

Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralization

Highlights and Key Messages

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Objectives:

- Exchange of lessons
- Identify contemporary challenges, trends and issues
- Analyse implications of these trends

Workshop Sponsors:

Governments of Indonesia and the Philippines as inputs to UNFF and AFP.

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Workshop Participants

- Estimated around 80-100 people; actual number of participants was 133
- Representatives of local, provincial, state and national governments, community organisations, international agencies and paper presenters
- Countries represented: Philippines, Indonesia, China, PNG, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, UK and US

Design of workshop

- ✦ **Presentations in plenary and breakout sessions**
- ✦ **Working group discussions**
- ✦ **Field trips, informal interactions**
- ✦ **Parallel panel discussions on 3 themes**

Highlights and Key Messages

- ◆ Decentralization not a panacea (outcomes vary, local antecedents condition results)
- ◆ Decentralization a work in progress – various points of tension
- ◆ Centralization and decentralization
 - Takes time, gradual vs. big bang
 - Constant renegotiation and adaptation

I. Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

- ◆ Need to further clarify roles, rights and responsibilities
- ◆ Clarity and stability of tenure regimes (right to own, access, use, sell, transfer etc) essential

II. Institutions, organizations, capacity building, infrastructure and legal aspects

- ◆ There are major issues of inequity (gender, ethnic/tribal, caste, across regions, within and among communities)
- ◆ Inequities and uneven access to resources and processes of decision-making related to forests constrain effectiveness of decentralized forest governance

II. Institutions, organizations, capacity building, infrastructure and legal aspects

- ◆ Capacity building and empowerment critically needed at all levels
 - Spaces for targeted empowerment
 - Capacity to negotiate
 - Infrastructure support
 - Resources and enabling environment

II. Institutions, organizations, capacity building, infrastructure and legal aspects

- ◆ New ways of thinking and doing things that allow for local adaptation and diverse institutional arrangements essential
 - Honest consultation
 - Transparency and accountability
 - Incentives and disincentives

II. Institutions, organizations, capacity building, infrastructure and legal aspects

- ◆ Legal and regulatory frameworks need to be further clarified, gaps need to be addressed
 - Inconsistencies and inequities need to be redressed
 - Understanding links between 'illegalities' (small scale and large scale)
- ◆ Corruption and perverse incentives need to be tackled
 - Alliances with civil society, use of the media
 - Advocacy and direct action

III. Financial Incentives and Investment

- ◆ Funds for decentralization generally inadequately provided
- ◆ Decentralization has often meant devolving costs and burdens with uncertain benefits
- ◆ Major revenue generating rights and resources remain centralized

III. Financial Incentives and Investment

- ◆ Sources of funding for decentralized forest management
 - Central government
 - Local government
 - Local communities
 - External donors
 - Private sector (untapped potential)

