

Forest Policies for the 21st Century

Sixth Executive Forest Policy Course

27 May - 6 June 2013, Thimphu, Bhutan

Policy Course Module Details

FAO, SAARC Forestry Centre and Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank

Forest Policies for the 21st Century

Below is a provisional indication of the issues proposed to be addressed under the different modules of the 6th Forest Policy Course. While the issues relating to a given topic will be introduced by an expert, much of the thrust will be to capitalize on the varied experience of the participants through a system of seminars by participants, group work and debates. Participants attending the course will be required to undertake advance preparations from their home countries. Once nomination is received the course coordinator will get in touch with the participants requesting them to prepare for seminars, debates and group discussion on specific topics based on their experience/ expertise.

Monday 27 May

Module 1: Thinking ahead: Societal changes and crafting forest policies for the future

This module will focus on the long term changes in South and Southeast Asian society and how this affects the policies especially as societal changes get translated into changes in policy objectives and policy instruments. Drawing upon the findings of the recently completed Asia-Pacific Outlook Study, in particular the South Asia and Southeast Asia Sub-regional Reports, this module will set the stage for the course providing the larger picture of how forestry is evolving in the region. Specifically the module will focus on:

- Drivers of change and societal changes in South and Southeast Asia.
- Current and emerging perceptions about forests and forestry.
- Adapting forestry to the future
- Issues in crafting forest policies for a changing society
- Discussion – What is the likelihood of forest transition in South and Southeast Asian countries in the next two decades and how forest policies should be crafted to facilitate forest transition.

Tuesday 28 May

Module 2: International agreements and national forest policies

In a globalised world what happens to the economy and environment in one country tends to have an impact on human well-being elsewhere. In many cases isolated action by individual countries may



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not help to address the problems, especially considering the transboundary nature of the problems. It is in this context that global community has crafted a number of agreements/ conventions. The purpose of the module is to provide an overview of the evolution of various international agreements that have directly and indirectly impacted forests and how these have been accommodated in the national policies and programmes. In particular the discussion will focus on how international initiatives have altered the objectives of forestry at the country level.

- Post UNCED developments and their impact on forest policies
- Rio+20, green economy and forest policies
- Trade liberalization, forest products trade and forest policies – protectionism and trade barriers
- Changing competitive advantage – how forest products trade is affected?

Wednesday 29 May

Module 3: Provision of ecological services and forest policies

In almost all countries environmental concerns are receiving increasing attention, especially in the context of continued loss of biological diversity, climate change on account of global warming, decline in the quantity and quality of water and increasing land degradation. The module will help to get a picture of current and emerging environmental issues and how forest policies are responding to the greater thrust being given to the provision of ecological services.

- Ecological services and forest policies: How environmental concerns have been taken into account in forest policies
- Carbon markets, REDD+ and national forest policies
- Biodiversity conservation and protected area management in forest policies
- Managing forests for water: How forest policies have responded to the water challenges in Asia
- Land degradation and desertification
- Discussion: What is the best option to provide ecological services and what are the potentials and limitations of market driven approaches? - Economics of the provision of ecological services

Thursday 30 May

Module 4: Production, processing, consumption and trade of forest products

Historically wood production has been the main focus of forest management in almost all South and Southeast Asian countries and most of the wood continues to be used as fuel. However increasingly forest policies are giving greater thrust to the provision of ecological services and wood production has been scaled down by way of logging bans and setting aside more forests as protected areas. While imports and trees grown outside forests have helped to fill up the gap, it is important to examine the long term prospects of wood production in the region, the options available and the implications on forest policies.

- Changing demand and supply of forest products: The situation in the next 20 years and its implications on forest policies.



- Trade of forest products – intra-regional and interregional – in South and Southeast Asia and emerging opportunities and challenges
- The future of wood energy in South and Southeast Asia
- Emerging opportunities for non-wood products
- Discussion: The future of production forestry and its implications for forest policies

Friday 31 May

Module 5: Social issues and forest policies

A very large number of rural people are dependent on forests for their day to day needs and the persistence of widespread poverty in forested regions requires that forest policies address the problem directly. Historically policies and legislation have excluded local people's access to benefits from forests and invariably only a negligible share of the products and income accrue to local communities. There are several initiatives to address this, especially in the context of the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of poor people. Forest policies are hence required to address social concerns, especially poverty reduction and gender. This module will assess how forest policies have fared in mainstreaming social concerns.

- Poverty alleviation and forests: What forestry can do and what it cannot
- Gender and forestry: How have we fared and what more needs to be done
- Social conflicts and forestry: How forest policies may address them?
- Group work: Benchmarking and measuring forest policies for social objectives

Saturday 1 June

Module 6: Institutions for implementation of forest policies

Institutions form the core of all societal action. Yet this remains a neglected area especially in the forest sector and many of the problems of poor policy delivery stems from weak and outdated institutional framework. There have been several efforts to reform and reinvent forest sector institutions, especially government forestry departments, to make them more responsive to the larger changes. This module will focus on sharing the experience of institutional reform, the lessons that have been learnt and what more need to be done in the South and Southeast Asian context. Discussions will examine the indicators of institutional transformation and how they can be measured.

- Changing institutional scenario in the forest sector
- Challenges in making public forestry institutions responsive to emerging changes
- Private investors, industries, community groups, farmers and forestry departments: Evolving a framework for collective action
- Group work: Measuring performance of institutions



Monday 3 June

Module 7: Governance, accountability and transparency in the forest sector

As resource use conflicts intensify informal and illegal transactions increase governance and accountability are severely compromised. Forest sector in almost all countries are prone from problems stemming from poor governance and accountability. However the public is demanding better accountability and transparency and it is imperative that these are improved. The module will focus on the national and international efforts to improve transparency and accountability.

- State of governance of public forests: Dealing with corruption and illegal activities
- Improving transparency in public forest administration
- Discussion: Improving governance in the forest sector – Challenges and options
- Group work: Measuring governance and accountability

Tuesday 4 June

Module 8: The policy process

A major issue relating to forest policies is how exactly they are formulated. Invariably the lead responsibility for forest policy formulation/ revision is assumed by the Forest Ministry/ Department. Although mechanisms are often in place for adopting a consultative process, their effectiveness is often questionable and this leads to policies that fail to take cognizance of broader concerns. This module will assess the processes adopted in policy formulation and how the processes could directly and indirectly influence policy implementation.

- Case studies on policy formulation process
- Stakeholder participation
- Discussion on the pros and cons of different approaches
- Group work: designing more effective processes

Module 9: Effective communication

Effective communication plays a critical role in the development and implementation of forest policies; however in the top-down approach that prevailed for a long time, communication remained a totally neglected area. Increasing demand on forests for a wide array of goods and services in the context of diverse perceptions and needs of people warrant a significant improvement in the communication skills of policy makers and planners. Establishment of trade offs between competing demands and resolving conflicts would require excellent communication/ negotiation skills. The module will provide an understanding of the different strategies/ approaches to effectively communicate with the major stakeholders of forests and forestry.



Wednesday 5 June

Module 10: Analysis of national forest policies

Having discussed and debated the different dimensions to be considered in forest policies and the processes to be pursued, this module will focus on analysis of national forest policies and how they are catering to the different challenges facing the forest sector. Selected policies will be subjected to SWOT analysis and group work will focus on how policies could be redrafted.

- Case studies on forest policies in South and Southeast Asia
- Case studies on forest policies in other countries
- Group work - redrafting policies

