling out grant and loan conditions required by the World Bank and the IMF; and
- bilateral donor strategy documents.

Literature on *how* to advocate and influence policy for forests is not so common, but is increasing. Examples in forestry include: Juniper 1998; Institute for Development Research 1997; websites and literature of the Rainforest Action Network and the Rainforest Foundation.

In 1998, 162 individuals responded to a survey, administered by CIFOR, which asked them to list their top five publications that have influenced debates on policies affecting forests over the last twenty years. The individuals were participants in an e-mail forum of forest 'policy experts' – *Polex*. Most participants work in developed country organisations and international agencies; rather fewer are developing country policy-makers or researchers. The three publications that were mentioned most frequently were:

- Repetto and Gillis (1988). *Public policy and the misuse of forests*. Cambridge University Press – on forest concession policies and trade restrictions that promote unsustainable logging
- Poore *et al* (1989) *No timber without trees: sustainability in the tropical forests*. Earthscan Publications – on whether tropical forests were sustainably managed for timber, and how they could be
- Peters *et al* (1989) *Valuation of an Amazonian Rainforest*. Nature – on the value of non-timber forest products

The *Polex* responses suggested that the documents which respondents considered to be influential did *not* affect policies directly. In most instances, they seem to have influenced the general 'conventional wisdom' in international, policy, academic, and funding circles on different topics and this eventually filtered down to policy makers in specific countries. However, documents with major direct influence in particular countries – government commission reports, action plans and official policy documents – were also noted by some. Other documents in the 'top ten' included three key products of the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit – Agenda 21, the Forest Principles, and the Biodiversity Convention – and the Brundtland Commission report 'Our Common Future' that preceded UNCED.

In his summary of the survey, the *Polex* mailing list coordinator noted; "the responses give the impression that conventional wisdom tends to associate each major forest-related issue with a handful of publications that have crystallised public interest in a topic, given it greater legitimacy, or synthesised previous research on it" (Kaimowitz, 1998). The discussion of approaches to understanding and increasing policy influence – through use of documents and other means – is taken up further in Section A5 of this Annex.

## A2 Recognise the political game: theory, value, language and power

Section 2 of the main text introduced the forestry 'players' and the SFM 'plot', and Section 4 related individual stories from several countries. From this, it should be clear that real forest policy abides in the realm of politics rather than deep in forestry text – books. In this section, we take a little more time to explore some of the theory which may help us to understand policy.

### A2.1 Policy is a slippery concept

*"Policy. A course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman, etc.; any course of action adopted as advantageous or expedient".*

Oxford English Dictionary

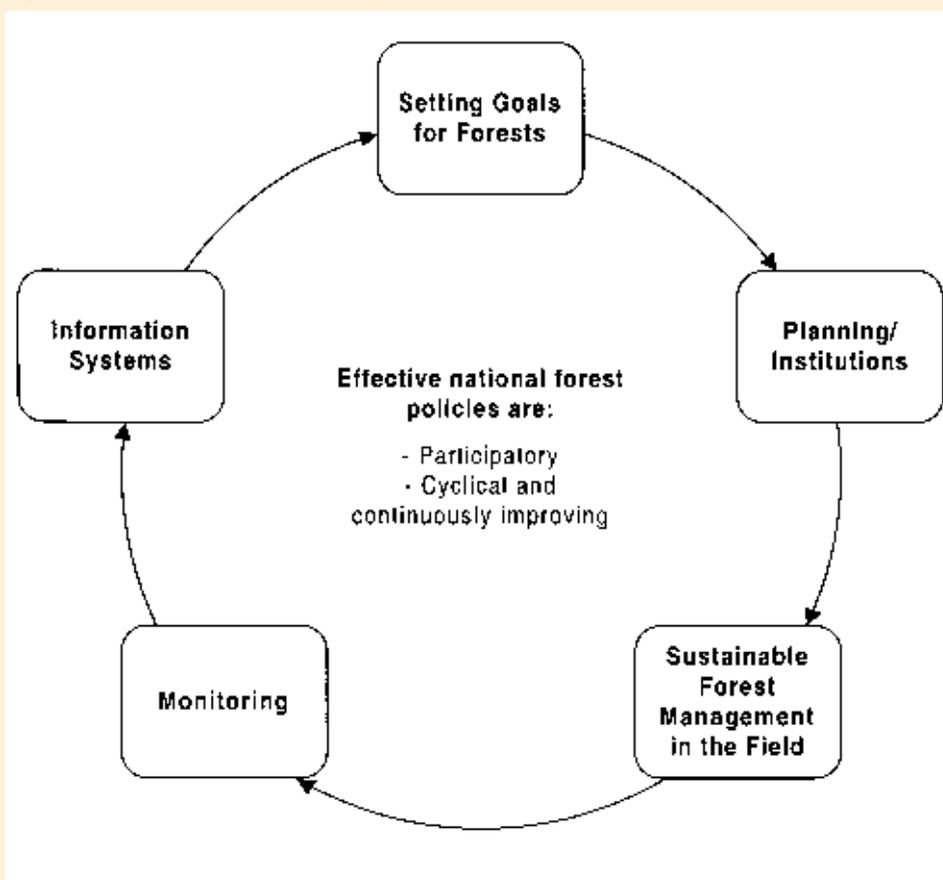
'Policy' – the word developed from both Greek and Latin roots – first came to mean both the art, method or tactics of government and regulating internal order. This second meaning split off with the formation of Robert Peel's 'new police' in Britain in 1829 and the administration becoming the domain of 'policing'. We can note in passing that forestry seems to have retained the linkage between policy and policing since most national forest policies have traditionally put a strong emphasis on maintaining a national forest estate by 'policing' against exploiters and encroachers.

The Oxford English Dictionary also reveals uses of 'policy' which are now obsolete: "a device, contrivance...stratagem, trick". The former meaning of policy – as the art of government – has also gone through changes, from its former pejorative meaning as cunning, deceit, trickery to become more respectable. For Shakespeare, policy encompassed the arts of political illusion and duplicity. Show, outward appearance and illusions were the stuff of which power was made. He employed the terms of Machiavellian philosophy...Power cannot be sustained purely with force. It needs 'policy'. Indeed whilst the English, Dutch and German languages insist on two different words, 'policy' and 'politics'; the French, Italian and Spanish do not feel the need for this distinction.

## A2.2 Problems with the 'rational systems' model

A model of the policy process as a series of stages – e.g. information-decision-implementation-evaluation – is a useful way of chopping up a complex and elaborate process for the purposes of analysis. The 'stages' idea can of course be presented in other versions which may be useful for explaining things, e.g. analysis; anger/provocation; persuasion; consensus; action; analysis..."

Figure A2.1 The notional 'policy cycle'



But there are problems with such a 'rational' model, whether it is described as a linear form or as an improving 'virtuous circle' form (Figure A2.1)

- There are few blank slates – current policy processes are usually products of long histories; a realistic starting point for analysis may thus be far back in time, or difficult to discern at all.
- Stages may not be sequential; they may occur simultaneously or in apparently random order. Policy initiation may start anywhere in the system.
- Stages are not insulated from each other and there may be various overlaps and interactions between them.

It is quite legitimate to employ a rational model as an analytical device – in order to 'map' what elements exist at present, and where the 'entry points' for policy work might be. However, many practitioners and policy wonks have tended to treat it as a prescriptive framework – how policy *should* be made, implemented and assessed. The rational systems notion has been conferred with a status as a normative model, "a dignified myth which is often shared by the policy-makers themselves" (Gordon, Lewis and Young, 1993). But, to talk about 'rationality' (as so much policy analysis literature does – often taking its cue from economics), without reference to ends or to the issues about who has the power to determine these ends is at least beside the point, and at worst dangerous.

### A2.3 Irrational alternatives?

The literature provides a range of other models, each attempting to show the limited practical usefulness of the search for 'rationality' implicit in many attempts to devise 'objective' tools for policy analysis. Three distinct types of model are described below:

- incremental 'muddling along'
- bureaucratic process; and
- political bargaining.

The *incremental 'muddling along'* model has it that it is rare to be able to identify a clear-cut group of decision-makers, or an event which can be pinpointed as the moment when the decision was made. Therefore, policy is a continuous bustle of activity (or even a period of inactivity), and it is only in retrospect that people become aware that policy was made.

'Decision-makers' – bounded by their skills, knowledge and habitual modes of thought – thus muddle through. Weiss (1986) breaks the incremental model down into eight types of behaviour [our interpretation]:

- reliance on custom – do what has always been done
- improvisation – do something off-the-cuff which seems to fit the bill
- mutual adjustment – make small changes in response to others
- accretion – wait until things build up, then do the obvious thing
- negotiation – get together with others and bargain a solution
- move and counter-move – do something tactical in provocation or response
- implementing pet remedies prior to identification of a problem – never mind the context, just do what you fancy
- indirection – leave it to others

The *bureaucratic process* model suggests that policy decisions emerging from institutions are fundamentally affected by the way in which these institutions work. This is due to three main reasons. First, once individuals become part of a bureaucracy, they acquire goals or interests distinct from those of their professional independent selves and quite separate from those of their political masters or the general public. Second, bureaucracies endeavour to retain a monopoly over information and then utilise this to ensure that their own interests are protected. Third, organisations are coalitions of interest groups. Internal horse-trading and compromise rather than the rational evaluation of evidence will characterise final decisions. Resulting policies are seen as, e.g., maintaining internal or external relations, rather than purposefully addressing a problem.

The *political bargaining* model proposes that policy and practice are not the product of individual and organisational choice processes, but the outcomes of a political struggle between interest groups within society. *Pluralists* argue that no one group achieves a dominant position in the longer term. *Elitists* argue that establishment groups can bias the whole policy formulation and implementation process towards their own vested interests. More radical *structuralists* argue that only one élite holds power – the capital-owning class. Public service and regulatory agencies are seen to operate in support of private capital, by reducing social conflict, providing essential services, etc. They operate to maintain a social system which is conducive to capital formation and in which the economic development interests of capital dominate (Poulantzas, 1973; Habermas, 1976). When viewed from the political perspective, the key question changes from how policy decisions are made, to who has the power and influence to make the effective policy choices.

We argue that each of these models has some explanatory power for particular aspects of policy or for the policy process in particular contexts. But none of the models is sufficient on its own to fully explain the complexity and messiness of what is often going on. Some further realities about policy processes include the following considerations:

- Both formal and informal rules and procedure determine: who participates, paths available for action, rules of the game.
- There is rarely one person or group of people who is sitting on a set of policies which could be changed.
- Policy decisions are often the cumulative result of interactions, conflict and cooperation. The 'policy-makers' – those who currently 'hold' policy – may be a clear 'policy élite' or they may be a combination of less obvious groups.
- Decision-makers see different faces of an issue – depending on concerns which are ideological, professional, personal, concern for clients or relationship with others. In other words, they themselves have several identities, and this may be reflected in how they exercise their role as 'policy-maker'.
- Interactions reflect power relations and include: overt exercise of power by some groups over others; decisions to do nothing; non-decisions (keeping conflict from flaring up); refraining from an overt statement of policy in order to maintain flexibility; keeping certain subjects out of the policy arena in order to maintain a personal power base on that issue; and the shaping of perceptions such that conflict is prevented from arising.

We pursue some of these issues further below.

## A2.4 Policies as 'myths', 'dominant symbols' and 'demons'

Anthropologists have likened the notion of policy to that of 'myth', in the sense of the term as a *guide to behaviour*. Malinowski's study in the 1920s of Trobriand society in Papua New Guinea used the notion of myth in this way. Unpicking this idea further, policy has been described as a *'charter'* for action, as a *commentary* that either justifies or condemns action, and as a focus for *allegiance*. A *political myth* has been described as the pattern of the basic political symbols current in a society (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950). This concept is close to others e.g. Marx's 'ideology' (Marx and Engels, 1998) or Mannheim's 'Utopia' (Mannheim, 1936). Given this range of functions, policies may "encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them" (Shore and Wright, 1997). Indeed, key policies can reveal the nature and structure of cultural systems. The Truman Doctrine – 'containment' of communism – in the USA of the 1950s, has been described as one such 'dominant symbol'.

At a more day-to-day level, the words or 'labels' applied to issues and problems by policy-makers or development administrators can embed a particular angle or version of reality which may bear little relation to that held by others, and can be very difficult to dislodge. This labelling is generally done in an innocuous manner, apparently for simple convenience, yet it is often highly political – since it may fundamentally influence the creation of agendas or access to resources. In discussing 'common sense' or 'rational' models of agricultural policy, Clay and Schaffer (1984) also note that such models are full of "apparently innocuous but ultimately pernicious concepts such as 'target groups'".

In forestry, symbols suggested by words such as 'monoculture' or 'native forests' – which have come to have strong connotations – can also be the enemy of consensus. Maughan (1994) describes an advantage of organised conflict resolution (in US watershed management) in terms of removing the 'symbols and demons' which get in the way of constructive debate.

A common example of a label applied in policy contexts, is the so called 'gap' between 'policy' (statements) and 'practice'. Such a gap is rarely a void, but a space already crowded with perspectives and biases, and thus 'full' already of preconceptions and misconceptions. Rather than trying to understand these crowded spaces and better connect statement and theory to practice – the real challenge – the notion that they are knowledge gaps serves to bring forth hasty new policy pronouncements and prescriptions about what is needed.

## A2.5 Policy as language and discourse

The language of policy (and of policy research) functions as a type of power. This power is exercised through styles of expression – "power comes as much from the barrel of a phrase or sentence as a gun" (Apthorpe, 1997).

When the primary aim of policy language is to persuade rather than inform, '*goal language*' is used. This inspires, uplifts, gains support, defines parameters, or offers a 'badge' to wear.

Policy statements are unlikely to depend on a weighing of positions and evidence, but to rely on presentation of a position that is held to be exemplary in some way, and in a style chosen mainly to attract, please and persuade. Style can be as powerful as substance.

As policy protagonists use language with symbols and labels to convey their ideas, 'discourses' can be discerned. Discourses have been defined as "configurations of ideas which provide the threads from which ideologies are woven" (Shore and Wright, 1997). 'Dominant' discourses work by setting up the terms of reference and by disallowing or marginalising alternatives. Some policies can be seen in this way, as they set a political agenda and give institutional authority to one or more discourses.

Apthorpe (1997) discusses an example of two competing discourses about rural livelihoods under green revolution technologies – 'ideal ruralism' and 'radical realism' – which failed to see eye to eye at all. Ideal ruralism is preoccupied not with any actual pattern of rural livelihood but with deducing only an ideal type – to ensure it avoids falling into the 'local bias' of which realist case studies are accused. Radical realism pursues local detail, proposes solutions based on it, and charges its idealist rival with being too selective in its perspectives and relying on only negative characterisation – the rural poor are described as landless, stockless, feckless, etc. What one side took in formal fashion as objectives, was taken by the other not as objectives but perspectives.

While the ideal ruralists' prescriptions were being converted into policy documents, the radical realists were still preoccupied with substantive details, little recognising that they were being as selective in their perspectives as the ideal ruralists were. In Apthorpe's example, the realists' solutions were Utopian, e.g. concluding that planners are to blame for poverty, not local people, and therefore that planners' offices should be restaffed or abolished. This did not go down well with the officers concerned. Neither could policy-makers deal with the particular and specific nature of the realists' conclusions, which ill-suited policy's characteristic concerns with transferrability and replicability (Apthorpe, 1997).

## **A2.6 Policy as 'political technology', oversimplifying and stereotyping people**

Foucault coined the term 'political technology' as the means by which power conceals its own operation. Others have noted that policies can be seen in this way – as instruments of power for shaping individuals' sense of self. "The political nature of policies is disguised by the objective, neutral, legal-rational idioms in which they are portrayed. In this guise, policies appear to be mere instruments for promoting efficiency and effectiveness." (Shore and Wright, 1997). The objectified person "is seen but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication" (Foucault, 1977).

The metaphors of the individual and society which are used in policy shape the way individuals construct themselves – as 'citizen', 'professional', 'stakeholder', 'criminal', etc – and influence the way people behave. 'Governance' – the processes by which policies not only impose conditions, but influence people's norms of conduct so that they themselves

contribute (not necessarily consciously) to a government's mode of social order. Although "imposed on individuals, once internalised, [these norms] influence them to think, feel and act in certain ways" (Lukes, 1984). Basic categories of political thought are reconfigured to create new kinds of behaviour through notions like 'popular capitalism' and 'active citizenship'.<sup>5</sup>

Policies thus provide a means by which consent is 'manufactured' – conditions are engineered so that, seemingly, consent of the public comes 'naturally'. In this way policies also have a legitimising function – serving to buttress the authority of rulers – one cannot successfully argue against 'the proper order of things'. It is also evident that policies themselves can function as a vehicle for distancing policy authors from the intended objects of policy and for disguising the identity of decision-makers.

These days, the manufacturing of consent is not solely the preserve of governments. For example, as North (1995) points out, many influential groups (government and the private sector, and to some extent the general public), are beginning to distrust the green movement's definition of issues. The 'prophecies of catastrophe' which is the *modus operandi* of so many groups have not, in fact, been followed by the prophesied problems.

Hecht and Cockburn (1989) suggest, with reference to the various solutions that have been proposed for the *Amazon*, that 'knowledge systems' are systems of domination – the question of *who* defines a situation is critical. In recent years, NGOs, particularly the green movement, have been adept at defining situations in ways which make the influential listen. Yet there are "a number of pitfalls that lie in the line of march staked out by the 'green' movements in the First World. By de-emphasising 'old-fashioned' concerns with political economy, property relations and distribution, they extol the [NTEP extractive] reserves as environmentally sound solutions where the good rural life can continue. But all reserves are far more precarious than their current popularity would suggest."

The intentions of big industry have moved from simply manufacturing goods, to manufacturing markets (through advertising) for those goods, and now to manufacturing consent in favour of the ethical and policy conditions under which they would prefer their markets to evolve. Monsanto, for example, heavily made the case for genetically modified organisms (GMOs) as contributing to the elimination of hunger in developing countries, and as environmentally desirable through e.g. the reduction of chemical usage they would bring. In this, however, there was inadequate recognition of the public's fear of science and a failure to realise that consumers become suspicious and vulnerable when they are starved of choice. The 'overselling' by Monsanto has now blown up in the company's face.

Agendas can generally be more easily controlled if policies can be used to over-simplify issues. Simplistic problem definitions often lead to the domination of policy by a single group or institution that has the required muscle provided by money, relevant mandate or technical expertise. If other concerns are introduced into the simple story, this group is likely to perceive

---

<sup>5</sup> Rose (1992 – quoted in Shore and Wright, 1997) has even argued that the idea of 'freedom' acts as an instrument of government control in the construction of 'free market' and 'free society' which requires: "a variety of interventions by accountants, management consultants, lawyers, industrial relations specialists and marketing experts...[to] make economic actors think, reckon and behave as competitive, profit-seeking agents, to turn workers into motivated employees who strive to give of their best in the workplace, and to transform people into consumers who can choose between products."

them as a threat. Ascher and Healy (1990) note how central leaders may get large political rewards from the symbolism of simple large initiatives with an impressive single-performance measure. Even when such grand schemes and policies begin to manifest problems, the political symbolism of the big project often leaves little room for pulling back; the bigger the venture, the more the central leaders' reputations are on the line.

In such contexts, policy tends to be based on highly aggregated and centralised analysis (if it is based on analysis at all) which is likely to be blind to local variation and to mask distributional issues. That is not to say that such contexts have no use for information from the field. As Polly Hill notes, information collected directly from the field "is not some kind of pure substance with inherent validity, [but rather] matter which has commonly been extracted from unwilling informants by resorting to many convolutions, blandishments and deceits [and then] fudged, cooked and manipulated by officials at higher levels, the main purpose being to ensure that the trends will be found satisfactory and convincing by those with still greater authority, as well as to compensate for presumed biases" (Hill, 1986, quoted in Lohmann, 1998).

Most insidious are the policies which create unattractive stereotypes of people whom holders of policy would like to keep marginal – often the very people who are most dependent on forests, or might be able to manage forests best. Hecht and Cockburn (1989) describe how views on forest-dependent people, held by governing élites in Brazil, are fundamental in determining policy towards forests. In the Amazon context, "the portrayal of native peoples as *Rousseauian* creatures has... permitted a view of them as children, incapable of wise decisions or the exercise of adult responsibilities. Until recently the official Brazilian view is that they are wards of the state, unable to participate in political life." This is consistent with other policies which have been exercised towards Amazon forests and their people – the massive 'flooding the Amazon with civilisation' through major government programmes for the region, and the settlement and clearance of forests for other uses when pressures in e.g. cities and industries began to build up.

Colchester and Lohmann (1993) note similar examples in Thailand and Vietnam, where a policy belief that ethnic groups were inferior helped to colour their interpretation of the shifting cultivation that these groups were invariably practising. Coupled with the increasing observation of environmental problems (soil erosion, etc) in highland regions, the result has tended to be a policy assumption that shifting cultivation and its practitioners are destroyers of the forest. Do Dinh Sam (1994) for Vietnam, Rerkasem and Rerkasem (1994) for Thailand, and Bass and Morrison (1994) analysing the regional consequences, have outlined these policies. They tend to aim at settling shifting cultivators, without understanding either the fact that shifting cultivation is sustainable in circumstances of low population density, or that the transition to more settled forms of agricultural or forest management requires much time, and support on many fronts.

## A2.7 So, 'policy is a power thing'... but there may be room for manoeuvre

In summary, to understand policy that matters is to understand power and influence. The exercise of power may be obvious and crass, or it may be subtle: *"is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things..."* (Lukes, 1984)

The balance of power between interests may be highly entrenched, but it is rare for a system to be devoid of room for manoeuvre – for some people at least. Moments of change or indeed crises occur in the cultural, political, economic or natural environment; these cause reactions and create windows of opportunity to put issues on the agenda. Small, well-focused actions in these moments can produce significant, enduring improvements, if they are in the right place. The policy analysis literature refers to: 'access points' and 'critical junctions'; 'high-leverage changes', 'quantum leaps' and 'punctuated equilibria'. Often these actions may be counter-intuitive and non-obvious to many people in the system.

This room for manoeuvre can be identified with the benefit of hindsight, but our interest here is in whether it is recognised in advance. Hill (1997) describes the 'rubbish bin' model of policy change, which assumes that problems, solutions, decision-makers and choice opportunities are independent. Solutions are linked to problems primarily by arriving in the bin at similar times. Changes occur with unique juxtapositions of events and the unique responses of individual actors. With such a model we can do little but sit in the rubbish bin and watch what happens.

In the following sections we pursue an alternative approach in the belief that we can better understand the forces at play in these processes, predict what might happen and get ready to influence it. Here, we offer various methodologies, many of which were tested in the *Policy that works* country case studies.



### A3 Develop a strategy: objectives, framework, key steps

*"There can no more be only one approved mode of policy research than there can be only one way of learning"*

(Wildavsky, 1987)

*"One should not be too straightforward. Go and see the forest. The straight trees are cut down, the crooked ones are left standing"*

(Kautilya, Indian philosopher, third century B.C.)

Having, we hope, installed a notion that policy processes are essentially political, and dispensed with naive optimism about pluralism and the rationality of decision-makers, we can get on with identifying practical approaches to tackling policy! Utilising a range of approaches and methods is likely to prove productive. Our aim is to help fill a toolbox, but we must stress that not all tools will be needed in any one context. It is important to be selective, recognising the work on the policy edifice that has been done before, by others with their own tools. A basic framework is first needed – to stay on track.

Important conditions, required before undertaking policy work, tend to be:

1. Reason – a clarity on the need and purpose needs to be defined – which means identifying the real issues
2. Timeliness – key people must already feel some need for change
3. Locus – an independent but influential institutional location for coordinating policy work can be helpful
4. High-level support and expectation – that the work will lead to significant changes in important matters such as governance, policy and investment
5. Commitment of key participants
6. Reasonable idea of the tactics required for influencing those who need to agree changes

### A3.1 Identify the issues – the problems and the opportunities

It is unlikely that a pool of policy researchers will be sitting around waiting for a problem to arise or a success to analyse. It is more likely that policy researchers will be asked to address a problem or opportunity, or that people recognise the existence of a policy failure or success and want to know how to tackle it. In either case, a preliminary definition of the issue is needed.

An initial assessment is also needed on whether the issue is researchable, and/ or whether there might be room for manoeuvre with it – i.e. whether doing policy work is worthwhile. For example, a problem may be too big, intractable, complex, expensive or dangerous to be worth tackling. Or it may simply be the wrong moment to broach the issue, or there may be others in a better position to work on it. Information might best be gathered from key informants, perhaps in an informal way, rather than throwing the whole thing open to deep consultation at this stage. Once an informed 'gut feeling' that a problem is do-able is recognised, it is useful to capture it in a basic model. A hypothetical example of defining a policy problem follows:

- *Problem:* the forest is being cleared by cocoa farmers
- *Possible cause* currency devaluation
- *Possible chains of causation:*
  - currency devaluation → cocoa exports more profitable → cocoa farmers better off → more forest cleared by more cocoa farmers to make profits
  - currency devaluation → food and agricultural input prices rise → cocoa farmers worse off → more forest cleared by cocoa farmers to make ends meet
  - currency devaluation → forest officers' real incomes drop → forest officers are less able/ interested in preventing forest clearance by cocoa farmers → more forest cleared by more cocoa farmers
- *Stakeholders involved.* At this stage, it is useful to note the main stakeholders who may be involved in problem causation, suffering its consequences, or solutions.
- *Values and assumptions:* each of the presumed chains of causation is based on a range of values and assumptions which need to be identified, since these imply very different lines of investigation and possible solution. Some may be associated with particular stakeholders.

Further work reviewing existing information and the range of opinions about the issue will allow the related policy factors to be identified. These factors may be policy influences on the problem, or policy influenced by the problem. An initial understanding of these factors is needed to allow development of this basic model and to allow specific objectives and research questions to be identified (see below).

### **A3.2 Develop initial understanding of five groups of factors: context, actors, process, contents and impacts**

Understanding why and how an area of policy is 'shaped', and how it changes (or stays the same), requires consideration of many factors. These factors can be divided into five main groups: context, actors, processes and integrating institutions, policy contents and policy impacts. It is usually important to make explicit investigation of each of these groups and the linkages and interplay between them. The idea is to identify promising policies, actors, initiatives, obligations, and integrating systems which could be employed for further progress – building on what works.

These factors, which are commonly important to an understanding of policy influencing forests are summarised in Figure A3.1 and outlined below.

*Understanding policy context.* Policy is conditioned and shaped by a wide range of contextual factors relating to the physical, cultural, political and economic environment and to decisions made in the past. These factors include:

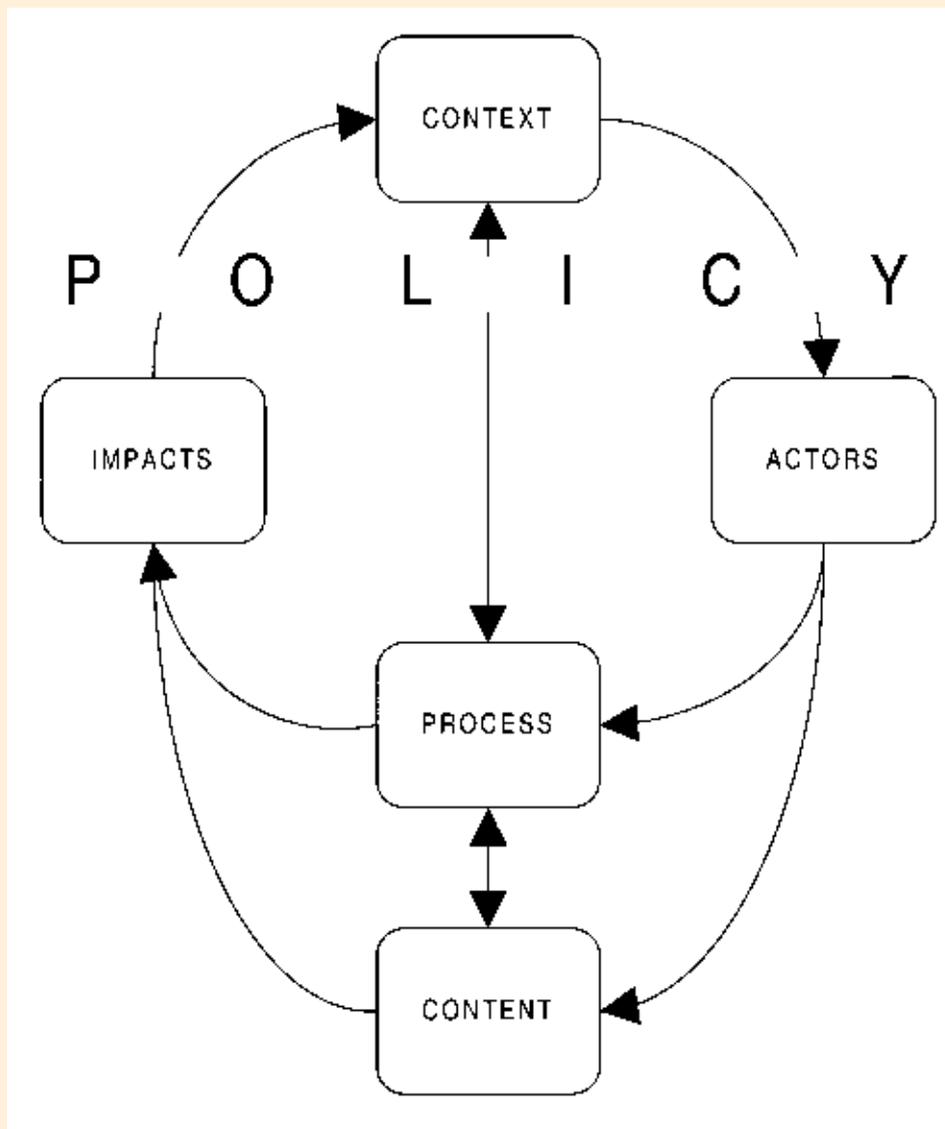
- Pressure from forest stakeholders and society at large
- History of forest use and policy
- Institutional capacity
- Tenure system and pattern of ownership
- Economic conditions and changes
- Forest resource conditions

*Understanding policy actors.* In any one context, various institutions and stakeholder groups will have a bearing on policy. These policy actors and the apparent power structure involved in decision-making need to be identified (this may need more detailed work later – see Section A4.7). It is useful to identify who is pushing for what, and who cannot be 'heard'? Who are the 'integrators' and who are the 'dividers'? The range of influences on policy actors can then begin to be unpacked. These influences include:

- Institutional/ organisational factors
  - mandates, rules, norms, functions, strengths and weaknesses
  - dynamics, interactions, institutional culture
- Individual motivation factors
  - ideological predispositions, pursuit of political objectives
  - position and control of resources
  - professional expertise and experience: adhering to professional standards; promoting own careers
  - institutional loyalties: enhancing the standing of own agencies
  - personal attributes and goals, such as rent seeking

*Understanding policy process.* Here we are interested in identifying the way in which agendas translate into implementation. Section A2.2 in this Annex describes the problems and advantages of various conceptions of the policy process. Developing a conception of the

Figure A3.1 A framework for analysing policy change



current policy process which makes sense in a particular context is an important step in research. Any of the elements, mapped in the notional policy cycle, Figure A2.1, which exist in practice need to be identified.

A key feature of the process is the way in which the policy agenda is formed. The need for change in policy for forests stems from different perceptions of the agenda amongst key policy actors. These perceptions will be shaped by combinations of institutional position, experience, motivation, ideology and the use of language. We can therefore think of agenda formation as being firmly linked to the origin and maintenance of particular narratives and discourses (discussed in Sections A2.4-6 of this Annex).

A particularly common type of discourse framing what is on the policy agenda is *crisis*. Many policy processes are catalysed by the perception and language of crisis amongst policy actors. 'Deforestation crisis'...'woodfuel crisis'...'forest sector crisis' have been recurrent phrases with much impact on policy around the world over the last decade or more. Other policy processes are subject to more day-to-day – *'politics-as-usual'* – language, whilst others are catalysed by a *breakthrough* into the policy arena of new ideas (such as new taxes or market instruments) and new actors not previously involved in policy. The following are common types of agenda perceived by policy actors in forestry over the last few years. The agenda types are arranged in order of those most commonly emerging from perceptions of crisis, through those which grow from politics-as-usual, to agendas formed by the breakthrough of new policy actors or the perception that their innovations should be mainstreamed.

- *New controls* – major changes in institutional structures, laws and regulations
- *Privatisation* – deregulation and market reforms
- *Decentralisation* – divesting responsibilities, or devolving power
- *Cross sectoral cooperation* – harmonising sectoral policies
- *Civil society initiative* – non-governmental and private sector actors cooking up policy
- *Local innovation* – those previously marginalised muscling in on policy with innovative solutions

Each of the above types of agenda leads, characteristically, to a different process by which policy is negotiated and developed. We need to know how the above policy actors get involved, how priorities are set, what communication channels and key decision points or gateways are involved, and how influence is exercised. Elements of process which are likely to warrant particular investigation include:

- *Policy arena*. For example, this might be primarily the macropolitical arena in the case of making bold new laws following crisis, or it might be fora designed to bring national and local actors together in the case of decentralisation.
- *Institutional procedures*. It is especially useful to identify opportunities and constraints to cross-sectoral and top-bottom linkages, in terms of information flows, consultation, and decision-making.

**Table A3.1 Characteristics of some of the main policy processes prevailing in forestry**

Discourse	'Crisis'		'Politics-as-usual'		'Breakthrough'	
<b>Main Agenda</b>	'New controls'	'Privatisation'	'Decentralisation'	'Cross-sectoral cooperation'	'Civil society initiative'	'Local innovation'
<b>Arena of conflict/negotiation</b>	Macro-politics	Macro-economic stringency, private sector	Bureaucracy-local linkages	Cross-sectoral fora	Private sector, NGO fora	Local politics, national policy élite
<b>Institutional procedures</b>	Central, high-profile	Central, competitive	Incremental, administrative	Periodic, consultative	Tactical, collaborative	Devolved, experimental
<b>Determinants of implementation</b>	Legitimacy and stability of regime  Single or group of policy changes  Degree of élite consensus/control	Fiscal efficiency, degree of élite consensus  Structure and interest of private sector  Degree of realignment/horse-trading in private sector	Efficiency and strength of national support  Viability of local institutions  Degree and equity of devolution of power	Catalysts for convergence of interests  Contingency of budgets/incentives on cooperation  Level of cross-sectoral consensus	Strength and credibility of private/ NGO institutions  Extent of 'gap' left by government  Viability of proposed forestry options	Viability of local forestry options  Strength and equity of incentives, leaders and organisation  Degree of support from enlightened national élite
<b>Examples</b>	<i>Papua New Guinea</i> – new forest law and revenue system	<i>South Africa</i> – restructuring of government forests	<i>India</i> – handing over forest responsibilities to panchayats and local committees	<i>Pakistan</i> – National Conservation Strategy	<i>International</i> – progress with forest certification	<i>Costa Rica</i> – locally-developed smallholder forestry spread by organisation

- *Determinants of implementation.* Factors involved here might include the strength of central government support, the degree of devolution of power, the viability of institutions, etc.

Table A3.1 illustrates some of these elements of process under the different types of discourse and agenda types described above.

*Understanding policy contents.* The contents of policy are generally the central focus in the above processes, and are often the 'meat' of any policy research. Policy contents are highly specific to particular cases. Typically there may be tools, instruments and mechanisms involved which are of one or more of the following types: regulatory, economic/ market, informational, institutional, contracts/ agreements. It is useful to ascertain whether there is general agreement over the contents and, even if there is agreement, what is the level of 'policy inflation' in relation to actual capacity to implement real policy, i.e. to think, debate and act strategically.

*Understanding policy impacts.* Policy processes and contents may have dramatic or inconsequential impacts on forests and people. In very general terms, there are three types of impact which need to be borne in mind:

- Environmental
- Social
- Economic

Each of these three impact areas might be assessed in terms of (provisional) criteria and indicators for good forestry, and/ or for sustainable development, perhaps as expressed in overarching commitments such as an NSSD.<sup>6</sup>

Policy impacts may be the expected ones, or they may be quite unexpected. They may be seen quickly or only be revealed in the long term – hence the importance of reviewing policy and impact regularly and building up a time series. Often the link between policy and impact is very hard to ascertain. The work of tracing causes from effects, and effects from causes is a key part of policy research. These impacts are likely to shape, or become part of, the context for any future change in policy.

Thus, there is ultimately a fourth type of impact we are seeking – impact on institutional change and on the evolving policy process itself. Each impact study should, therefore, look beyond the immediate confines of the policy in question.

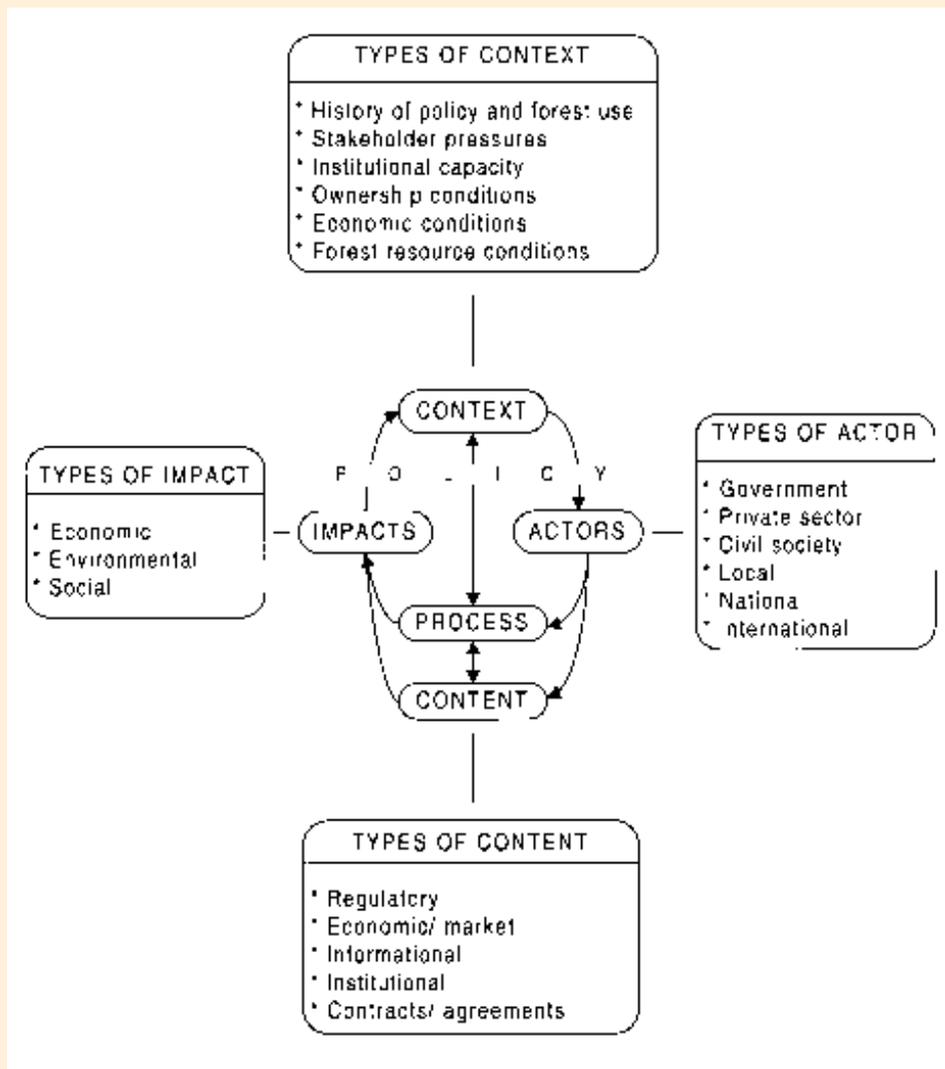
### **A3.3 Develop a framework: piecing together the key policy elements of the problem/ opportunity**

Recognising that policy change is the interplay of context, actors, policy characteristics (process and content) and impacts, the above information can then be assessed and integrated in a framework which best describes the real links between the factors. Figure A3.2 summarises some of the factors to bear in mind in developing such a framework.

---

<sup>6</sup> Preliminary criteria and indicators (C&I) could prove useful as a framework against which to classify policies, to conduct analyses, to assess impact, to focus debate, to build consensus on the dimensions that really matter, and to classify information built up during the policy review. Final sets of C&I could then be tailored to show whether critical values are getting better or worse, by assembling a time series.

Figure A3.2 Analysing policy affecting forests and people: the interplay of context, actors, process, content and impact



### **A3.4 Identify type of influence desired – and plan a strategy for achieving it**

If any good is going to come from policy work, a clear focus on the type of influence desired is needed from the start. There is a wide range of possible objectives here, ranging from just hoping that someone will listen, to working with a policy-maker for a particular policy decision, to trying to build long-term consensus among groups that might one day influence policy. Policy work may help to think about issues and define problems, rather than to seize on solutions.

One possible typology of tactics for influencing policy follows:

- Dump information near policy-makers
- Draw in policy-makers during analysis
- Service the policy machine
- Stay connected – seize opportunities.
- Convene better policy processes
- Offer do-it-yourself policy review kits
- Build constituencies
- Create vision

Where policy research is involved in any of these approaches, it is important to consider how the findings may be used. Three main ways in which research findings may be used by policy-makers are:

- *Data* – most likely when policy-makers already agree on values, goals and problems
- *Ideas* – most likely when current policy is in disarray or there is much uncertainty
- *Argument* – most likely when there is much conflict – where policy-makers are manoeuvring, justifying positions, delaying decisions, enhancing credibility and personal agendas, etc.

Each of the above tactics is investigated in Section A5.3. Clear identification of the scope and possible tactics for using the planned policy research, i.e. some form of 'dissemination and influence strategy', will ensure that the resources, expertise and specific objectives of the research are well-focused.

### **A3.5 Match scope of work to available time and resources**

'Small and quick' approaches, and 'large and long' programmes may be equally valid, but work best for different issues and for different types of influence.

The advantages of small and quick studies are: timeliness in relation to key events, good political and stakeholder momentum, and the ability to exploit a state of urgency. But they can be too quick for some stakeholders to be involved, they may produce results that are insufficiently well-informed, and they are unlikely to be well-coordinated with other initiatives.

Large and long studies give time to explore issues, time to bring in the right stakeholders and for reactionary stakeholders to see the need for change. They can command resources to do the work well, and use time wisely to produce results that are 'mainstreamed' into all the necessary related processes. But they run into trouble if the money dries up, protagonists change, policy issues are no longer pertinent, and policy-makers can't digest the results. And they can take so long that key actions are delayed 'to wait for the plan' and people lose interest.

Perhaps the best compromise is a permanent forum and process to keep an eye on policy, and the ability to call in short studies as and when needed.

### **A3.6 Select team members, investigators, advisors**

The 'team' is obviously rather dependent on the issues and scope of the process. But, in general and assuming a fairly comprehensive forest policy review process, five types of groups may be needed:

1. A *convenor* of the policy process (high-level and – especially if there are many extra-sectoral issues – a 'neutral' and/ or widely-credible office, e.g. the prime minister's office, or a development planning authority)
2. A *steering group* (multi-agency with government, market and civil society representation at high levels; reasonably catholic, to survive party political changes). This would comprise a mix of policy-connected and policy-affected people, who would review the work (thereby sharing perspectives), possibly in stages to ensure that it is focused
3. A *'technical' working group* (again, multi-agency/ discipline). They would conduct the analysis and develop technical solutions – but the 'field work' will take place as much in corridors of power as in the forest
4. *Secretariat* (this could be one-off, or in a fairly 'neutral' body). It might comprise:
  - a 'neutral' manager who is credible to stakeholders
  - economics expertise
  - participation/ facilitation expertise
  - communications expertise
5. *Key informants* who will need to be kept informed and consulted, individually and in special meetings. These are the 'policy-affected' people, and those with diverse and useful perspectives, such as writers and the media. Stakeholder analysis will help to identify these. Key informants may be involved through e.g.
  - local surveys (questionnaires, local meetings)
  - interviews
  - participatory appraisals
  - small working groups

Our proposals on policy processes require – and promote – an acceptance of the principle of participation in policy. Whether or not this is accepted, there are several problems which can occur. One is to do with the *different ideologies* behind participation, e.g.:

- instrumentalist approaches – participation confers higher value, better information, and reduced cost by engaging other actors
- post-modernist – all views are valid and need to be heard
- neo-liberal – reduction of state interference is a good thing in itself
- rights activists – more local/ stakeholder autonomy can be achieved through participation, which leads to claims-making

All of this means that there will also be *different expectations* about the outcomes of participation:

- Apparently 'win-win' solutions will mask or undermine ideological differences
- Bitter experience means many people do not expect any real change
- Participation can be associated (negatively) with party politics

Participation mechanisms need to be selected so as to minimise these problems. It is important to *clarify 'how far' participants can expect participation to go*, i.e. certainly:

- providing information (consultation)
- helping to define priority issues
- confirming findings
- developing options
- contributing to consensus

*but* it is unlikely that wide participation can be expected in making decisions on priorities, investments and precise policy/ institutional changes.

### **A3.7 Formulate specific objectives, research questions and methodology**

The foregoing preliminary work – on identifying issues, understanding the context, and building a big picture of how the issues fit in this context, needs to be discussed amongst involved stakeholders with a view to:

1. verifying the scope of the issues
2. agreeing the boundaries of the forthcoming policy exercise
3. focusing on objectives and questions that will need to be addressed
4. designing the policy process

These four points form useful agenda items for the early meetings of a steering group or technical group, for example. Without this, the issues addressed in the policy process are likely to expand beyond any ability to handle them, and the process may become discredited.

The idea is to channel attention and thought into what matters, not provide a forum for unending debate. It is especially important that multi-stakeholder groups design the process themselves, for ownership of the process and its results.<sup>7</sup> Key actions include:

- *Select priority aspects of the problem/ issue/ opportunity.* Priorities might be assessed by reference to criteria for human and ecosystem well-being and practicality, e.g.:
  - central to poor people's livelihoods or key economic sectors
  - possibility to act without extra finance
  - key environmental hazards
  - key developmental needs
  - presents major learning opportunity
  - visible to the public/ multiplier effect
  - international obligation
  - high priority amongst key actors
  - timeliness in relation to a pending decision
  - linked to current work – topicality – and skills – comparative advantage
- *Formulate objectives and questions.* Things cannot be left as 'issues', as this does not help to provide direction to analysis or developing solutions. For example, 'watershed degradation' is less useful a formulation than "what incentives have encouraged watershed conservation? And how can we remove perverse incentives to deforest key watersheds?" Questions should:
  - address an important aspect
  - provide a synthesis
  - exhibit policy responsiveness
- *Agree the outputs and who will get them* – it is important that this should not be a surprise once it has been produced, and so stakeholder expectations and political/ legal procedures and implications need to be discussed beforehand. For example, will the output be 'evidence', 'proposals' for policy, a draft policy itself, or a policy and accompanying action plan?
- *Select and sequence methods.* This is primarily a technical task, but the implications of the types of analysis and consultation will be important to the convenor and any policy-level steering group. For example, they may need to prepare the way by encouraging officers to be critical and not 'toe the party line'.

### **A3.8 Conduct analysis, develop findings, analyse their potential for impact, and revise**

See Section A4 for a selection of methods for analysis which we have found to be useful. A possible sequence of tasks in the analysis follows:

---

<sup>7</sup> The 1997-9 forest policy formulation process in Grenada was agreed by all stakeholders (interviewed by an independent IIED mission) to have high 'ownership' within the country. Said one: 'It started off on the right foot. That make-a-policy process was designed by MANY OF US, not by the [forest] department or any outsiders, and then it talked to EVERYBODY to get a policy which is the NATION'S interest and not just the department's!'

1. *Analyse* particular issues defined earlier – what resources are being degraded and how; who is affected and how; policy, institutional, market, behavioural, international causes of problems
2. *Assess likely futures and vulnerability/ resilience* – accounting for trends (globalisation, technology, etc)
3. *Local consultations* to find out complexities (what effect, who affected, what positive/ negative trends in terms of sector/ livelihoods concerned – basis for indicators)
4. *Build information system* to collate results ('hidden wiring') based around the 'priority criteria (human and ecosystem well-being)
5. *Synthesise* all evidence and recommendations – common and differing approaches (done by independent working group/ secretariat)
6. *Weigh carefully against priority criteria* – need to do homework to avoid a totally win-win 'additive' recommendation, and instead to achieve a more practical, tactical approach
7. *Assessments of trade-offs between levels* (local to global – buck-passing and 'importing sustainability')
8. *Produce findings, conclusions, recommendations, and implications of recommendations* – in that order of 'ambition'

The above process is not quite as 'linear' as it has been portrayed. When tentative findings have been produced and synthesised, stakeholder positions and institutional factors may need to be revisited and reanalysed to predict the consequences and probability of the findings having impact – such as uptake and implementation. Often it may be necessary to revise the tentative findings in the light of this reanalysis. For example, if the impact desired is a particular policy decision, the following steps can be envisaged:

- Assess power of actors in relation to the targeted decision:
  - prune the list of actors compiled during research
  - divide the list into those responsible for the targeted policy decision, and those who will try to influence it
  - ascertain power of actors to access and mobilise resources and decision-makers
  - assess their opinions
  - visualise the power structure related to the targeted decision
- Assess institutional factors needed to implement targeted decision:
  - organisational structure
  - amount of resources needed
  - supporting policy mechanisms – existing and required
- Predict potential consequences of findings
- Estimate the probability of implementation. If probability is not high, options include:
  - accept the low probability
  - change the scope or depth of the recommendations, e.g. from fundamental to incremental change or vice versa; from a desire to change to a desire to obtain agreement on future
  - modify the recommendations, e.g. repackage using more appealing terms; modify and

work with actors to create ownership and support; redirect to provoke controversy, deepen public concern and build strong support for meaningful actions

- Prepare final recommendations and check against the agreed priority-setting criteria

### **A3.9 Prepare findings in optimal output form, communicate and influence policy!**

Findings and recommendations need to be driven by the right 'vehicle' to stand a chance. Packaging and presentation are all-important, and are discussed further in Section A5.2.

If communication throughout the study with different potential study 'users' has been good, the ground will be well prepared. But it is important that recommendations are seen to be 'owned' by the broad policy community, not just the author of any analysis. Briefing, debate, and decisions need to take place in the highest relevant forum (which may be Cabinet for a comprehensive overall policy review, or one which addresses very significant issues). Informal briefings with such ultimate arbiters throughout the process can be helpful. But 'bouncing' analysis and ideas in stages with their advisors is crucial (hence the steering group suggested in Section A3.6). At these high levels, oral communication is generally the most effective – any written policy briefs will have to be very short.



## A4 Analyse policy: some methods

### A4.1 Early and regular consultation with current holders of policy

Development of the strategy for policy work (Section A3) will clarify the balance required between pure analysis and advocacy/ influence. Where influence on, or with, the current holders of policy is needed – and mostly it is – regular consultation with them will be crucial. Policy research cannot generally afford to proceed like a typical detached research project; it needs to engage in a dialogue with key stakeholders so as to create a constituency for the findings. Approaches for generating this early and regular contact include:

- *Interviews* with people from various institutions to gauge diverse opinion amongst different sectors and social actors.
- *Inception workshop* to help define the research agenda – key issues and objectives.
- *Regular face-to-face contact* between the researchers and a range of stakeholders throughout the course of the work, to maintain a two-way flow of information.
- *Advisory committee* – comprising representatives from different sectors, identified in the early stages of work as key actors – to enable regular follow-up on a wide range of opinions and experience, and to build a support-base among key players. Committee members can be consulted individually and in meetings through the course of the study (Section A3.6).
- *Quick write-up and circulation of interim and preliminary findings* – among advisory committee and other peer reviewers – to stimulate debate and garner feedback and further support constituency and consensus.

Repeated consultation and discussion with a range of active ‘opinion-formers’ and members of the formal policy-making community can generate ‘political space’ for key issues, and policy opportunities may arise in the course of the work. For example, in the case of the Ghana *Policy that works* study, the Ministry of Lands and Forestry was particularly keen that the opportunity provided by the study be used to explore the potential for forest certification. Thus, an early focus of the study was to contribute to the emerging debate on the

appropriateness and potential of forest certification and labelling in Ghana; the background to the issues; and the directions and challenges ahead. This work helped to bring about the emergence of a substantive process which has enabled options and approaches for certification to be developed and debated.

## A4.2 Analysis of policy statements and laws

Analysis of policy *documents* is an important part of policy analysis. It cannot give a complete picture of policy – which as discussed must also include dimensions of context, process, intentions and outcomes. The language, style and length of policy documents can tell us much about context and process, although it is only recently that they have tended to give direct information about how they were formulated (such as the Grenada forest policy of 1999, which was formulated through a highly participatory mechanism, and some policies produced through newer NFP processes). However, by keeping these dimensions in mind whilst reviewing documents, we can identify implications, notably implementation issues and potential policy instruments. A desk review of key policy documents might include:

- Gathering policy documents which have a bearing on forests and people
- Cataloguing the contents in relation to the purpose of the analysis, e.g. by criteria and indicators of SFM
- Highlighting inconsistencies, links and overlaps between the documents
- Identifying particular innovations and lessons in the documents
- Comparing the positions in these documents with those of key stakeholder groups
- Noting any conflicts or gaps with respect to international obligations and opportunities
- Identifying issues related to implementation, notably on capacity implications
- Identifying mechanisms for dialogue between stakeholders, for reconciliation of potentially competing objectives and inter-sectoral coordination

### **Example: Policy documents as a basis for ‘sustainable forest management’ in Sri Lanka**

The two tables which follow below were developed as a way of giving a quick ‘interested outsider’s’ assessment of the extent to which the Sri Lanka forest policy and draft legislation documents appear to provide a good basis for stakeholders to pursue sustainable forest management at forest level (Dubois and Mayers, 1998).

From interpretation of forestry experience in a wide range of contexts, IIED has summarised what it has identified as the *functional needs* of SFM. Table A4.1 relates the two Sri Lankan policy documents to these functional needs of SFM and makes a ‘back of an envelope’ assessment of the degree to which these documents appear to enable stakeholders to support each need.

**Table A4.1 Sri Lankan policy documents in relation to the functional needs of SFM**

Functional needs of SFM	Policy	Act
• Clarifying stakeholder roles and procedures	**	*
• Securing property rights	***	**
• Building staff capacities within institutions	**	*
• Integrating multiple objectives	***	**
• Making choices between objectives	**	*
• Building and sharing forest knowledge	*	*
• Dealing with uncertainties	*	*
• Ensuring communication and participation	***	*
• Covering the costs	*	*

Explanation of the columns in the table:

**Policy.** The degree to which the National Forest Policy of 1995 appears to provide a good basis for stakeholders to pursue SFM.

**Act.** The degree to which the draft Forest Conservation Act of June 1997 appears to support the National Forest Policy and further contribute to the basis for stakeholders to pursue SFM.

\*\*\* = High  
 \*\* = Medium  
 \* = Low

Such a 'functional' assessment can be taken a step further, to determine how far policies might match up with 'best practice'. For example, IIED has also analysed a wide range of international, regional and national initiatives to define SFM – the various criteria and indicators and certification programmes – and found that they all had the following in common:

- Framework conditions on policy and commitment
- Sustained and optimal production of forest products
- Protecting the environment
- Ensuring the well-being of people

These core elements can be broken down into a number of common sub-elements. These are listed in Table A4.2 for a second 'back of an envelope' assessment. The Table also notes some of the features of the documents which are particularly innovative, and some challenges remaining.

**Table A4.2. Sri Lankan policy documents in relation to common elements of international and national SFM standards**

Common element of SFM standards	Policy	Act	Innovations	Challenges
<b>Framework conditions</b>				
• Compliance with legislation and regulation	**	**	Policy likely to motivate many stakeholders to comply, if well disseminated	Questionable legitimacy of state control of all forests and trees on non-state land. Little provision for international commitments or opportunities
• Securing tenure and use rights	**	**	Multi-tenure approach to permanent forest estate through leases	Lack of provision for conversion areas or improved tenure security in Act
• Commitment to sustainable forest management	**	*	Policy has inspirational strength, if well disseminated	Priorities amongst objectives unclear. Institutional roles unclear Little promotion of incentives cf. regulation
<b>Sustained and optimal production of forest products</b>				
• Sustained yield of forest products	**	**	Multi-user forestry approach on state lands	Lack of provision for transfer of ownership of state plantations in Act
• Management planning	***	**	Forest agreements and joint management potential	Little involvement of stakeholders in planning stages
• Monitoring the effects of management	*	*		Many rules but little emphasis on information systems and flow
• Protection of the forest from illegal activities	**	***	Detailed provisions	
• Optimising benefits from the forest	**	*	Emphasis on promotion/ extension activities on non-state lands	Provisions for Class III, IV and V forests are unclear. Very strict controls on felling and transport of timber on private land

Common element of SFM standards	Policy	Act	Innovations	Challenges
<b>Protection of the environment</b>				
• Environmental impact assessment	*	*		An objective without provisions
• Conservation of biodiversity	**	**	Strong forest-level protection measures	Lack of provision for stand-level conservation in either document
• Ecological sustainability	**	*	Clearly implicit throughout Policy	Land use planning perceived as purely regulatory cf. incentive- and information-based
• Waste and chemicals management	*	*		No provisions
<b>Well-being of people</b>				
• Consultation and participation processes	**	*	Fairly strong theme in Policy	Proposals for participation but weakened by excessive regulation and state powers
• Social impact assessment	*	*		No provisions
• Recognition of rights and culture	**	**	Fairly strong theme in Policy	Traditional/ existing rights not spelled out/ reinforced
• Relations with employees	*	*		Little on staff development
• Contribution to development	***	**	One of three core objectives	Much still to do to establish vision of forestry in national land use and development

Explanation of the columns in the table:

**Innovations.** Features of the recent policy and legal documents which strike us as being particularly innovative, and likely to be of interest to others in the forestry world beyond Sri Lanka.

**Challenges.** Features of the documents which, from our reading, appear to be challenges remaining – potential gaps or issues in need of further policy or legislative attention.

Source: Dubois and Mayers, 1998

### **Example: Review of legal documentation in Himachal Pradesh**

In *Himachal Pradesh*, a major forest sector review is under way, with the aim to produce proposals for new policy. It is known that many of the relevant legal instruments are out of date, and not rationalised – each one being an incremental response to a new situation. In such circumstances, it was felt that the review of the legal documents should be a two-part job: the first to assess the legal instruments available, and the second to look at the legal possibilities and changes associated with any policy proposals.

*Step 1: Assessment of current legal situation.* This is informed by the main problems raised by an initial scoping exercise. It covers:

- Assessing relevant legal documents, noting their provisions within an eight-part SFM Criteria framework
- Highlighting inconsistencies, links and overlaps between them
- Noting gaps and opportunities with respect to international obligations on forests, environment, human rights
- Identifying particular innovations and lessons in the recent development of legislation on forest-related issues

*Step 2: Assessment of legal requirements associated with proposed policy options*

- Comparing the provisions of current legislation with the emerging policy options
- Identifying the need for enabling legislation to permit new arrangements, such as partnerships for SFM
- Identifying the need for further regulation on issues related to implementation, notably on capacity to enforce in relation to critical forest assets
- Noting cross-sectoral issues, which may require the forest sector review to engage with authorities in other sectors
- Rationalising legislation, perhaps within the eight-part SFM Criteria framework<sup>8</sup>

## **A4.3 Policy instrument analysis**

We have described in the main text of this report (see Section 6.4) the types of policy instruments and the ways in which they seek to work – by compulsion, persuasion or incentive. Much policy instrument analysis aims to evaluate the impacts of existing policy instruments, or to predict the likely consequences of the use of proposed instruments. However, there are various other reasons why such analysis may be needed, and the approach taken needs to be tailored to the circumstances. There is a wide range of tools for analysing policy instruments, from cost-benefit analysis to environmental assessment and various modelling approaches. The advantages and disadvantages of some of these tools are outlined in Table A4.3.

---

<sup>8</sup> In the UK, legislation, grant guidelines, and other incentives were catalogued according to the Helsinki Criteria and Indicators for SFM. The rationalised result was the UK Forest Standards, which subsequently formed a useful basis for converging with FSC certification requirements, to result in the UK Woodland Audit Scheme.

**Table A4.3 Comparison of some tools for analysing forestry and land-use policy instrument options**

Tool/ Approach	Description/ Purpose	Advantages	Disadvantages
Land Suitability Classification	Distinguish and map areas in terms of characteristics which determine suitability for different uses.	Distills a mass of physical, biological and (sometimes) economic information into a single index of relative suitability for various land uses.	Economic comparisons are rarely made explicit and the relative importance of different factors in calculating the final index may be arbitrary.
Environmental Appraisal or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Detailed documentation of environmental impacts, adverse effects and mitigation alternatives.	Explicitly requires consideration of environmental effects; ability to monetise does not preclude enumeration of all benefits and costs of an action.	Difficult to integrate descriptive analyses of intangible effects with monetary benefits and costs; not designed to assess trade-offs among alternatives.
Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)	Evaluates projects, land-use options and policies based on monetisation of net benefits (benefits minus costs).	Considers the value (in terms of willingness to pay) and costs of actions; translates outcomes into commensurable terms; consistent with judging by efficiency implications.	No direct consideration of distribution of benefits and costs; significant informational requirements; tends to omit outputs whose effects cannot be quantified; tends to reinforce status quo; contingent on existing distribution of income and wealth
Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA)	Selects land-use option that will minimise costs of realising a defined non-monetary objective.	No need to value benefits; focus on cost information often more readily available; provides implicit values of objectives (e.g. marginal cost of increasing by one unit)	No consideration given to relative importance of outputs; degree to which all costs are considered will be important to judgements as to 'best' approach.
Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA)	Uses mathematical programming techniques to select option based on objective functions including weighted goals of decision-maker, with explicit consideration of constraints and costs.	Offers consistent basis for making decisions; fully reflects all goals and constraints incorporated in model; allows for quantification of the implicit costs of constraints; permits prioritising of projects.	Results only as good as inputs to model; unrealistic characterisation of decision process; must supply the weight to be assigned to goals; large information needs for quantification.
Risk-Benefit Analysis (RBA)	Evaluates benefits as socialised with land-use option in comparison with risks.	Framework is left vague for flexibility; intended to permit consideration of all risks, benefits and costs; not an automatic decision rule.	Too vague; factors considered to be commensurate often are not.
Decision Analysis (DA)	Step-by-step analysis of the consequences of choices under uncertainty.	Allows various objectives to be used; makes choices explicit; explicit recognition of uncertainty.	Objectives not always clear; no clear mechanism for assigning weights.
Macroeconomic and Behavioural Models	Economic programming models used to simulate intersectoral linkages and producer behaviour.	Dynamic and price-endogenous models allow explicit simulation of feedback effects and price movements; best for large-scale projects and land-use allocation.	Tend to be data and analysis intensive; expensive to build and run and often difficult to interpret.

Source: Adapted from Pearce and Markandya (1989). Land Use Classification and Behavioural Models added (JIED, 1994).

Rarely are policy instruments used alone, so the *mix* of instruments is often of crucial concern. It is important to work out the boundaries and interrelationships, synergies and conflicts amongst instruments. For example, in *Chile* the 1974 Act (Decreto Ley 701) which established afforestation incentives has been hailed as a success because it also guaranteed the security of forest land ownership – whenever forest investments were carried out – and the free trade of all forest products including roundwood. Thus, the objective of building a successful forest-timber industry, seems to have been met through the right mix of incentives, property rights and trade regulations.

Figure A4.1 is an example from *Ghana* of mapping the impacts of two main policy instruments – forest fees and log export bans. It shows the interrelationships between these instruments and key institutional and market factors, and the resulting impacts on the forest.

Where many approaches to policy instrument analysis founder, or at least fail to break through to having much effect, is in their lack of attention to differences between actors. Policy instruments affect some actors more than others, and often in unforeseen ways. Perceptive approaches to analysing the potential impacts of policy instruments focus on how the various actors involved will react to them. The objectives, knowledge and power of each actor needs to be mapped out, and consideration given to the fact that people have very different degrees of access to, and perspective on, information about available policy alternatives and their pros and cons. Once the situations of the different actors are better understood, they can be compared and some judgement made about the likely outcome of the proposed instrument or intervention.

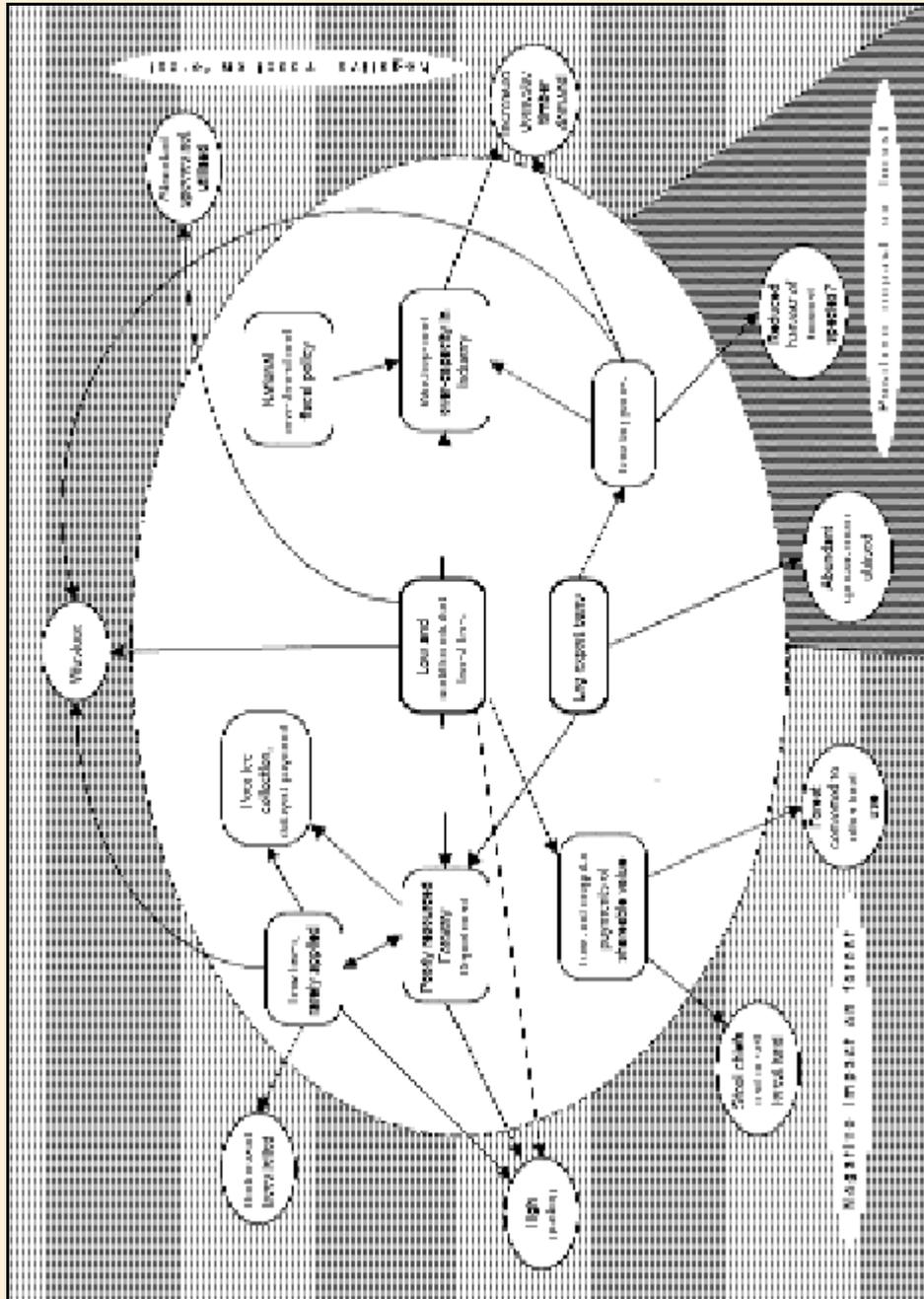
In summary, the use of analysis of policy instruments – to make decisions and trade-offs between possible instruments – is likely to depend on the degree to which it deals with actors' different costs and benefits, agendas (hidden and overt) and powers. The following sections describe approaches which address these issues and can thus make sure that policy instrument analysis is done by the right people, focused on the right issues, and likely to have some effect.

#### **A4.4 Surveys of attitudes and perceptions**

Use of the vast array of techniques available for surveying attitudes and perceptions amongst stakeholders has not been conspicuous in the analysis or development of forest policy. However, provided that a clear focus is kept on objectives, the likely biases in responses and the ability to deal with the results (rather than getting carried away with asking questions), such surveys can generate important findings.

In *Papua New Guinea*, a country with a high per capita count of anthropologists, the PTW study team sent a questionnaire to many of them. The questions aimed to draw on the anthropologists' knowledge of local attitudes towards forests and policy. The response rate was high. The questionnaire was also sent to university environmental studies students from all over the country. The two types of respondent proved complementary and allowed a much wider spread of views from local level, than a small number of field exercises would have permitted. Although the interpretations of anthropologists and students are not necessarily

Figure A4.1 Example of policy instrument impact mapping: Impacts of forest fiscal system and log export bans on Ghana's timber resource in 1993



Source: Majors et al., 1996

representative of all local views, the results provided the team with a useful basis on which to judge the local linkage and relevance of the 'world' of national-level policy.

In *Grenada*, a small island nation with a high literacy rate (95 per cent), a committee, comprising 18 key forest-sector stakeholders, was established to design and implement a 12-month forest policy review process (September '97 to September '98). The committee decided that the policy should be for the whole nation and that the development process should be highly consultative and participatory, to optimise both content and ownership.

In order to achieve this the Forestry Department was asked to facilitate this process through a combination of community meetings, radio phone-in programmes and consultative sub-sector studies and questionnaires. The main questionnaire (Box A4.1) designed to provide a chance for all citizens to give their views on forest-related issues, was distributed through committee members and printed in all national newspapers. To encourage completion and return of the questionnaire 70 small forest-related prizes were given on a lottery basis. This may have contributed to the high response, 430 or 0.5 per cent of the population. The questionnaire was also used to identify individuals who could be invited to help develop the policy.

The response from this consultation process was extremely useful in demonstrating that the public and forest officials shared similar ideas on forest values. However, the scope of the policy and Forestry Department activities needed to be broadened both technically and geographically. The information collected during the year was fed into a 'Consensus-building' workshop from which a new forest policy was developed. The new policy has given strong impetus for change within the Forestry Department

In *Himachal Pradesh*, however, where literacy is much lower, participatory appraisals and focus group discussions in 24 villages (stratified across the State according to livelihood and forest differences) are being used to obtain the same sorts of information – people's perspectives of forest values, and of the forest authorities and other service-providers. This will emphasise different stakeholder groups rather than treat 'the public' as a whole, as in Grenada.

## **A4.5 Participatory appraisal – to identify stakeholder vision and priorities**

Whilst it can be useful to start policy analysis by discussing with *key informants* (for qualitative, basic information on issues) it is always necessary to move on to (stratified) *sampling of wider groups* for more detailed information on quantities and weighting of issues. The methodology needs to suit the group in question. In A4.4 we noted the value of questionnaires. Telephone surveys and household surveys may also be useful (as used in British approaches to revising forest strategy). For many groups, however, especially at the local level, village/ user group meetings and participatory appraisals are the best way forward, especially where there are problems of representation of the group (Box A4.2).

*Communication with local groups*, from the early stages of policy work, is important to enable local views to shape the direction and substance of the work. For example, the Zimbabwe

*Policy That Works* team worked with several communities in important resource and tenure contexts for two main reasons: firstly, to ascertain whether the current collection of national policy statements and laws made any sense in relation to local perspectives and priorities; and secondly, to help the team develop its own 'vision' for forests and people. These local findings and the team's vision were then debated in several local and national workshop exercises.

**Box A4.1 Grenada's forest policy questionnaire**

**If Grenada's environment is important to you please take time to complete this:  
FOREST POLICY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Complete and return to enter a FREE PRIZE DRAW (details at bottom of page)

The Forestry Department (FD) is currently managing a wide-ranging and participatory Forest Policy review process, with assistance from the British Government, and we would like your ideas and opinions. This 'policy' is being developed for use by all Grenadian individuals and institutions, not only the FD, who have an interest in the goods and services that the country's forests and trees provide. The FD is one of the institutions that looks forward to using the new policy to develop and implement a new and responsive strategy to manage forested State areas and assist private land owners, as requested, in forest management issues. The new Forest Policy will also generate new laws and will, hopefully, make a positive impact on everyone who lives here.

The policy development process is being managed by a Committee made up of a wide variety of both Government and non-Government representatives covering areas such as: farming, fisheries, education, hunting, land-use, Carriacou and Petit Martinique, development, extension, water, tourism and others. We, the Committee, invite you to tell us what you think about any issues that concern forests and forest use. Your comments will be highly valued. The questionnaire below is designed to cover many of the issues but please write and tell us what you think about any other forestry matters. This is the only time that such a questionnaire will be published. Please write clearly.

In helping us develop Forest Policy you are directly helping manage and protect our natural forest heritage so that our children's children can enjoy the benefits of a healthy environment that our grandparents passed on to us.

Score the questions below between 1 (unimportant) and 5 (important) Please circle

1) Should the FD be managing State forest in the hilly lands for the following:

	Unimportant					Important				
a. Wildlife conservation.....	1	2	3	4	5					
b. Soil and water conservation.....	1	2	3	4	5					
c. Biodiversity (protection).....	1	2	3	4	5					
d. Eco-tourism / recreation.....	1	2	3	4	5					
e. Timber production.....	1	2	3	4	5					
f. Non-timber products.....	1	2	3	4	5					
2) Should the FD be concerned with safe-guarding mangroves?	1	2	3	4	5					
3) Should the FD expand its provision of tree seedlings to farmers or others?	1	2	3	4	5					
4) Should the FD be working with farmers to help reduce soil erosion?	1	2	3	4	5					

5) Should the FD be working with hunters to jointly manage wildlife populations? 1 2 3 4 5

6) Should the FD improve / create hiking trails and recreational opportunities in forest reserves? 1 2 3 4 5

7) Should the FD be more involved in environmental education in schools? 1 2 3 4 5

8) Have you bought timber / fence posts / fencing from the FD in recent years?  
YES / NO (please circle)

9) If 'YES' then: Was the quality: Good \* Adequate \* Poor \*  
Did the price seem: High \* Reasonable \* Low \*

10) If you have not bought such items from the FD, why not? Please 'tick'  
Do not buy timber / posts etc. \* Did not know that FD sold timber / posts etc. \*  
Erratic quality \* Timber not dried \* Limited variety of species \* Limited variety of sizes \*  
Too expensive \* Other:

Questions 11 - 14 all ask for the answer YES/NO/please give details

11) Are there other products or services that you would like to see the FD provide? YES / NO

12) Should forest products that are sold by Government be subsidised ? YES / NO

13) Do you have particular problems in your area that you would like FD to address? YES / NO

14) Do you depend on the forest for your livelihood or for some of your income? YES / NO

15) Do you visit forest areas for recreation? YES / NO  
If 'YES' what activity: Walking / hiking \* Picnicking \* Hunting \*  
Bird watching \* Other activities:

16) If you do use forest areas for recreation how often do you do these activities?  
At least once a week \* 2-3 times a month \* 4-10 times a year \*  
1-3 times each year \* Comments:

17) Do you see much garbage or litter in forest areas? YES / NO  
If 'YES' should anything be done about it and if so what ?

18) Is soil erosion a problem in Grenada? YES / NO  
If 'YES' please tick what the major causes are: Poor agricultural practices \*  
Clearance of vegetation for construction \* Lack of awareness of problem \*  
Lack of Government control in upland areas \* Other:

19) Does soil erosion affect you in any way? YES / NO  
What should be done about it?

20) Please add your thoughts or comments about any forestry or forest-related issues, below (or on an attached sheet):

21) How important is it for the public to be invited to contribute to the development of Grenada's various national policies?  
Unimportant Important  
1 2 3 4 5

Your name and address: (optional but required for entry in the Prize Draw:  
Any information you can provide about yourself would be useful:  
Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: Grenadian \* Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: M / F (please circle)  
Age group: Under 20 \* 20 - 29 \* 30 - 39 \* 40 - 49 \* Above 50 \*

## Box A4.2 Some participatory tools for working with stakeholders

Participatory methodologies comprise various means of obtaining information from local stakeholders, without introducing the bias of the researcher or planner on the one hand, or the leaders or narrow segments of stakeholder groups on the other hand. There are hundreds of such methodologies worldwide – mostly developed in the last 15 years to foster people-first, sustainable development objectives. They have been tested in many participatory forestry projects, especially in developing countries, with the aim of helping stakeholder groups to identify their forestry resources, problems and objectives of both the majority and minorities. A challenge for the next decade is to get these methodologies integrated into forest policy processes. The following is just a summary of the methodologies:

**Village/ community meetings.** Attend existing village or community groups if they are broadly representative; or call special meetings to give out information and to get feedback. Communicate intentions of a forest organisation at such meetings – especially in the early stages of identifying stakeholder groups and possible impacts. Such meetings are essential when community-wide issues or conflicts emerge.

**Focus groups.** Convene special groups to discuss a particular topic. For example, farmers wanting land within the forest or hunters and their practices.

**Participatory mapping.** Provide opportunities for stakeholders to prepare maps of resources/ problems/ conflicts. This can be done on paper or blackboards, or can use local materials such as sticks, leaves, stones, grass, coloured sand, cigarette packets, etc., on the ground. Allow one map to lead to others, as more and more people get involved. Encourage interruption of map preparation to enable more focused discussions to take place. A range of maps can be produced, such as:

- *Resource maps* – depicting villages, forests, farms, hunting grounds and so on.
- *Tenure and rights maps* – indicating who owns, and has rights to, which areas or resources
- *Impact and action maps* – recording where particular impacts occur or actions that are needed.
- *Mobility maps* – showing people's movements to other towns and cities from their community. These can reveal valuable information about seasonal movements, markets used, transportation difficulties and so on.

**Time lines.** Work with groups to prepare a history of major recollected events in a community with approximate dates, and discussion of which changes have occurred and why (cause and effect).

**Matrix scoring.** Use matrices to agree ordering and structuring of information, and then for planning. Agree ranking criteria (matrix rows) and relevant issues (matrix columns). Ask stakeholders, usually in a group, to fill in the boxes for each row.

**Group contracts.** A formal written contract in which a group's members set out their roles and responsibilities, and what they see as appropriate behaviour and attitudes towards one another and towards other groups. Ensure the contract is seen as a working agreement between all group members. This might be appropriate for outgrower schemes and the forest organisation's own liaison committee/ group.

**Useful references on participatory appraisal.** There is a huge literature in this methodological field. A useful ongoing source of information is *PLA Notes: notes on participatory learning and action*, produced by IIED. Carter *et al* (1996) provides an extensive discussion of the application of participatory approaches to forest resource assessment. Pretty *et al* (1995) offers an extensive and practical trainers' guide. Abbot and Guijt (1998) provide practical guidance on participatory approaches to monitoring the environment.

Source: Higman *et al* 1999

## A4.6 Mapping policy influences

Policies send signals to different actors, and encourage certain types of reaction. Some signals are strong and compelling, while others are weak and almost subliminal. In a way, they can be viewed as concentric circles of influence. Indeed, this is often a good way to visualise them – and such visualisation can help in discussing policy as a mixed group of stakeholders. Some examples are given here.

Figure A4.2 is a generic 'policy influences map', which will often be found to apply. In itself, it can be a useful tool to open up discussion beyond the obvious influence of forest policy alone. Figure A4.3 was drawn by the PNG PTW team. Here, physical metaphors were chosen – overriding policies of structural adjustment and governance 'raining' down on the nation as a whole, land reform policy providing the essential soil on which forest policy must develop – and minerals and agricultural policy either threatening to knock forestry out of the equation, or finding a place alongside forest policy.

Policy influences can extend from one nation to another. For example, the notion of the 'ecological footprint' can be a useful way of visualising the impact of one country's international relations – through trade, aid, foreign investment, foreign and military policy – on other nations.

Figure A4.2 Generic policy influences map

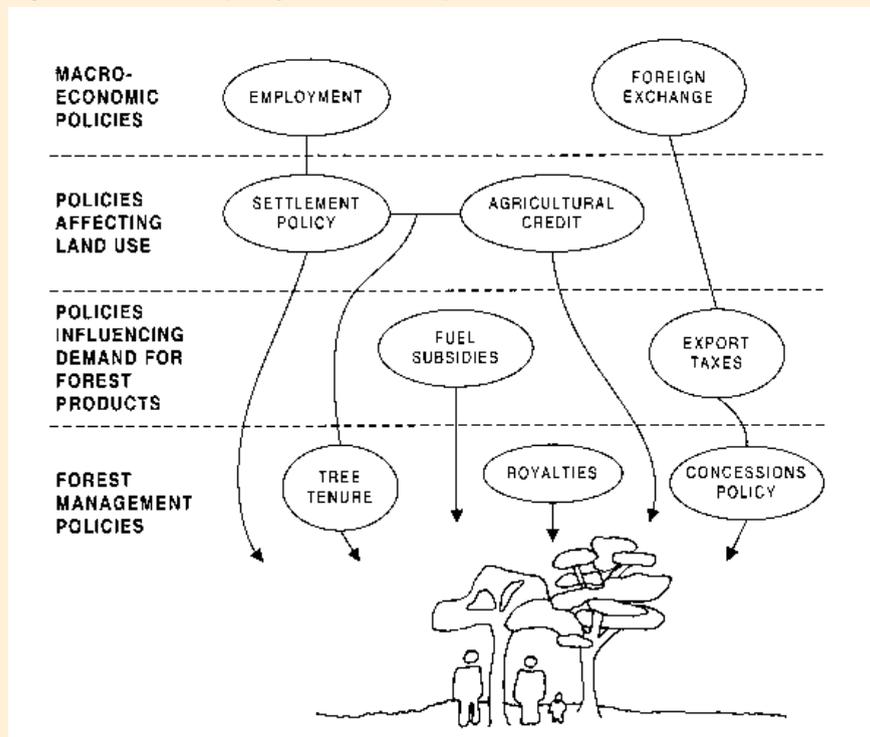
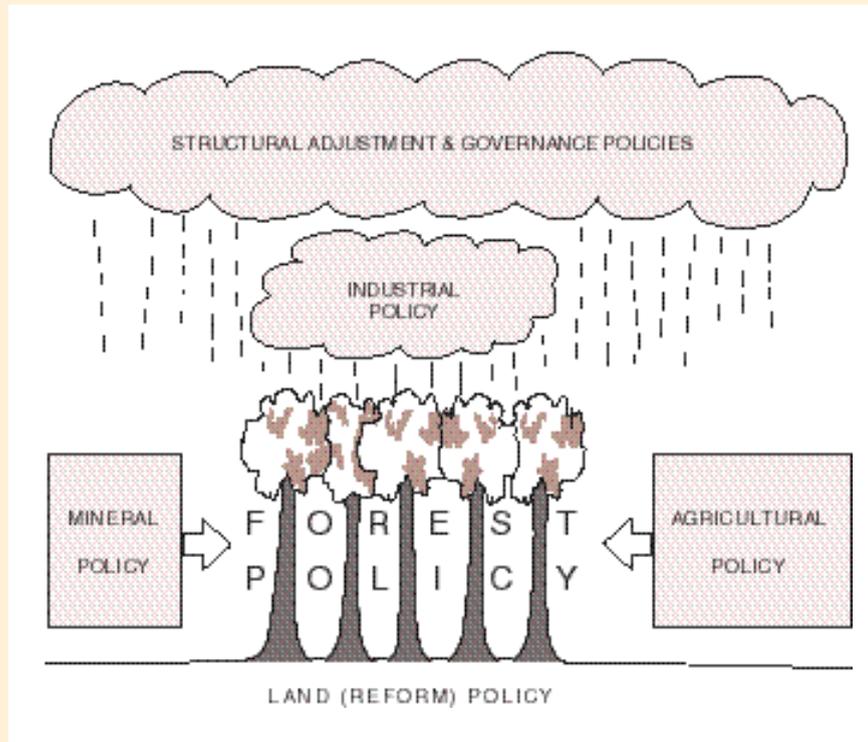


Figure A4.3 Forest policy in the context of other policy domains in Papua New Guinea



This could again be depicted as concentric circles of influence or, as IUCN Netherlands has done, a series of maps showing the degree of 'heaviness' or 'lightness' of footprints on other countries – clearance of land because of imports of livestock food, intensity of pressure on forests because of timber imports, etc (IUCN Netherlands, 1994).<sup>9</sup>

All of these approaches of 'mapping' are useful first steps in analysis, and can help to focus on key issues, but they invariably always end up begging more questions that require detailed analysis.

An area which often requires particularly detailed analysis is the *impacts of individual non-forest sectors on forests and forest stakeholders* – partly because the effects are often so large, and partly because such analysis has been rare and special efforts are now needed. Table A4.4 highlights these extra-sectoral impacts. The details given in the table are a summary of the work of the Zimbabwe PTW cross-sectoral focus groups which conducted the work. Such a matrix does not look at the links between different extra-sectoral policies, but it does point to the need for action in specific sectors.

<sup>9</sup> See IIED 1995 for further discussion of ecological footprints.

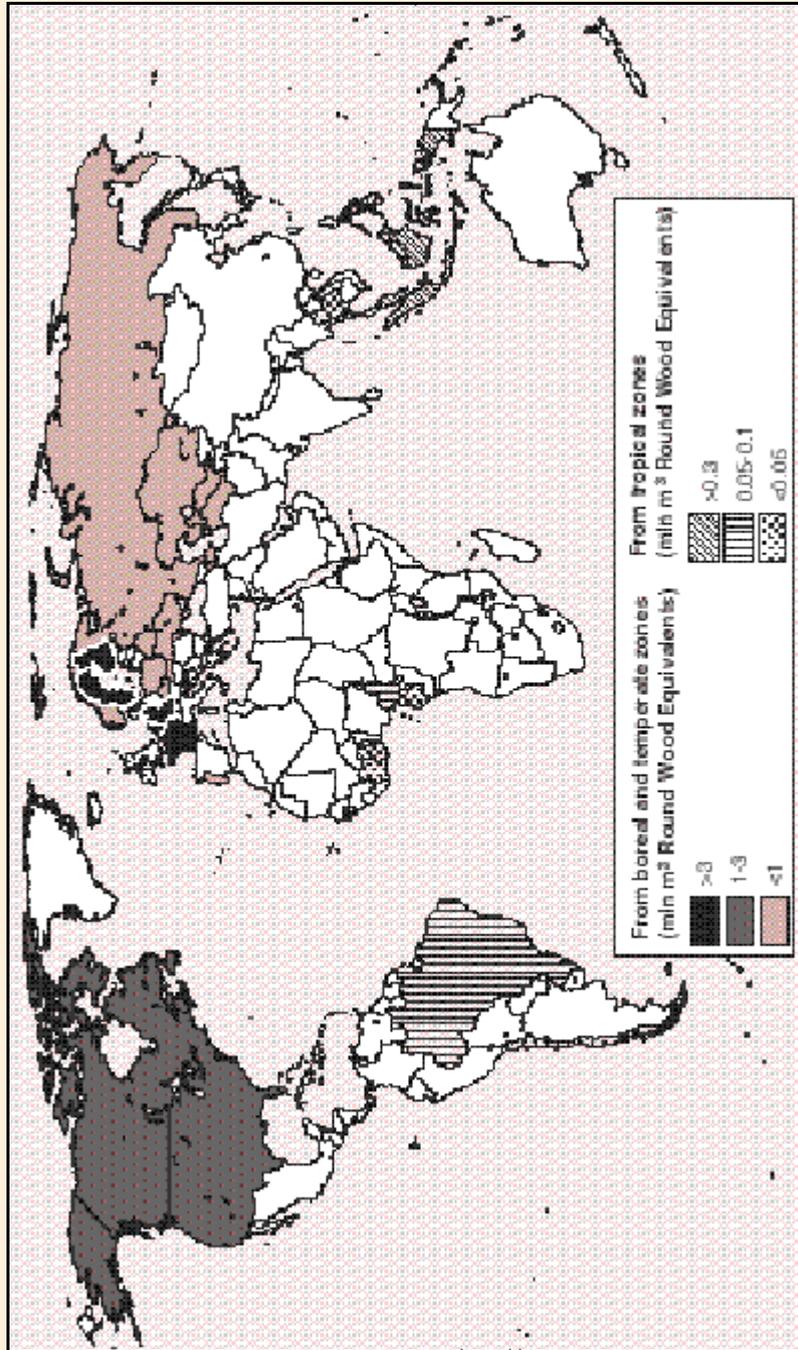
**Table A4.4 Impacts of key policies on woodlands and woodland-based livelihoods in the main land**

Key Policy	Communal areas	Resettlement areas	
Land allocation, use, tenure	High population densities on poor land. Strict regulatory frameworks: land-use planning interventions (about 1930 to 1960) centralised villages, confused local institutional structures, led to major clearance of woodland for arable production and transformed forest areas to heavily coppiced and pollarded woodland	Planned settlement, but poor level of institutional commitment to land-use planning, leads to forest asset stripping by residents and neighbours	
Forestry	Regulation of forest products: 'own use' only. Permit system benefiting RDCs, a disincentive to local management (Communal Lands Forest Produce Act). Forestry extension focused on small eucalyptus woodlots and (recently) natural woodland management	As in communal areas. FC has formal control over cutting but has no capacity to monitor	
Decentralisation	Regulatory: licences for any extraction. Land-use plans erode local autonomy. RDCs: many responsibilities but lack of resources and capacity for woodland management. Potential for devolved management eg. through by-laws	Land-use plans not done through participation of locals, absence of viable local institutions	
Agriculture (pricing and extension)	Removal of subsidised inputs by structural adjustment. State withdrawal not matched by private sector, lack of information on markets. Increased woodland clearing to maintain agricultural livelihoods	As in communal areas	
Livestock	Grazing schemes – isolated success stories, need for designs which take into account multiple functions of cattle in production system. Close linkage between livestock and woodlands unrecognised in policy	Tsetse eradication – opened up large areas in Zambezi valley for settlers, but poor land management, top-down planning initiatives, worsening status of livelihoods	
Wildlife	Regulation and granting of 'appropriate authority' to RDCs for sustainable use of wildlife. CAMPFIRE a success, making significant contribution to livelihoods in areas where game abundant	Little impact	
Tourism	Expansion of eco-tourism ventures in CAMPFIRE areas where game numbers low for safari hunting. Increase in wood-craft production	Little impact	
Rural infrastructure development	Pace slow, huge demand for investment, limits productive potential	As in communal areas	
Economic structural adjustment and trade	Decline in livelihoods with: loss of services; increased input prices; making room for those laid off from the formal employment market. Increased reliance on woodlands by poorest. New state programmes to strategically address poverty?	As in communal areas	

### tenure categories in Zimbabwe

Large and small-scale commercial farm areas	Indigenous forests (state reserves)	Industrial plantations (state and private)
Low population densities on good land, extensive holdings in large-scale sector. Private, relatively secure tenure (although recent compulsory acquisition by state). Remaining areas of woodland often managed under Integrated Conservation Areas. Voluntary regulation	About 1 million hectares set aside as forest reserves, mostly in Matabeleland (in addition to 4.9 million hectares of national parks). Isolated conflicts with communal area neighbours over access to resources	Limited to Eastern Highlands. Isolated conflicts with land-hungry
Guidance and voluntary regulation. Weakly applied FC restrictions over cutting. Ban on export of mukwa and modification of timber concession guidelines in 1988 and 1994	Forestry Commission has full powers to manage, but increasing conflicts with other users hence attempts to co-manage with neighbours	FC in process of relinquishing role of regulator on private lands
Grants, loans and taxes favouring conservation through Intensive Conservation Areas. (See communal areas for RDCs)	Potential for selective co-management with neighbouring communities being explored	Owned and run by companies, companies thinking of promoting outgrower schemes in communal areas
Government continues to subsidise agricultural extension. Shift to horticultural products and non-traditional agricultural exports as beef prices low	Declining agricultural livelihoods in neighbouring communal areas leads to increased pressure on woodland resources in reserves	Declining agricultural livelihoods in communal areas leads to interest in outgrower schemes
Cattle numbers falling due to low beef prices. Isolated examples of sharing pastures with communal areas residents	Grazing for communal area residents one of elements contained in co-management largely to reduce fuel-load	As in indigenous forests
Establishment of private game ranches and conservancies as beef prices low. Favours woodlands	Wildlife management objectives incorporated by the FC. Some safari hunting concessions	Little impact
Photographic safaris and game ranching. Favours woodlands	FC looking to tourism revenue from reserves as timber stocks no longer sufficient for significant revenue	Little impact
Government continues to subsidise. Potential for more demand if land further sub-divided	Reserves mostly quite remote from much infrastructure	Likely to encourage outgrower schemes
Liberalisation – removal of restrictions on foreign currency, import licences and import duties – leading to increased competition and investment. Gains for those who can reorient production strategies quickly. Non-restrictive investment climate may reduce environmental accountability	Reduced funding for forestry management	Relative boom in wood industry – growth in roundwood production. Impetus for development of standards for sustainable forest management

Figure A4.4 Dutch imports of timber from tropical, boreal and temperate zones



## A4.7 Stakeholder analysis

### Identifying forest and policy stakeholders

Stakeholders are those who have rights or interests in a system, and related knowledge and skills. For our purposes it is useful to think of forest stakeholders and policy stakeholders. Forest stakeholders – who could be further defined as individuals and groups with objectives and legitimate interests in the goods or services of a specific forest environment or forest resource – might include: people who live in or near forest; people who live further away, who use forest; settlers from elsewhere in the country, or abroad; forest workers; small-scale entrepreneurs; forestry officials; timber company managers; environmentalists; politicians; public servants; national citizens; global citizens; and consumers. All of these people, if their interests in forests are indeed legitimate, should in some way be involved in the making and implementing of policy which affects forests.

However, in practice, policy stakeholders are often only a sub-set of forest stakeholders, or are those who barely have a stake in forests at all – but who nevertheless manage to cook up policy which profoundly influences forests. As the Zimbabwe PTW team put it...

*“Thus, one of the challenges may be to better recognise both forest and policy stakeholders, and to close the gap between the two. Stakeholder analysis is particularly useful to bring the focus onto distributional issues – understanding winners and losers in policy – and ways to address structural problems and improve effectiveness and social impacts of policy.”<sup>10</sup>*

### Contexts for stakeholder analysis

The most useful type of stakeholder analysis will depend upon:

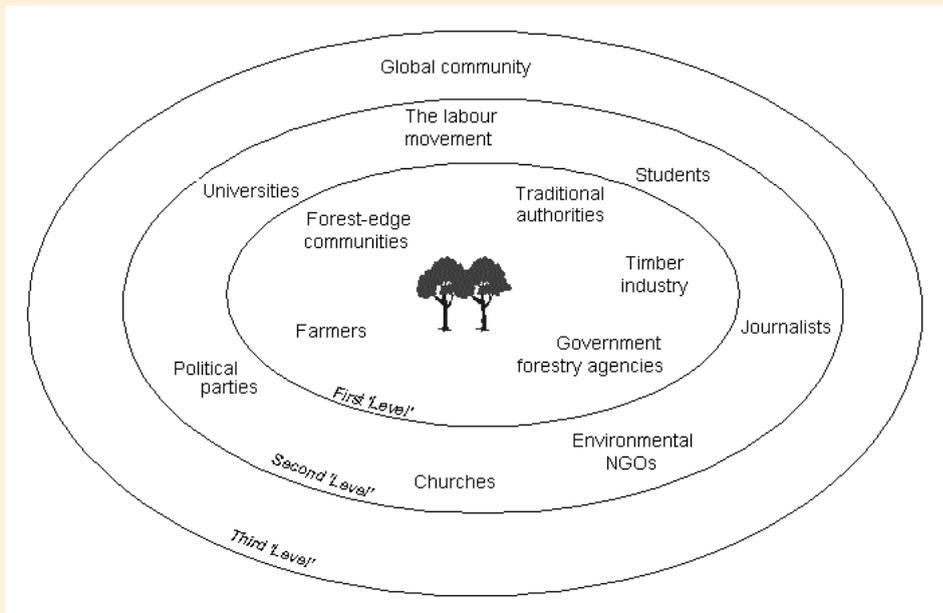
- The institutional level: a national policy analysis will need to engage different stakeholders compared to a regional forest management policy, or local projects – it will involve challenges of ‘vertical’ representation up and down the hierarchy .
- The purposes: an appraisal of possible policy would be different from an evaluation/ analysis of existing policy – the former needing to include considerable extra-sectoral representation, and the latter needing to emphasise ‘forest stakeholders’ perhaps more intensively than ‘policy stakeholders’.

### Steps in stakeholder analysis

This can take a step-wise approach. An understanding of the total system and stakeholders’ overall perspectives is needed first: i.e. – what are the key dependencies on forest goods and services, and the key problems identified by the main groups? Who is closest to forestry issues – this might be mapped as concentric circles of ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ stakeholders, as in the Ghanaian example (Figure A4.5). This provides focus for subsequent analysis – detail can be added in time.

<sup>10</sup> Stakeholder analysis is nothing new to policy research in the social sciences. Texts in the 1970s, which sought to establish ‘policy research’ as a focused discipline, put much emphasis on identifying stakeholders and ascertaining the power they have (e.g. Etzioni, 1971; Dye, 1976; Wildavsky, 1987).

Figure A4.5 Levels of stakeholders in Ghana's forests



There are several methodologies for identifying stakeholders (Higman *et al.*, 1999; Borrini-Feyerabend, 1997):

- *Identification by forest authority staff.* Those who have worked in forestry for some time can identify groups and individuals whom they know to have interests in forest issues and to be well-informed about them.
- *Identification by other knowledgeable individuals.* Land and agricultural agencies may be able to recommend relevant farmers and settlers; local government, religious and traditional authorities, forest agencies and forest enterprises may all be able to identify key representatives of different forest interests.
- *Identification through written records, and population data.* Forestry operations often have useful records on employment, conflicting land claims, complaints of various kinds, people who have attended meetings, financial transactions, etc. Forestry officials may have important historical information on forest users, records of permit-holders, etc. Census and population data may provide useful information about numbers and locations of people by age, gender, religion, etc. Contacts with NGOs and academics may reveal relevant surveys and reports and knowledgeable or well-connected people.
- *Stakeholder self-selection.* Announcements in meetings and/ or in newspapers, local radio or other local means of spreading information, can elicit stakeholders coming forward. The approach works best for groups who already have good contacts and see it in their

interests to communicate. Those who are in more remote areas, or are poor and less well educated, and those who may be hostile to other stakeholders, may not come forward in this way. There is a risk that local élites, or others with inequitable objectives, will put themselves forward.

- *Identification and verification by other stakeholders.* Early discussions with those stakeholders who are identified first can reveal their views on the other key stakeholders who matter to them. This will help to better understand stakeholder interests and relations.

It is important that the individuals dealt with actually represent their constituencies. The dimensions of *representation* are:

- *Identity:* does the representative share the views of the group/ constituency in relation to forests? Or will the representative bring other/ multiple identities to the process e.g. tribal/ class or political affinities? Where can such other identities help, and where might they hinder representation and forest management?
- *Accountability:* Was the representative chosen by a particular group/ constituency? And/ or does s/he consult with that group regularly? What kind of specificity and sanction has the group attached to the representative's accountability?<sup>11</sup>

Once stakeholders or their representatives have been identified, it is important to assess:

- Their 'stakes' or interests. Dubois (1998) introduces the '4Rs' approach for assessing stakeholders' Rights, Responsibilities, Rewards (or revenues or returns) and Relationships with other groups. Useful methodologies include:
  - semi-structured interviews: cross-checking; identification of common ground; identification of trade-offs; identification of decision-making frames
  - oral case histories
  - indirect investigation
  - use of quantitative data
- The patterns and contexts of stakeholder interaction:
  - investigate competing/ complementary interests
  - investigate other factors in conflict/ cooperation, e.g: authority relationships; ethnic, religious or cultural divisions; historical contexts; legal institutions

To be useful, stakeholder analyses need to be summarised in a form where everyone's interests and issues can be seen together. Table A4.5 provides an example from Ghana of a summary stakeholder analysis, examining the current stakeholders, interests, means to pursue these interests, and impacts on forests and other stakeholders. (The Pakistan PTW team took a similar approach, and added a column on the constraints and pressures which stakeholders feel they face – as these realities in part determine future directions of policy.) Figure A4.6 provides an historical overview of how the relative influence of Ghanaian stakeholders has changed over time, providing useful context to the stakeholder analysis.

<sup>11</sup> The use of existing stakeholder associations – professional, commercial, user group, community/ traditional – can help to handle problems of representation. However, there are limits to associations, especially in the private sector (there is a need to find private sector 'leaders' rather than the 'lowest common denominator' which tends to characterise associations generally) and in communities (élites may dominate such associations).

**Table A4.5 Example: Forest stakeholders in Ghana**

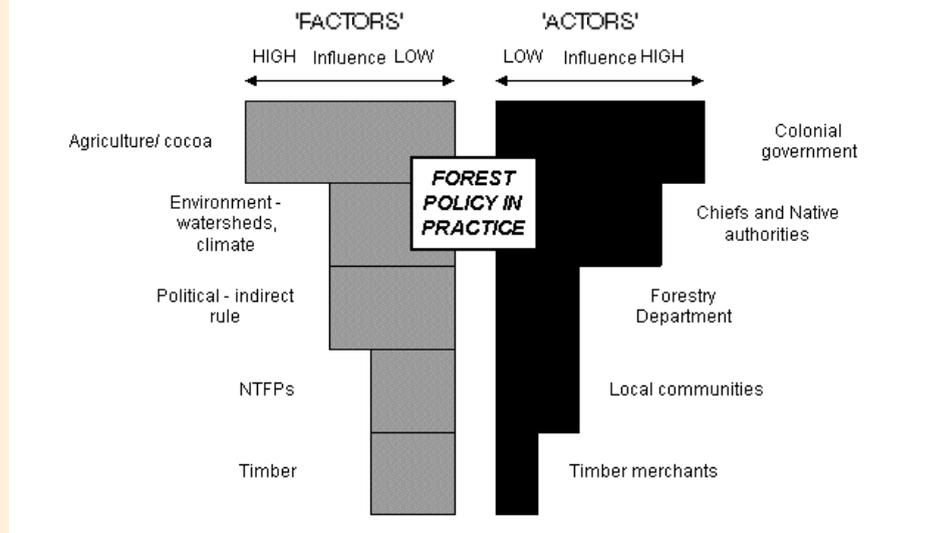
<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Main Interests in Forests</b>	<b>Means to Secure Interests</b>	<b>Main Impacts on Forests and People</b>
<b>Ministry of Lands and Forestry</b>	"Conservation and sustainable development of forest resources for maintenance of environmental quality and perpetual flow of optimum benefits to all segments of society" (MLF, 1994)	Inter-ministerial (intra-governmental) negotiation Policy statements Concession allocation Market mechanisms Laws and regulations Consultation with other stakeholders Provision or control of information Monitoring Much pressure from private forest sector	Dominate policy processes Strong policy control over Forest Department and other forest sector bodies Over-ridden or influenced by some other sectoral policies and impacts
<b>Ministry of Agriculture</b> (e.g. of other central government stakeholder groups)	Source of land for conversion to agriculture	Statutes clashing with some forestry laws/ policies Agricultural extension advice Subsidised pricing of agricultural inputs Fixed crop prices	Conversion of forest land to agriculture – particularly cocoa. Some shade trees favoured. Encroachment on forest reserves
<b>Environment and development NGOs/ lobby groups</b>	Sustainable use Watershed protection Source of biodiversity and endangered species Climate regulation	Influential members lobby government. Access to donor support and international recognition	Some policy influence. Donor support for forest planning and control by Forest Department. Scattered environmental and community projects by NGOs
<b>Forest Department</b>	"Sustained supply of timber and non-timber products in perpetuity and environmental protection" (Kese, 1990)	Forest reserves as power base Allocation of yields Supervision of harvesting Policing role over people around forest reserves Poorly resourced, but significant donor support	Increasingly effective control of logging and farming encroachment in forest reserves. Weak control outside reserves Poor coordination with downstream control structures
<b>Local government (District Assemblies)</b>	Source of revenue through royalty shares	District by-laws Involvement in roadside checks Chainsaw controls	Some increase in law enforcement and protection Increased revenue demands
<b>Traditional authorities</b>	Land – power base. Source of revenue through royalty shares	Tenurial control of land Allocation of land Passive recipients of low and irregular payments of shareable revenue	Stool chiefs sell or rent land in reserves for conversion, allocate lands outside reserves for farming Excess sawmilling

Stakeholder Group	Main Interests in Forests	Means to Secure Interests	Main Impacts on Forests and People
<b>Wood processing industry</b>	Source of logs at low prices to convert to high value processed timber	Strong influence at policy level based on economic muscle Keep forest fees low and poorly collected	Excess sawmilling capacity and wastage in industry Low log prices promoting this
<b>Logging concession holders (without processing capacity)</b>	Source of logs for sale at high prices Only marketable species valued, others may be damaged	<i>De facto</i> control over large areas of forest	High grading Undersized trees felled
<b>Chainsaw operators and bush millers</b>	Source of logs for on-site conversion to lumber	Preferred over loggers by farmers More able to avoid royalty payments than loggers Some organised in trade associations	Active throughout high forest zone High grading
<b>Commercial NTFP traders</b>	Source of particular NTFPs for commercial use, e.g: canes, wrapping leaves, chewing sticks, bushmeat	NTFP permit and check system ineffective No local level rights to control access	Locally-based traders may conserve resources Non-local traders likely to override local customary controls and over-harvest resources
<b>Farmers and village-level institutions</b>	Source of agricultural land and creation of fertility Contribution to farming system: shade, mulch, disease control, grazing Forest products for domestic use, sale and exchange (NTFPs may be household economic mainstays)	Marginalised in policy Do not own timber trees on farmed land Farm-level land-use decisions Gain low levels of compensation for farm damage from timber extraction by concession-holders. In practice – are decision-makers about produce taken from forest reserves	Destroy timber trees on farms Variety of tree and forest management practices on farms Encroachment on forest reserves in particular circumstances

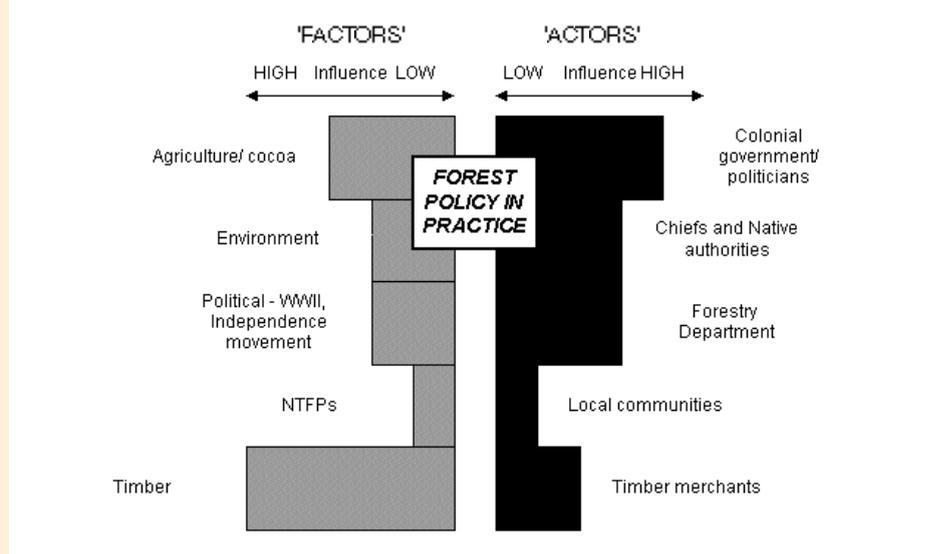
Source: Mayers and Kotey, 1996

Figure A4.6 Changing 'shape' of policy, Ghana

Colonial government began reserving forest, through consultation with chiefs, to maintain environmental conditions primarily for cocoa farming.



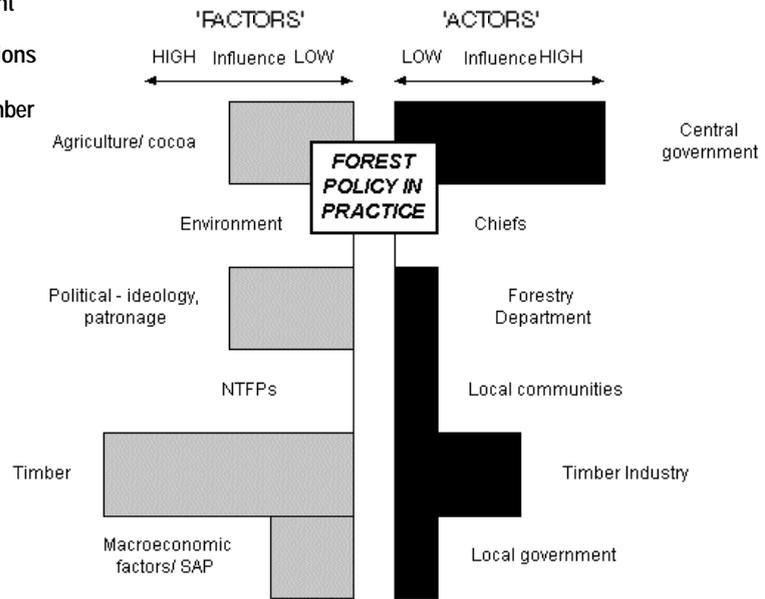
Timber out-turn was prioritised by government in time of World War.



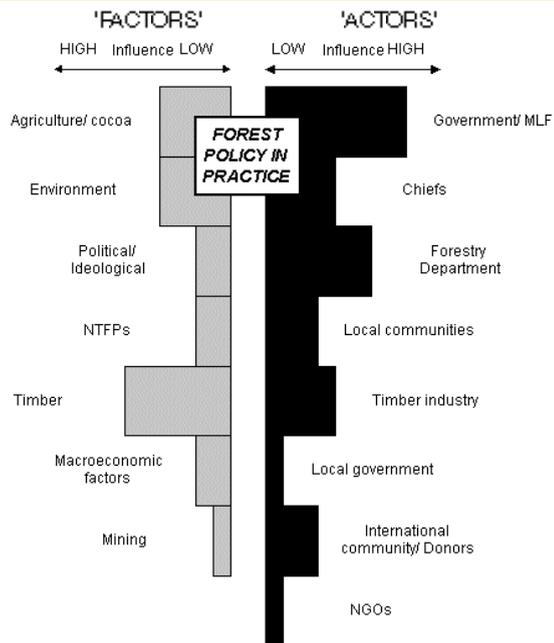
**Notes:**

- 'Factors' are the major concerns and pressures from within and outside the forest sector which influence forest policy in practice
- 'Actors' are the major stakeholders and organisations who influence forest policy in practice
- There is no horizontal correlation between factors and actors

Newly independent government centralised decisions and continued to encourage the timber industry.



Perception of forest crisis led to national rethinking on forestry, with greater involvement of stakeholders and more balanced objectives.



### Limitations of stakeholder analysis

- Stakeholder groups overlap – and even within one group, people take on multiple identities
- Conflicts are based on different values – no common ground may be apparent
- Where it reveals information about less powerful groups, this can be dangerous as it might lead to inequitable actions on the part of the more powerful groups in the process
- Stakeholder analysis is an information tool, rather than a communications tool. It can identify the heart of the problem – but it cannot provide easy solutions. Challenges raised are:
  - what common ground for compromise?
  - how to manage conflicts?
  - which stakeholders' interests to prioritise?

In relation to the challenge of weighting stakeholders' interests, Colfer (1995) has developed an approach for attempting to redress imbalances amongst stakeholders in access to forestry decisions by ensuring that *local forest actors* are fully identified and 'weighted' against certain criteria. Building on this, we suggest stakeholders should be identified, and weight should be accorded to them, depending upon:

- *proximity* to forests, woodlands or trees on farms
- *dependence* on forests for their livelihoods (i.e. where there are few or no alternatives to forests for meeting basic needs)
- *cultural linkages* with forests and uses of forest resources
- *knowledge* related to stewardship of forest assets
- *pre-existing rights* to land and resources, under customary or common law
- *organisational capacity* for effective rules and accountable decision-making about forest goods and services
- *economically-viable forest enterprise* that is based on environmental and social cost internalisation, bringing equitable local benefits

Colfer strongly suggests that an 'inverse' criterion also be used i.e. if a local group has a *power deficit* it should be weighted more heavily (to make up for such a deficit). We can add, conversely, that some stakeholders may have considerable levels of power and influence and interests which may adversely affect the abilities of other stakeholders to pursue good forestry, or even prevent it entirely. In such circumstances, an approach is needed which weights stakeholders according to the degree to which their actions should be *mitigated* or *prevented*. This is, of course, difficult ground. Practical approaches to analysing power are needed. These are investigated further in Section A4.10.

## A4.8 Stakeholder narrative interviews

Once the stakeholder analysis has been performed, it will become apparent who are key informants. One approach to get the best out of key informants is that of narrative interviews. This approach allows stakeholders to put forward information in their own way. It can be structured to be able to glean their insights into the key dimensions of context, actors, policy content and impacts – or it can be looser, based on 'telling the story', which allows these dimensions to be brought out without necessarily having to ask overt questions about them.

The interview approach has to be modified for each personality. Policy issues are generally controversial – stakeholders will be wary of how the information they provide will be used. At one end of the spectrum is eliciting anecdotes informally over a beer, or golf; this can be a useful approach with politicians, who need to be engaged in policy review but whose formal engagement can cause problems for others. At the other end is formal, taped interviews with transcripts reviewed for accuracy; this can be suitable for gaining the experience of established professionals – such as senior or retired foresters who have ‘seen it all’. A range of techniques can be used:

- presenting different perspectives/ views on a problem and getting interviewees to react to each
- allowing interviewees to leave their own values and definitions unstated (recognising that commitment to a particular perspective may be politically difficult for them)
- using ‘if....then’ scenarios to determine interviewees’ judgements of the feasibility of possible developments or recommendations (people may be more comfortable reacting to hypothetical situations)
- assessing whether further contact/ useful information and commitment to the work can be provided by the stakeholder – some may be flattered or see it as in their interests to provide further advice (one way to build an ‘advisory group’)

## A4.9 Institutional analysis

If policy is taken to mean ‘what institutions actually do’, it is important to analyse institutional factors in policy work. Three main aspects of institutions generally need to be understood:

- institutional roles – functional mandates of some organisations in relation to others
- internal dynamics and characteristics
- factors shaping institutional change

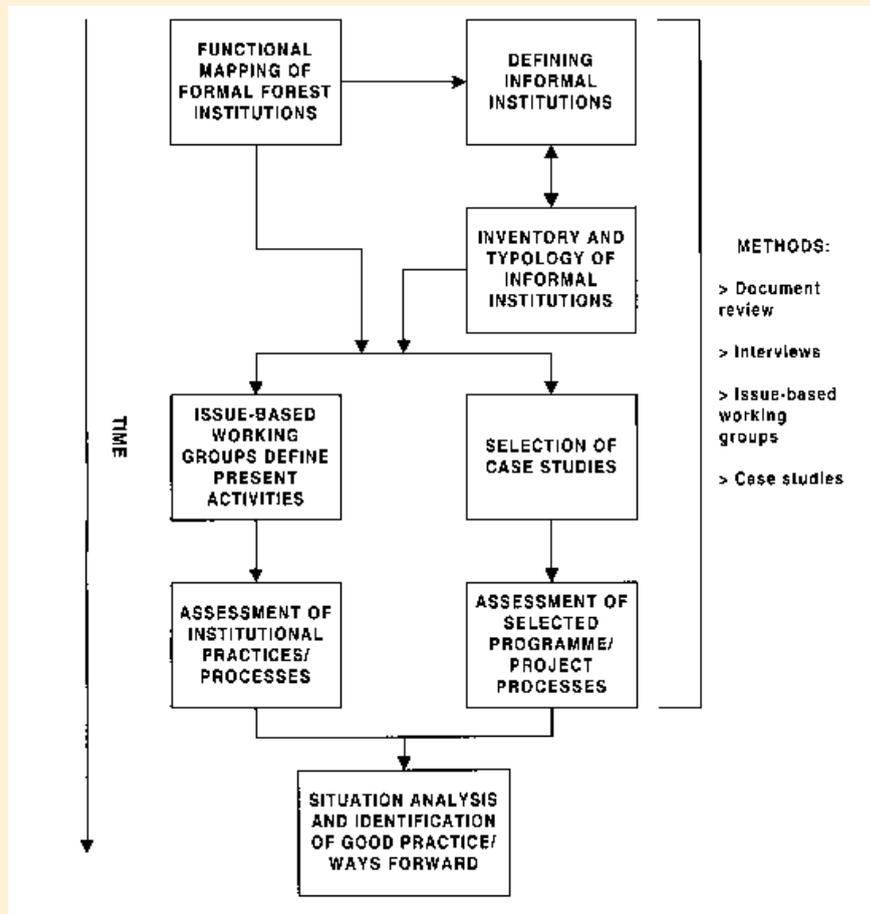
### A4.9.1 Institutional roles and relations

It is common practice for individual organisations to conduct analyses of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in relation to their mission. In policy analysis, however, analogous efforts are needed for the forest sector as a whole, or for key institutional arrangements within it, e.g. all those involved in timber production. A ‘mapping’ approach can help reveal the functional strengths, weaknesses and relationships among formal and informal institutions. Figure A4.7 ‘institutional analysis for forests’ illustrates one possible process to identify and investigate different types of institutions.

Figure A4.8 is an example of a summary of such analysis, demonstrating the linkages between various companies in the forest sector in Papua New Guinea in 1993. The lines, which connect the companies involved, indicate key factors in the relationships between these institutions: shared ownership, management and facilities.

DFID (1999) describe an approach to ‘institutional profiling’. Prepared by particular groups or by all groups with an interest in an issue, these profiles can provide a quick visualisation of

Figure A4.7 'Institutional analysis for forests'

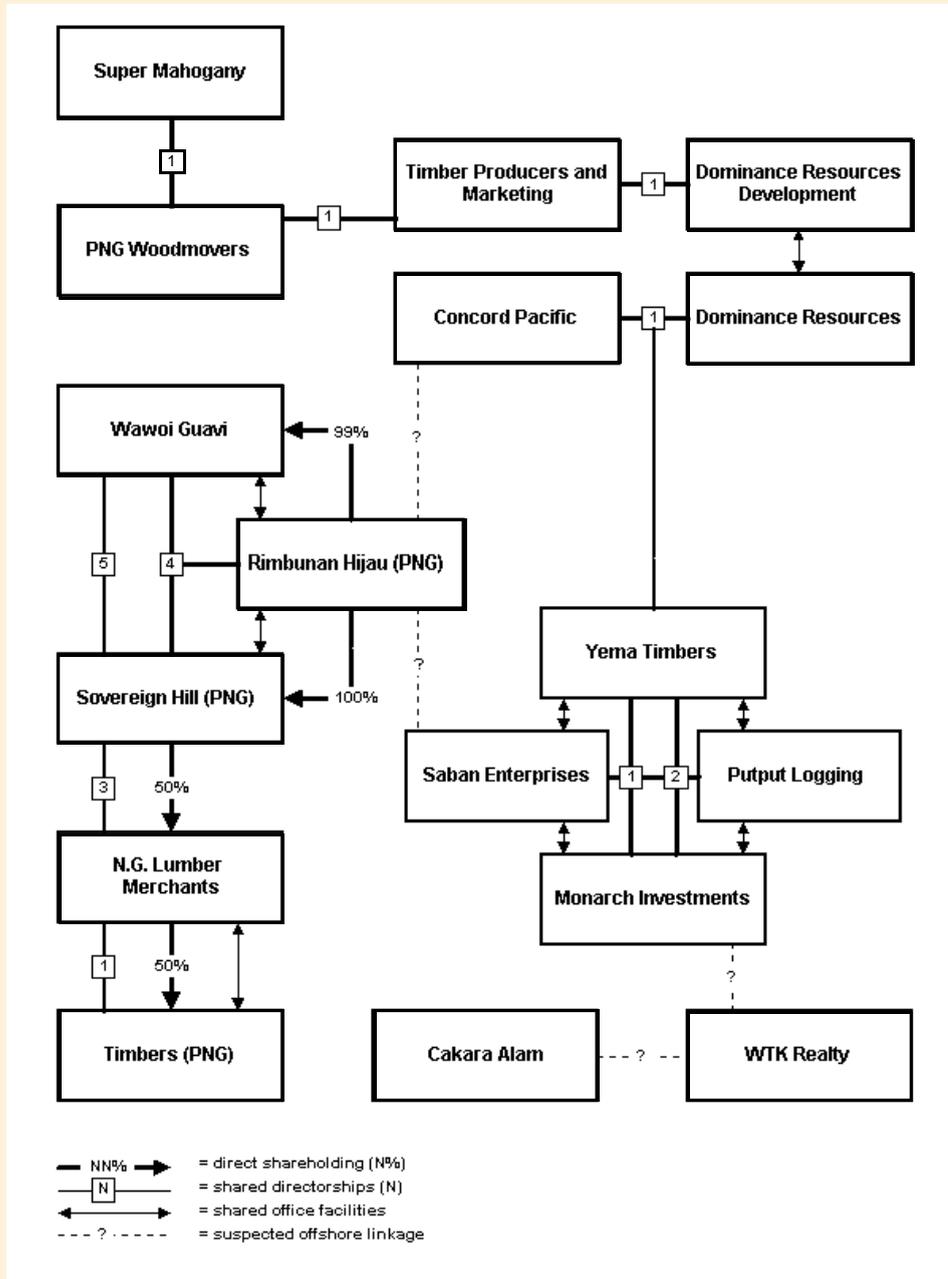


Source: Filer with Sekhran, 1998

the current situation which can be understood easily by all and provoke much discussion. The group first selects a centre point – a policy, a forest, a project, a particular group, or perhaps a particular role or function. Each institution related to the centre point is then represented by a shape – usually a circle – the size of which shows the importance of that body. Arrows are then used to indicate relationships between groups, with the thickness and direction of the line illustrating the strength and direction of influence (DFID, 1999).

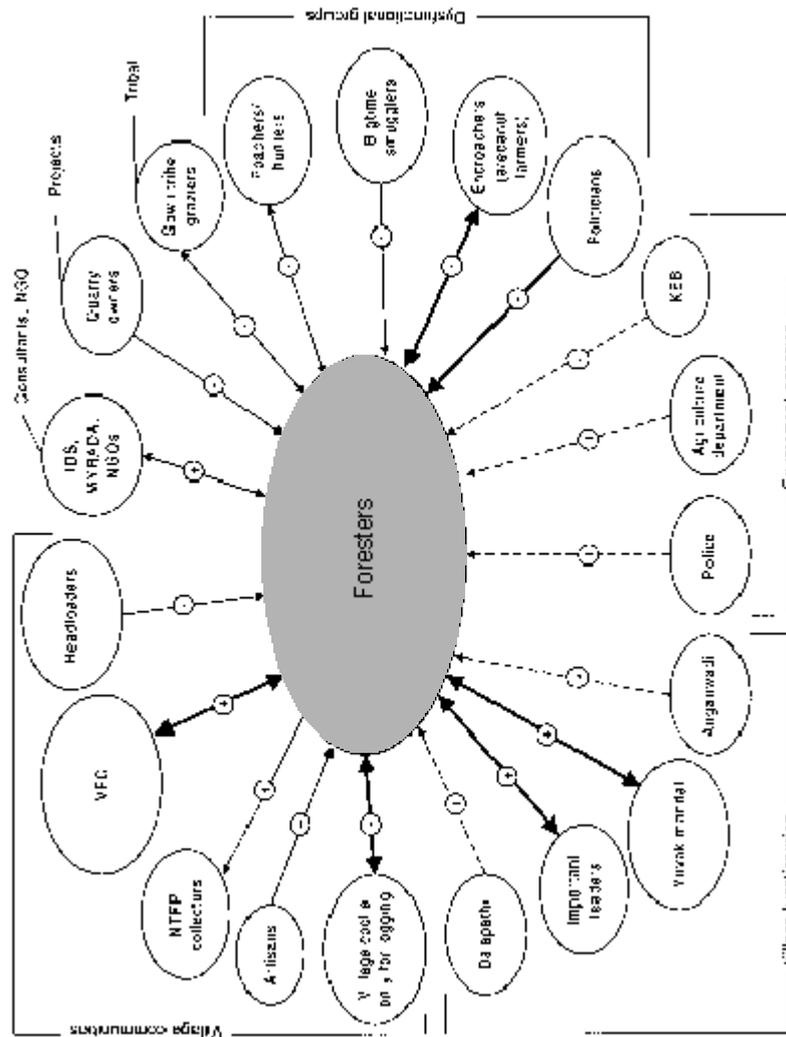
Such profiles can help identify blockages, gaps and weaknesses. The process of developing these profiles can also reveal many issues which need further investigation. Profiling can also be used for monitoring, if the exercise is repeated at relevant stages with a view to tracking changes.

Figure A4.8. The putative Sino-Malaysian logging cartel, 1993



Source: Filer with Sekhran, 1998

**Figure A4.9 Institutional profile : foresters, Karnataka Forest Department**



This diagram was prepared by a group of foresters in Karnataka State, India. It shows the wide group of stakeholders recognised by the foresters. Each stakeholder group has been assigned a circle, and arrows are used to indicate the relationship with the foresters – the thickness and direction of the line illustrating the strength and direction of influence of one group on another. The plus or minus signs also show whether that influence is positive or negative.

In other diagrams of this type, circle size can be adjusted to illustrate the importance of the group or the number of people in it. The gap or overlap between circles can signify closeness or distance or relationships. Lines between stakeholder groups can illustrate their relationships, while types of line can indicate whether the relationship is formal or informal, etc. The great strength of these diagrams lies in their development. Out out circles of paper and other materials can be used in their preparation and participants do not need to be well-educated to participate. Many thorny issues are likely to be raised in discussion over development of the diagram and the outcome is a clear and immediate representation of key relationships which can be very useful to provoke further debate.

Source: DFID, 1999

#### **A4.9.2 Institutional histories, internal dynamics and actors**

Individuals within institutions interact in ways which relate to the institution's formal mandate, e.g. legislation, human resource development and budgets. These interactions are 'visible' and can be planned and managed. But there are also hugely complex, less visible interactions which collectively define the 'institutional culture'. Institutional 'actors' may have diverse motivations (Section A2.2). The combination of such motivations, when linked to both the 'visible' and 'invisible' institution, may explain many policy outcomes. Many efforts to make policy responsive to the new demands of sustainable forest management have concentrated their recommendations on broad goals, without quite knowing how such changes could be brought about. Without basing such prescriptions on motivations for change within existing institutions, frustration at the lack of subsequent action is a common result.

Analysis of institutions in community forestry has blossomed in recent years (Ascher, 1995; Ostrom, 1991; Thomson, 1992; Thomson and Freudenberger, 1997) – with much to offer approaches which seek policy-level impact. Thomson and Freudenberger (1997) provide guidance on institutional analysis of community forestry, describing a series of steps in analysis and reform:

- Identifying the forest products that are involved in resource governance problems
- Analysing the characteristics of the products: whether a particular forest product is a private, common pool or public goods/ service. (Each of these types of goods and services creates a different kind of incentive affecting how people will behave toward the resource)
- Analysing the community's capacity for collective action
- Analysing the system of rules within the community, as well as outside rules that affect resource governance
- Identifying 'best bets' for improving resource management and the institutional adjustments that will be needed
- Planning and implementing institutional changes to suit the 'best bets'
- Managing institutional change and the consequences of change

The authors note, however, that these steps may be frustrated by various 'complicating issues', both internal and external to the community. *Internal issues* include: dominance by a few powerful individuals or interest groups; exclusion of women or minority interests; and competing factions based on economic interests. *External issues* include the limitations placed on decision-making and enforcement at the local level; and the bureaucratic imperatives of NGOs and government staff (Thomson and Freudenberger, 1997).

#### **A4.9.3 Factors shaping institutional change**

Policy processes inevitably lead to change. It is useful to know how institutions have dealt with change, and what their current capacities for change are.

It may be trite to say, but understanding and managing institutional change in forestry is both a science and an art. A functionalist analysis of institutional roles, functions, and efficiency is necessary for understanding the 'fit' of the institution to the job and for identifying the broad goals for change. An interpretative view of institutional histories, dynamics and actors is

essential for understanding what kind of change is possible, who might lead it and how to get them involved. Both these functionalist and interpretative 'lenses' are necessary for understanding and guiding institutional change as a whole.

In a review of the issues connected to institutional change in public sector forestry, Bass *et al* (1998) present an analytical framework for describing institutional change (IC) based on five linked sets of issues, covering:

1. institutional context
2. pressures on institutions
3. state of the institution and its capacities
4. response – direction of change
5. institutional change management and methodologies

Splitting the categories up in this way allows for a cyclical approach, i.e. context>pressure>state>response>altered context. Different management actions and methodologies may be appropriate at different 'stages', and indicators of change may be developed for each of these stages. Some of the sets of the issues in Box A4.3 describe a spectrum, or degrees of magnitude on a single axis; others are merely empirical clusters of related issues.

The analytical framework in Box A4.3 was developed with a view to guiding those considering, or already engaged with, projects aimed at bringing about institutional change. It provides a way of describing institutional change processes and the contexts in which they operate. This it needs to incorporate information as described in Section A4.9.1-2. The framework was developed following the recognition that the theory available to those involved in institutional change in forestry is weak, that empirical lessons have not been fully drawn, and that the information base is poor. However, because development assistance is continuing to invest quite heavily in forest sector institutional change, further research and information-sharing is sorely needed (Bass *et al*, 1998).

#### **Box A4.3 Pressure>state>response framework for analysing institutional change**

##### **A. 'Context': cultural/ political conditions surrounding institutions**

- *Cultural factor influence*: degree to which cultural factors and especially the power structure determine what forest institutions do, and whether change is possible
- *Political influence*: degree to which politics dominates forest institutions and the scope for change, e.g. dominated by crisis politics, as opposed to incremental institutional reform in politically mature environments
- *Technical/ market influence*: degree to which forest institutions implement technocratically-developed, efficiency-driven policy that is responsive to markets and other needs
- *International agency/ policy influence*: some institutions, particularly in small and/ or poor states, can be considerably open to influence by international bodies such as aid agencies

## **B. Pressures: forces for institutional change**

- *Motivations/ driving forces*: the key issue(s) for which there is pressure to change, e.g. imperatives stemming from: globalisation, finance/ efficiency, environment, social/ equity issues, and ethical issues/ (anti-)corruption
- *Actors* which are pushing for the above change(s), e.g: internal/ top of the hierarchy, internal/ lower in the hierarchy, other governmental, market actors, civil society actors, projects and one-off initiatives, and international bodies
- *Change agents and champions*: where is there capacity to lever change? For each, is the agent an individual, organisation, or institution?
- *Resistors to change*: where is there resistance to change? an individual, organisation, or institution? Is resistance active or passive?
- *Other factors enabling/ constraining change*:
  - legal scope for change e.g. resource ownership laws and legal mandates
  - concepts, capacities, skills, incentives and procedures that may help or hinder the ability to understand and undertake change
  - funding/ resource availability to (contemplate) making changes
  - perceptions of the costs – both of change, and of the status quo
- *Summary – degree of openness to change, from most to least open*:
  - unfrozen – widespread expectation of change
  - thawing– willingness to change amongst some influential actors
  - clashes between resistant and open partners
  - resistance all round

## **C. State: current institutional type, capacity and roles**

- *Type*:
  - Organisations (central forest authority, decentralised forest authority and its organs, other governmental organisations involved in forestry, private sector forest bodies, civil society organisations)
  - Institutions (regulations – laws and rules, market institutions e.g. trading relationships and norms, civil society institutions, e.g. common property regimes and other traditions, societal norms, e.g. traditions, habits, hierarchies, and the forest sector as a whole)
- *Institutional capacities*: These do not concern the mandate alone, but also:
  - transparency
  - accountability
  - legitimacy and representativeness
  - learning processes, resilience, adaptability and longevity
  - commitment of leadership and others
  - enforceability of rules and effectiveness of incentives
  - relations with stakeholders and other institutions
  - skills and resources

- *Current priority roles of the above:*
  - financial roles, e.g. earning timber revenue
  - social roles, e.g. local (community) development
  - environmental roles, e.g. biodiversity or water conservation
  - development roles, e.g. supporting other sectors (agriculture or energy)
  - political roles, e.g. controlling territory or certain people
  - client orientation, e.g. big forestry companies or communities

**D. Response: the scope/ trajectory of institutional change**

This covers the degree/ scale of change, from (generally) easier to more ambitious:

- *improving efficiency* of one organisation in meeting existing objectives
- *changing objectives* of one organisation, including decentralisation
- *entering partnerships* between an organisation and other stakeholders
- *renegotiating specific institutional roles* within the sector
- *changing the institutional climate* – participation, devolution, legitimacy and accountability of different organisations, and the rules by which they operate

**E. Institutional change management and methodologies**

- *IC process with no formal project management.* Informal alliances, prejudices, market forces, and laissez-faire, normally giving rise to gradual change
- *IC process with formal (project) management.* This is normally the result of the perceived need to organise a response to the driving forces. IC management style may range:
  - from top-down to bottom-up/ client-led
  - from a process approach to output/ plan-led
- *IC methodologies:*
  - coercive tactics: whistle-blowing , humiliation, disenfranchisement, imprisonment, certain donor conditionalities
  - organisational analysis/ audits
  - 'unfreezing' / awareness-raising/ visioning activities
  - conflict resolution and consensus/ coalition-building
  - coordination and participation mechanisms
  - commercialisation/ privatisation
  - organisational reform: structures, systems and procedures
  - learning/ training: action learning; training in new functions; study tour and exchanges; pilot projects
  - financial mechanisms

Source: Bass *et al.* (1998)

## A4.10 Power analysis

Power is a touchy subject. However, as should be clear from our description of some approaches to stakeholder and institutional analysis above, there is a limit to how far progress can be made in either the analysis or the effective change of policy without broaching issues of power differences. Some stakeholders are usually losing out, or their contributions or negative influences are hidden; important issues are not being talked about; and problems might be solved if stakeholders were free to look at them in another way. Ways need to be found to get some of these issues 'out into the open' if they are going to be tackled.

The elements of power need to be unpacked. Power is not (like money) a single negotiable object. It is important to address the question of how stakeholders gain or lose power to influence the direction of the policy process. Filer with Sekhran (1998) identify four different types of power:

- *positional power*, which is the capacity to secure the sympathy and support of other stakeholders, on the assumption of some common interest;
- *bargaining power*, which is the capacity to extract resources or concessions from other stakeholders, by some combination of force and persuasion;
- *executive power*, which is the capacity to meet the needs and demands of other stakeholders, thus increasing one's authority over them; and
- *managerial power*, which is the capacity to control the productive activities of other stakeholders, and thus to determine the quantity and quality of their outputs.

Since each group of stakeholders is often internally divided, like a character played by several actors whose own attitudes and interests may be quite diverse, it is also possible to distinguish between *external* forms of power, which are exercised by one group of stakeholders over other groups of stakeholders, and *internal* forms of power, which are exercised by some members of a stakeholder group over other members of the same group. The power of each group can then be analysed and an indication of their overall 'weight' within the policy process given – the sum of all their influences over the direction of that process.

For policy analysis, a useful first step is to identify the relative degree of stakeholders' power, the source of that power, and the means by which power is exercised:

- *Degree of power*. Simple diagramming approaches can help here. Figure A4.10 is the product of a multi-stakeholder exercise in Pakistan, to map the proximity of stakeholders to the 'centre' of policy-making, i.e. an indication of the impact of their power. Figure A4.11, from Costa Rica, takes this approach a step further. It is an attempt by the Costa Rican country team to visualise the main actors' powers to influence policies affecting forest and people between pre-1950 and today. The diagrams indicate the relative influence of the different actors – their ability to create 'policy space' – the linkages between them, and the ways this pattern has changed over time.

- *Sources of power* may include:
  - having useful personal contacts
  - earning or otherwise gaining money
  - possessing scientific knowledge
  - holding an important job
  - owning land
  - controlling equipment or vehicles
  - having authority to provide loans, allocate budgets or hire and fire employees
  - securing international or political support

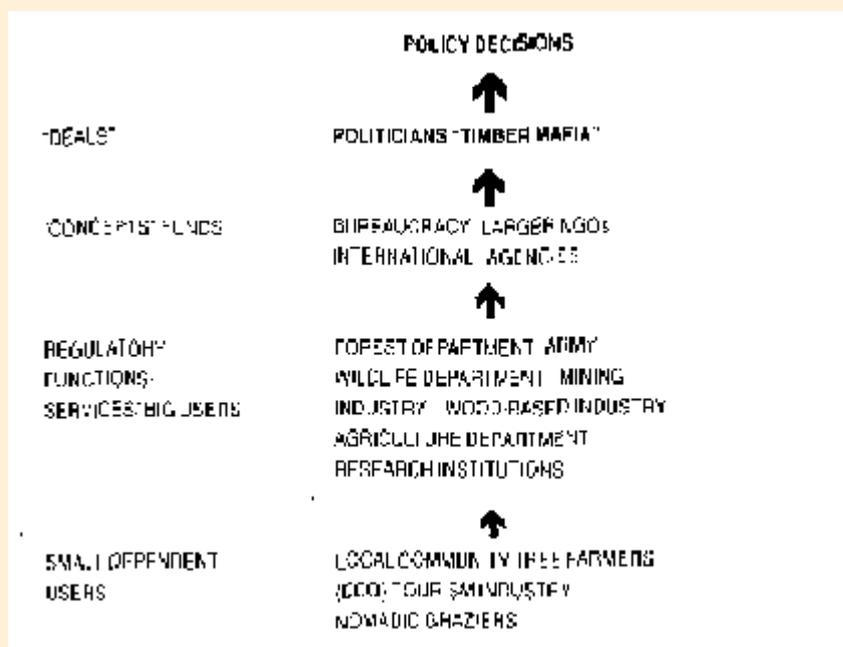
Documentary evidence and key informants are needed here.

*Means to pursue interests* may encompass:

- legal means, e.g. rights to resources or revenues
- illegal means, e.g. bribery or sabotage
- formal means, e.g. regulations or public meetings
- informal means, e.g. forming alliances or lobbying

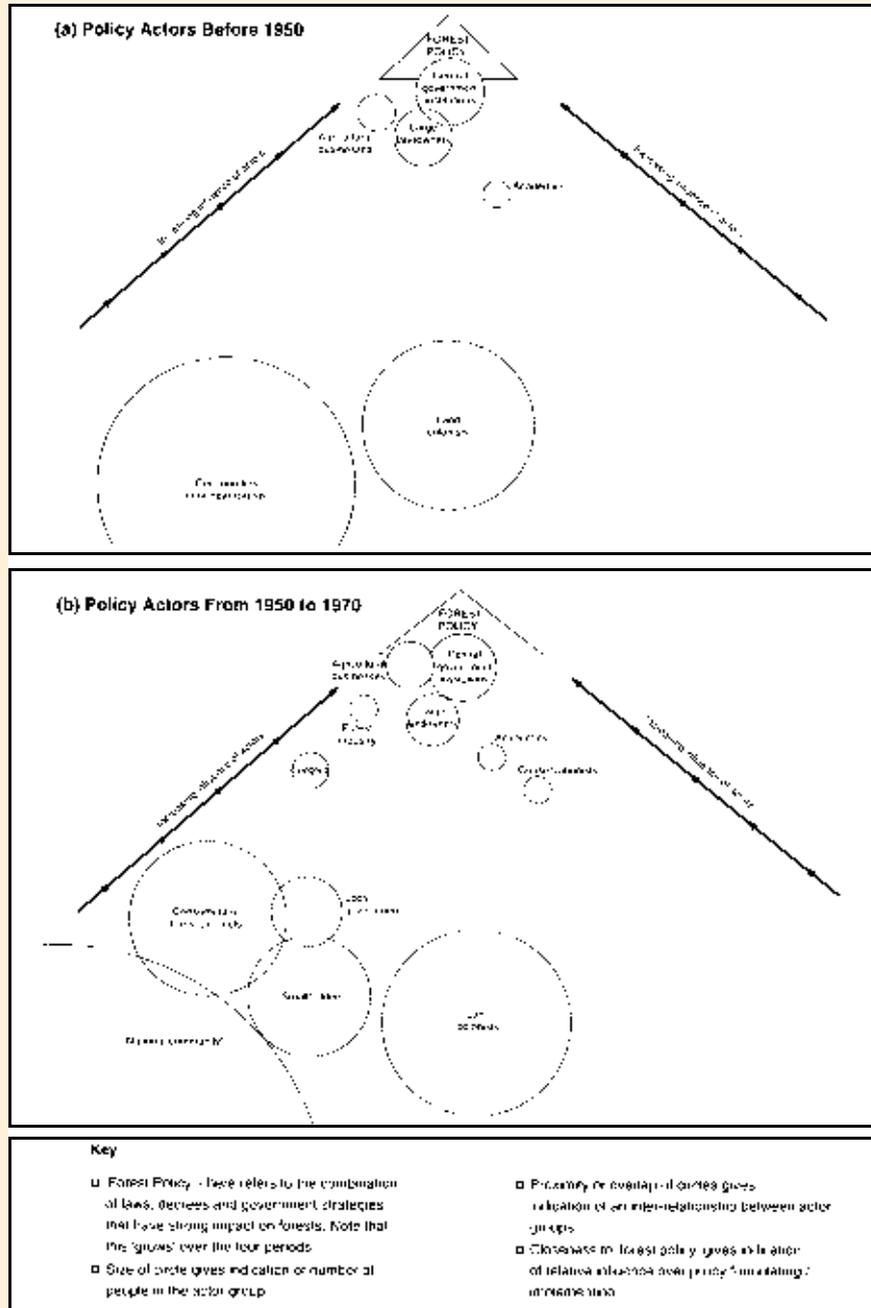
Again, documentary evidence and key informants are the best source of this information. In Section A4.7 of the main text of this report an example is given from Papua New Guinea of narrative description of the exercise of stakeholder powers over time.

**Figure A4.10. Stakeholder influences on policy, Pakistan**



<sup>12</sup> The size of the arrow indicates the degree of influence.

Figure A4.11 Power of different actor groups to influence forest policy, Costa Rica





## **A4.11 National debate/ stakeholder validation workshops – developing conclusions and recommendations**

Where improved national policy and process is the goal, the preliminary findings of policy work can be used as the raw material for national stakeholder workshops. Such workshops may need to bring key policy holders together with those, identified through the work as key stakeholders, who are currently marginalised by the formal policy system. If well facilitated, such workshops can result in sharpened findings and considerable levels of take-up by participants.

Refinement/ validation workshop exercises can also be highly productive when mixed international experience is brought together at the interim and preliminary stages of the findings. This is particularly important for international comparative work.

In Himachal Pradesh, for example, forest policy review workshops include:

- some which involve Forest Department staff only, so that findings and ideas can be internalised
- multi-stakeholder workshops, for debating findings and moving towards solutions; these will involve local-level stakeholders identified as key; one of these workshops will involve IIED as independent outside observer and facilitator, to help guide through sticky issues
- a multi-stakeholder validation workshop, at a stage where agreement has basically been produced, to confirm findings and the way forward, and to encourage subsequent commitments.



## A5 Influencing policy: some tactics

### A5.1 Revisit communication channels and uses of policy analysis information

Information may be used in a variety of ways. It can rarely be said to lead directly to the obvious, clear-cut event of 'policy change'. It can help us to think about issues and define problems, rather than to seize on solutions. Thus information generated may be used as data, ideas or argument. The way in which it is communicated will have a major bearing on its actual use.

The critical concerns here are the ways in which information is generated, and how it is delivered to those who can use it to affect policy choices. Are we doing all we can to increase the probability that policy-makers and those affected by policy get taken up in the research process, and/ or that policy-makers use the information which researchers produce?

Communication is the 'heart beat' of an effective policy process. It can:

- prepare the ground: publicising the purpose/ scope of the policy analysis/ process, to elicit reactions through its consultative processes
- keep the story 'on the boil' – spreading results as they arise: the main issues identified, the main findings and recommendations on each issue, decisions made, etc.
- keep people informed about the 'next steps' at each stage
- rehearse the networking needed for shared action towards SFM

The major communication channels (newspapers, Internet, radio, lectures, training, etc) are populated by advocacy groups and the media as well as policy-makers. Consideration should be given to the nature and needs of information sources (information 'wholesalers') as distinct from intermediaries ('retailers') and the end-users of information. Often wholesalers have no idea how retailers package up and sell their products, let alone who is buying them. Consider also the time required to absorb the message; the timeliness – right place, right time; and how to 'hook' people.

## A5.2 Target and package outputs

Content and packaging of outputs strongly influence the effectiveness of policy work. Audiences become hooked by the 'sizzle', not the 'sausage'. Some characteristics of 'successful' content may include:

- bringing out the hot news – the face of the issue most likely to attract attention
- trading off what are likely to be hot *future* issues – rather than just '*now*' preoccupations
- challenging conventional wisdom
- raising new issues, ideas or perspectives to show a clear 'angle'
- making information easily accessible, distinctive – provocative, surprising or cool
- selecting formats for different audiences – report, policy brief, video, training module
- selecting the style for different groups – amount of technical jargon, clarity, tone and design.

However, outputs may be high in content and well packaged, yet still fail to hit their target, even if policy-makers commissioned the work, if: results are not available when needed; there is too much information; findings are not adequately conclusive to enable the next step to be taken – and knowing what this next step is will always be key (more research, dialogue, option development, or direct implementation); the proposals are politically unfeasible; or priorities have not been sorted out through the process (a common failing).

Some of these characteristics may lend themselves to the development of indicators of the impact which outputs can have (see Section A6).

## A5.3 Select and pursue tactics: some possibilities

In reviewing its own work to influence policy, IIED has noted how it has used a spectrum of tactics (Mayers and Bass 1998b). These are addressed in turn:

### A5.3.1 Dump information near policy-makers

In some circumstances, analyses of particular policies, policy processes, outputs and impacts – or just empirical information which has 'policy implications' – can be influential even when not particularly actively sold to an audience. Such positive influence is likely if the work is seen to:

- Define a new debate.
- Reinvigorate a stale debate – a fresh or clearer look at a problem which had seemed intractable.
- Ask the right questions at the right time; and give a simple well-explained answer which can stand up to criticism.
- Have developed, or involved a methodology which stands up to peer review.
- Present the clearest possible picture of why current policy is a problem and what it could be like.

However, although nicely crafted reports are important – they show you have done your homework, and provide reference points – they often only have impact if they are 'pushed' further. 'Policy-makers' characteristically do not read very much. Indeed reports whose

contents remain undigested may either provide the excuse to avoid taking action at policy level – to legitimise doing nothing – or leave policy-makers with the impression that the issue has somehow been sorted out by the initiative. This highlights the importance of ‘going beyond the report’- into follow-up and advocacy.

#### **A5.3.2 Draw policy-makers into the analysis itself**

Policy-makers may not be like the ‘end-users’ of other forms of research. They may have no inkling that the work will be useful to them, or may actively resist it. It is often useful to draw formal policy-makers into the process, involving them at early and interim stages, as well as at the end, as discussed in Section A3.6:

- Choose research partners who are actively engaged in policy. Working with politically knowledgeable partners is vital for any policy analysis which seeks to be prescriptive.
- Try to make a policy impact right at the beginning – by raising the idea and engaging the right people

Involvement in policy research of policy ‘end-users’ of another type – those on the ‘receiving end’, affected by policy at local levels, is also vital. This may, in effect, be about bringing together the people who are suffering from bad policy. Overall, it is about beginning to create feedback loops in the policy process.

#### **A5.3.3 Serve the existing policy machine**

Direct engagement with the shaping of policy often occurs when invited in by policy-makers to flesh out the scale of a problem and prepare solutions, or to work out how policy can be improved. Policy-makers may commission research or even the writing of policy. Success here is likely to depend on whether there is real willingness and openness to consider change in the policy machine.

Yet there is a major concern with this type of work – getting locked in to servicing the machine, or only a part of it, and losing track of the vision of desirable change (both of who should constitute the ‘policy machine’ and what the policy should be). This kind of work may generate much material and consensual work but little vision. However, when done very comprehensively, the products of this research can become milestone documents – sources of reference material for subsequent debate – for years to follow.

#### **A5.3.4 Stay ‘connected’, seize opportunities, ‘gain power and influence’**

Identifying or recognising leverage points in policy is an art in itself but, as we have noted, predicting when and where they occur is an even finer art. This is about the political tactics of networking, listening to politicians and the media to pick up nuances, making leading comments to elicit reactions, and keeping on the look-out for political opportunities. When the opportunity arises the game involves dropping the right phrase in the right ear at the right moment, at the right dinner, etc. For all this to be possible, an existing reputation is needed. Firm resolve is also needed – you need to be brave to change policy in this way; you need a certain kind of assertiveness.

As with servicing the policy machine, this approach may mean that desirable big policy changes are shelved in the short term, in favour of continuity of contacts, and making small gains when opportunities arise.

### Box A5.1 How to have power and influence – the view from ‘management science’

The worlds of business and organisational management studies have for years investigated, and provided guidance on, ways to develop the powers of influence. One award-winning book for business managers (Bragg, 1996) on how to be more influential, includes the following nuggets of wisdom:

*Seven power levers* open to managers:

1. resources
2. information
3. expertise
4. connections
5. coercion
6. position
7. personal power

*Six principles of influence* through which managers can activate power:

1. contrast
2. historical commitments and consistency
3. scarcity value
4. social proof
5. liking and ingratiation
6. emotion

*Eight key tactics* of influence:

1. pressure tactics
2. upward appeals
3. rational appeals
4. exchange tactics
5. coalition tactics
6. ingratiation tactics
7. inspirational appeals
8. consultation tactics

*Four key steps* to becoming an influential manager:

- Step one – know yourself
- Step two – identify your target
- Step three – diagnose the system
- Step four – decide on strategy and tactics

Source: Mary Bragg, 1996. *Reinventing influence: how to get things done in a world without authority*. Pitman, London

There is clearly a trade-off between getting/ staying politically connected – being a political animal – which can threaten an analyst/ institution’s independence (because of the reactions it elicits from some quarters), and doing policy research. Ultimately, the capacity of an individual to do either probably depends on being able to do both. But in the meantime, an institution doing policy work may need to strive for a good balance of political animals and policy researchers.

There is a whole raft of literature on 'gaining power and influence', most written purely to further the reader's self-interest, rather than the public interest. But it can be instructive (Boxes A5.1 and A5.2).

### **Box A5.2 How to have power and influence – Machiavellian tactics**

An examination of the lives of history's great strategists (Sun-tzu, Clausewitz), statesmen (Bismarck, Talleyrand), courtiers (Machiavelli, Castiglione, Gracián), seducers (Ninon de Lenclos, Casanova), and con artists ('Yellow Kid' Weil) suggests that decency, honesty and fairness can never help you win. You should instead be shrewd, ruthless, oily and amoral – and power will be yours (Greene and Jeffers, 1998).

*First, conceal your intentions.* If people do not know what you are up to, they cannot prepare a defence. Guide people down the wrong path. Be bold.

*Next, get others to do your work for you,* but always take the credit. Use other people's wisdom and knowledge to further your own cause. Not only will it save you time, it will give you a godlike aura of efficiency and speed.

*Never trust friends.* They are prone to attacks of envy. Instead, hire a former enemy who will be far more loyal because he has more to prove. If you have no enemies, make some. Then choose the most threatening ones and annihilate them totally. Keep your hands clean by using others as a screen to hide your involvement in shady deals.

*Learn to exploit emotional weakness.* Play on people's uncontrollable needs and insecurities and seduce them into becoming your loyal pawns. Appear to give your victims a choice while forcing them to choose between the lesser of two evils, both of which serve your own purpose. Put them on the horns of a dilemma: they will be gored whichever way they turn. But most importantly, never accept a free lunch. Learn to throw your money around and make sure it keeps circulating: generosity is the ultimate seal of power.

Source: R. Greene and J. Elffers, 1998.

### **A5.3.5 Convene better policy processes**

Some initiatives aim to convene improved policy processes, to try and kick-start policy or to show what alternative policy processes could be like. They may attempt to involve previously unheard or under-represented groups. However, care needs to be taken not to 'jump in' to stakeholder policy processes before sufficient analysis has been done. Policy by brainstorm rarely works, and analysis can be used specifically to avoid this.

This approach is obviously more rewarding when following close on the heels of forest policy reviews which are full of expert analyses and depauperate of consultation. Since there are so many of these, having been spawned in recent years by TFAP, NEAP and other processes, it may be that this tactic will prove rather timely in the next couple of years.

In any case, in many contexts the policy analysis that is most needed draws on the same skills needed for better policy process, i.e. knowing who to talk to, what can and cannot be said, etc.

### **A5.3.6 Offer do-it-yourself policy review kits**

This approach aims at helping to set the frameworks for policy research, and extending methodologies, but not actually doing the policy research itself. For example, setting out the sequence of questions which must be asked in order to arrive at a policy answer, and how they might be answered. Training in policy analysis and policy process may also be effective for others who are, or, more likely, may become, influential in government and civil society. This book, for example, has some of the ingredients to equip such a 'policy review kit'.

### **A5.3.7 Build constituencies**

Some work appears to have little to do with policy, but aims to legitimise local views and support activities at local levels. However, some of this work explicitly recognises that the policy link – what is being contributed to, is a slow process of building a constituency through networks and support for community-level approaches. In other words, working outside the policy machine with constituencies whose agenda might one day include pushing the policy process.

With a long term view, work can contribute intellectual thinking – a body of understanding – which will bear fruit at policy level only in, say, fifteen or twenty years' time. For example, the several long-standing participatory forestry projects in Pakistan are fulfilling such a role. Indeed, there may be good grounds for arguing that the right foundation-laying and momentum-building activities are ultimately the strongest of all policy tactics. The key to success is being able to identify issues which are not completely off-the-wall today, but which will be especially meaningful in twenty years time; and working with credible people local to that issue to help build constituencies, and demonstrate what can be achieved in practice. There is little point in working outside the policy machine unless there is a chance that one day it will deal with these issues.

### **A5.3.8 Create vision**

Big changes can be achieved through dramatic action – or alternatively through incremental progress. Both require vision. Tactics for generating vision differ from 'dumping information on policy-makers' by aiming for a more voluminous groundswell. It may require fostering an attitude of mind among politicians – introducing a 'rolling stone' and keeping it moving – or working with those who can frame opinion – the intermediaries such as NGO networks, rather than the decision-takers.

In some contexts, the business of 'capturing minds' may best be achieved by stimulating debate. Contentious messages can be important tools to provoke reaction. Broadcasting short and punchy messages – 'spinning a story' – at the right moment, is a key function of the policy advocate. Where there is much uncertainty and issues are complex – and much environment-development territory is like this – it is important that research provokes reaction, perhaps even if it is a bit 'wrong' so that others will join the fray and eventually get it 'right'. However, some positions become such strong narratives that they circumscribe what is possible in the future, even when consistently challenged or proven wrong, e.g. 'fuelwood crisis' and 'tragedy of the commons' narratives (see Sections A2.4-5). If stories are the building blocks of knowledge, they are crucial for better policy. In the 'information age' it has been argued that there is increasingly too much information ('informed bewilderment'), and not enough stories.

### **A5.3.9 Keep donors 'on tap', not 'on top'**

In Sections 2.2, 4.2 and 5.2 we have discussed some of the roles and activities of donor organisations and external agencies in policy contexts. This is not the place for a thorough examination of the appropriate entry and exit points for external supporters of policy work. However a few general normative points from experience can be made. Few of the methods to analyse policy, and the tactics to influence it, are short-term endeavours; if donors seek to support policy work a medium- to long-term commitment – several years at least – is generally needed. But donors should be 'on tap' during the process, not 'on top' through inappropriate conditions on grants and loans.

Donor roles send signals about the purpose and 'ownership' of policy development. Donors should avoid involvement in defining strategy/ policy content.<sup>13</sup> Allying policy development processes too closely to immediate development assistance planning can dilute the likelihood that the policies developed will work. Similarly, if donors 'cherry-pick' only some activities arising from policy developments whilst ignoring others, they may skew internal capabilities adversely. To play an effective role in policy work donors might:

- be *facilitators*, more than issue experts
- pay for *secretariat* resources
- pay for time for *key informants and analysts* to explore key issues
- provide the '*lubricants*' – cross-institutional fora, quick money for transport and food, and process expertise
- assist in *methodology* development, training and use
- ask '*independent*' questions
- support involvement of *marginalised groups*
- support *risk-taking* and *experiments* that are otherwise impossible
- act as advocate for *international obligations*

If the above types of action are well-tailored to local circumstances, external agencies can help create political space in which internal advocates of policy change are able to manoeuvre.

---

<sup>13</sup> The term 'facipulator' has been coined for the facilitator who turns manipulator.



## A6 Track the impact

Rather occasionally, policy work has a direct and obvious impact on policy – and this can be easily identified. More often, impact is more ‘sensed’ than clearly seen. In general, it is necessary to at least be wary of the fact that there are many links, and the difficulty of pointing to any correlations, let alone causation.

As we have noted above, much policy work aims to contribute to a pool of knowledge and it is necessary to look ahead and acknowledge that work may only have impact in the long run. Thus, tracking the impact can be very difficult in a situation where bits of information are seeping in, uncatalogued, without citation, gradually forming a simple story and enlightening people, perhaps preparing for a change whose time has yet to come. Yet, if policy is to be improved, there is a vital need for information and monitoring systems which feed analysis of impact back into policy.

### A6.1 Develop policy impact indicators

If we want to try and track whether policy work has impact, then for each of our influence tactics (Section A5) it may be possible to develop impact indicators. The types of impact that we might want to measure for each tactic include:

- *Outputs*. Content, quality and packaging of the information produced (research findings, stories, messages)
- *Process*. Delivery and use of the information in relation to policy making and implementing; contribution of affected actors to the process
- *Outcomes*. Appropriateness of chosen policies, and their effectiveness in moving practice towards or away from sustainable development goals.

Indicators of policy work *outputs* can be the most straightforward: numbers of research products distributed; qualities of the work identified in peer reviews, workshops, etc. (see Section A5.2 on the characteristics of effective outputs). In terms of *process*, it may be possible to identify what information was available before, during and after policy work, and thus to show that certain insights and arguments were not present in policy deliberations before, but were afterwards. However, policy processes are often notable for their lack of a paper trail. *Outcome* indicators can be of various sorts – at their simplest, ‘real-life’ indicators,

monitorable by ordinary people, on key aspects of human and ecosystem well-being. At their most complex, they can include indicators on every single dimension of SFM (similar to certification) and end up reconfiguring national monitoring systems. The problem of correlation with single policies remains, however.

## A6.2 Treat outcome indicators with caution

Outcomes are even more difficult to monitor! Where the policy analysts are also key policy protagonists – e.g. campesino forestry groups in Costa Rica doing their own research and pressing their case – identifying the outcomes should be possible. In other cases, however, there may be trouble if the analyst or institution stamps its signature on policy work. This project – *Policy that works* – is perhaps a good example. It has had some impact because findings are owned by collaborators whose policy analysis capabilities have been used and, in some cases, built through the project, who are engaged with the holders of policy, and who are beginning to change policy. For policy change to work, ‘ownership’ of the change has to be in the right place.

It may not be wise for the policy analyst to become too closely associated with policy change. Ascribing the ideas or the groundwork to the analyst may jeopardise the relationship with other key policy actors and undermine their willingness to take the work on board. Thus, there may be very few benefits for authors and analysts in terms of citations of academic papers. Recognition is more likely to be based on word of mouth, repeat business, etc.

Much of the world as a whole – at least those in power – resist transparency of information on outcomes. Third parties can make progress in identifying indicators of policy outcome. IIED and others have been advocating systems that feed specific outcome indicators back into policy, e.g. through *pressure-state-response* models. But in general, the connection between policy work and policy change is likely to remain quite opaque – and often we may have to rely simply on the ‘gut feeling’ that policy work is worth doing!