Chapter 9

Multilevel, multiactor governance in REDD+

Participation, integration and coordination

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- Governance is the act or manner of governing. Multilevel, multiactor, participatory governance allows stakeholders to negotiate, formulate and implement policy.
- Multilevel, multiactor governance of REDD+ schemes will be needed to overcome differences between government ministries, and to build the trust of investors and local citizens.
- Creating new forms of governance that allow stakeholders with different degrees of political influence and different interests to come together could be time consuming but will allow REDD+ to achieve the 3Es+.

Introduction

Governance is the act or manner of governing. Inclusive and transparent governance allows stakeholders to participate in formulating and implementing policy. Multilevel governance allows stakeholders, such as officers at local, district and national government ministries and departments, investors and local citizens, to come together to negotiate, formulate and implement policy.

Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation, together with the conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks in existing forests (REDD+), require multilevel governance involving multiple actors to make it acceptable to stakeholders with different interests. Multilevel, multiactor governance can boost the participation of local people and agencies that often compete with each other and, consequently, could reduce potential conflicts in achieving REDD+ efficiency, effectiveness, equity and co-benefits (the 3Es+).

This chapter argues that we can look at multilevel, multiactor governance in two ways. *Horizontal* coordination refers to how stakeholders at more or less the same level and degree of influence can collaborate to implement REDD+. *Vertical* coordination refers to how stakeholders at different spatial scales, and with different degrees of influence, can work together to negotiate how REDD+ schemes are both formulated and implemented.

What is multilevel, multiactor governance?

'Good' governance is a form of political decision making that emphasises legality (rules to resolve conflicts), legitimacy (acceptance and trust by the public that create accountability) and participation (inclusiveness within decision making).[1] Governance is different from 'government' or 'decentralisation' (see Chapter 12). Good governance *includes* and enhances *participation* of both citizens and governments in formulating and implementing policies, such as for REDD+.

Building inclusion and participation into new policies engenders trust and acceptance by different stakeholders, and reduces the risks of conflict or failure of REDD+ projects. Multiactor governance implies collaboration among different stakeholders to achieve public policy objectives. Multilevel governance is the implementation of public policy across diverse spatial scales and by actors who have dissimilar influence and values. Both forms of governance are considered more inclusive, coherent and participatory than 'top-down' governance, such as legislation (Kern and Bulkeley 2009).

Analysts have put forward three important components of multilevel, multiactor governance: actors, scales and interests.

Actors

Actors who have different objectives and different degrees of political influence may be connected by horizontal links. REDD+, for example, involves several government ministries or agencies, such as those concerned with forests,

1 See http://www.undp.org/governance/mdgs.htm

agriculture or land use (see Chapter 14). Sometimes actors are from different sectors. For example, REDD+ could attract private investment, but investors need to cooperate with state agencies and with local people. Multilevel, multiactor governance therefore requires ready and coherent collaboration among actors. In terms of the 3Es+, good horizontal collaboration among actors can boost effectiveness (the amount of carbon stabilised through REDD+), and efficiency (the relative costs and speed of achieving stabilisation). For example, because most deforestation results from agricultural expansion, a REDD+ scheme will be more effective and efficient if forestry and agriculture ministries harmonise their efforts.

Scales

Vertical links could connect actors at the national and subnational levels according to international frameworks for REDD+. The nature of the links could be indicated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or be guided by large donors. For example, if smallholder farmers who commonly occupy areas where REDD+ schemes are proposed are included in national and subnational negotiations, this might enhance their participation and inclusion in REDD+. But, if they are excluded from negotiations and rigid rules for REDD+ are imposed from on high with no consultation, misunderstanding and resentment are likely to follow (see Chapters 12 and 17). An effective way of increasing forest carbon stocks might be to plant quick-growing pine or eucalyptus plantations that would rapidly sequester carbon and produce timber. But local land users often resist plantation monocultures because they restrict land available for agriculture and preclude collection of a variety of forest products. Inclusive and successful vertical governance, therefore, could maximise equity and effectiveness by ensuring the willing participation of different actors at different scales.

Interests

Similarly, agreement on REDD+ can only be achieved when different actors have a common understanding of its objectives, or are willing to accept compatible forms of REDD+ alongside each other. Different actors are likely to place different values on REDD+, and on forest and land use in general. Forestry and agriculture departments, for example, are likely to value tree crops that maximise timber production, conservation forestry or export crops. Many private investors are likely to take into account how investing in REDD+ might enhance their corporate image. Smallholder agriculturalists, however, are likely to value food security and livelihoods. REDD+ projects based on differing interests are likely to fail unless participants can come to a shared understanding of what kind of landscape is desirable, or reach an agreement about multiple forms of land use (Griffiths 2008). The World Rainforest Movement, an NGO based in Uruguay, has an ongoing campaign

called 'Plantations are not Forests!',[2] for example. The Movement advocates for balancing the different interests in production, conservation and community forestry, rather than seeing forests only in terms of maximising timber production or carbon sequestration. Balancing these interests can boost equity in the use of forests, or 'equity plus co-benefits', such as biodiversity and better livelihoods for forest users.

Approaches to multilevel, multiactor governance

There are, of course, different ways of achieving multilevel, multiactor governance. Table 9.1 shows three approaches. These are based on the extent to which actors participate in shaping rules about forest use, and to what extent each form of governance reflects different interests.

Nested institutions

The first approach to governance involves 'nested' (or sometimes, 'polycentric') institutions (Ostrom 1990, 2005). This approach sets rules for forest use that give forest users incentives to follow the recommendations for REDD+. The concept of 'nested' institutions is sometimes visualised as a Russian doll, where each local set of rules and incentives fits within the rules and objectives set at larger scales (e.g., regional, national and international) (see Angelsen *et al.* 2008). For example, the framework for REDD+ proposed in international meetings has clear objectives (to reduce deforestation and forest degradation), agreed mechanisms (to provide incentives via carbon credits) and transparent regulations (such as regular monitoring, and sanctions for failure). This governance framework applies at all scales. Ideally, the REDD+ system will be established so that the same rules apply to everyone. This approach to forest management appeals to economists because they appreciate the role of financial incentives and regulations in organising human behaviour. It could work best where the objectives of REDD+ – to maximise carbon sequestration and to provide rewards for stakeholders (either by sharing carbon credits, or some other reward based on credits) – are clearly established and accepted by all parties.

Legal pluralism

However, this 'nested' approach to multilevel governance has often been criticised by anthropologists. The third column of Table 9.1 summarises these criticisms in terms of legal pluralism and community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) (see also Chapter 16). Nested institutions are systems for managing a resource at different scales under one general set of rules. Legal

2 http://www.wrm.org.uy/

Table 9.1. Approaches to multilevel governance

	Policy objectives driven from above ←		→ **Policy objectives driven at the local level**
Type of governance	**Nested institutions**	**Deliberative networks and institutions**	**Legal pluralism, including Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)**
References	Ostrom (1990, 2005)	Hajer and Wagenaar (2001); Agrawal (2005)	Robbins (1998); Schroeder (1999)
Main mechanisms	Actors create rules for enforcement and monitoring, in coordination with higher authorities (Common Property Regime)	Policy is shaped by open discussion and participation by various stakeholders, aiming to empower localities to take responsibility for policy	Recognise coexistence of formal and informal governance regimes at different scales, as practised by communities
Main advantage	Clearly defined rules	Dynamic, localised and encourages learning	Reflects the complexity of local rule making
Main disadvantage	Does not always acknowledge local perceptions of forests or local political processes	Civil society might be dominated by elites and the state	Does not always relate to urgent 'global' tasks, such as controlling emissions
Implications for 3Es+	Can be effective and efficient where rules are agreed; but all 3Es+ can be compromised where local practices are ignored	High potential for 3Es+, but if process is slow and conflictual, efficiency is low and equity can be low because of a lack of legitimacy of network participants	Equity might be high, but effectiveness low

pluralism, in contrast, is the coexistence of various forms of governance at any one time, across a variety of scales. The different forms of governance may be formal (such as state legislation) or informal (such as traditional village practices). In The Gambia, for example, Schroeder (1999) describes how rural communities protected woodlands near villages for religious and ceremonial purposes. In Rajasthan, India, Robbins (1998) describes how state forest rules overlapped with local district (*panchayat*) and village rules for regulating land use, and with traditional religious understanding.

Legally pluralistic types of governance, such as CBNRM, differ in important ways from nested institutions. First, they acknowledge the different political processes adopted by different cultural groups and political organisations. Second, they also acknowledge differing views of the resource and land use. CBNRM often have little to do with commercial incentives, such as carbon credits. Consequently, if traditional practices are not taken into account when developing new forest protection mechanisms they will fail, because they do not acknowledge local values or decision making. Proponents of legal pluralism believe that it is a realistic and workable form of multilevel governance in complex resource landscapes, such as where forests and smallholder agriculture coexist.

Deliberative

The middle column of Table 9.1 is an approach to multilevel, multiactor governance that embraces both local concerns and 'global' environmental problems, such as climate change. Many critics of CBNRM argue that it is not efficient to take account of how local people value and use forests because they have little engagement with 'global' environmental problems, such as rising concentrations of greenhouse gases. The approach to governance in the middle column of Table 9.1 focuses on how global concerns about greenhouse gases can be reconciled with local concerns about forests and land use. This kind of approach might also be called 'deliberative' because it allows stakeholders (both local and policy advisers) to negotiate (or deliberate upon) common objectives and practices for environmental policy.

For example, stakeholders could agree to classify forest into production, conservation and community zones which could, therefore, allow different forms of forest use simultaneously. This kind of approach, however, is likely to create disagreement about where the boundaries should be drawn between forest zones where agriculture or community use will be allowed, and where they will not. This approach might also be influenced by the stage that the country has reached on the Forest Transition curve. In countries where much forest is still open to agricultural use, there will be disputes about the extent to which communities can use forest, and to what extent this has to be

controlled by forest law. What often happens in these cases is that laws have to be introduced quickly and are controversial.

In Thailand, for example, community forestry laws have evolved since the 1990s, restricting agricultural activities and sometimes even relocating villages from gazetted zones. There has been much disagreement about how the various forest zones should be demarcated (Forsyth and Walker 2008). An inclusive approach may take longer, but may also build public consensus. Agrawal (2005), for example, describes how the Kumaon State Government in northern India, through a long process of consultation and public deliberation, persuaded highland villagers to accept pine and fir plantations on land that they used for agriculture. Agrawal (2005) calls this process 'intimate government', because it allows people to feel included, rather than feeling that rules are imposed from above. The risk in the nested institution approach is that, although it might effectively reduce and remove greenhouse gases, it might not be perceived as equitable by local forest users. The deliberative approach to forest governance could be more equitable, and generate co-benefits such as better livelihoods and political goodwill toward the REDD+ process. But this approach may take time, first to establish an understanding of the objectives of REDD+ and then to devise ways to bring diverse stakeholders – such as smallholder agriculturalists and government ministries – together. Moreover, civil society or dominant social groups might not always be representative of local forest users. A long-term, consultative and learning process involving diverse groups may be more successful than negotiating with specific NGOs.

Cross-sector partnerships (CSPs)

One way of implementing multilevel, multiactor governance is cross-sector partnerships (CSPs). CSPs involve different actors, with different levels of influence and power, who come together to implement policy. It is now widely agreed that CSPs have evolved since the 1990s when they resembled orthodox public–private partnerships (Nelson 2002). CSPs have moved toward more deliberative forms of governance that include citizens in shaping the objectives of projects (Linder 2000; Ählström and Sjöström 2005). Indeed, one Indonesian NGO (cited by Tahmina and Gain 2002) said, 'By creating partnerships, we also are trying to encourage greater equality and to promote values such as social justice'. Proponents of CSPs have argued that they address three 'policy deficits': the regulatory deficit of influencing non-state actors; the implementation deficit of allowing different stakeholders to carry out policy; and the participation deficit of increasing the representation of less powerful actors, such as local forest users (Biermann *et al*. 2007; Glasbergen 2007). In this sense, CSPs can address both horizontal and vertical integration in REDD+ (see Forsyth 2007 and Benecke *et al*. 2008 for discussions concerning CSPs and the Clean Development Mechanism).

Some examples of cross-sector partnerships in forests

CSPs could take into account two important aspects of REDD+, *transaction costs* and *assurance mechanisms* (Weber 1998; see Table 9.2). Transaction costs include financial costs, time and conflict arising from collaboration. Assurance mechanisms, however, are practices that keep different sectors within a partnership happy. These mechanisms might be formal, such as contracts and laws, or informal, such as incentives paid by companies or NGOs to facilitate collaboration, or coverage of partnership activities in the media. Collaboration also depends on the ability of the parties to cooperate and communicate successfully, legal knowledge, a long-term perspective, and sufficient capacity within each organisation to deliver what has been agreed. This, in turn, also implies the capacity for deliberation.

Griffiths (2008) investigated the *transaction costs* and *assurance mechanisms* of multilevel, multiactor carbon-offset schemes. Initial evidence suggests that transaction costs are very high when there are attempts to include forest dependent communities. For example, Granda (2005) assessed a monoculture tree plantation sponsored by the Dutch government in Ecuador. Communities claimed that the carbon forestry company never told them what payments they would get per hectare. Local people did not understand carbon credits and ran into debt because they claimed they did not know about penalty clauses. Villagers felt aggrieved because they had to pay unforeseen costs, such as replacing seedlings that failed or due to fire damage.

Another report by Greenpeace (2007) on schemes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo argued that World Bank strategies there increased rather than avoided deforestation because they encouraged logging as a form of economic

Table 9.2. Conditions influencing the emergence and sustainability of collaboration

Assurance mechanism	Transaction costs of alternative decisions		
	High and applicable to all stakeholders	High for most stakeholders, but not all	Low
None	No collaboration	No collaboration	No collaboration
Partial	Collaboration possible, but not sustainable	Highly unlikely	No collaboration
Full	Sustained collaboration	Collaboration possible, but not sustainable	No collaboration

Source: Weber (1998)

development. Logging titles were often allocated without acknowledging local land rights. The report claimed that community leaders only received salt and beer in return for logging rights. In another study of World Bank schemes in Guyana, Griffiths (2008) argued that 'the national REDD+ concept submitted to the [Forest Carbon Partnership Fund] … contains misleading and inaccurate information on land tenure, governance and deforestation'. In Peru, the World Bank's technical advisors explicitly refused to acknowledge forest peoples as key rights holders in REDD+.

These case studies suggest that it is difficult for forest people to fully understand carbon credits and comply with the requirements of carbon schemes unless there is a long-term effort to help them understand and involve them in deliberation. What assurance mechanisms can overcome these difficulties, and ensure learning and commitment by stakeholders?

Critical NGOs, such as the Forest People's Programme (Griffiths 2008), propose that measures such as making land tenure secure and acknowledging community rights to forest resources can enhance the equity and efficiency of multilevel, multiactor governance. Community representatives need better negotiating skills and there need to be transparent procedures for addressing grievances and distributing benefits, and mutual agreement on what is meant by the terms 'forest' and 'degradation'.

Many support the concept of Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) (Forest People's Programme 2007; Global Witness 2008; Wilson 2009). FPIC implies consultations with local people that lead to consent, rather than just contact. Indeed, Griffiths (2005, 2008) has argued that the World Bank approach to forest-related climate investment has used the term 'consultation' to imply more participation than actually happened. But it is worth noting that the cases cited involved a change in land use or expansion of plantations into agricultural areas. Protecting standing forests will require different rules and regulations and might be less confrontational.

Other studies suggest that deliberative and inclusive practices are already being developed. Wilson (2009) describes how one investor (Veracel) in Brazil has set up a social networks programme (to engage communities) and a social inventory (to map communities), allocated positions to local people (to allow company employees to work with communities) and begun talks with local governments and neighbouring landowners. Veracel's main interest is in eucalyptus plantations, but it also engages in environmental restoration of degraded land.

Conclusion

Multilevel, multiactor governance is necessary to ensure that REDD+ will achieve the 3Es plus co-benefits. Reducing and removing greenhouse gases through REDD+ is urgent. But this objective will not be met if stakeholders lose trust in REDD+ policy processes, or if there is no attempt to coordinate and integrate different actors, scales and interests. Indeed, if trust is lost, and REDD+ is seen to be invasive and imposed from above, then it might take years to regain trust and get full participation.

This chapter argues that REDD+ requires coordination among different stakeholders, such as agriculture and forestry ministries, in order to reduce deforestation from agricultural expansion. Multilevel, multiactor governance is perhaps most needed where REDD+ involves changes in land use, especially where agricultural land and community-managed forests overlap. REDD+ can succeed if stakeholders share a common understanding of appropriate forest and land use, a shared and trusted way of negotiating agreements about REDD+, and if local users derive co-benefits.

Despite the time and cost, there is a need to invest in new political processes that will encourage transparent and accessible deliberation, learning and agreement about forest management. Where there are large differences between stakeholders, short-term efficiency might have to be sacrificed in order to achieve equity and long-term effectiveness. But achieving trust is a sensible objective. If inclusive and accountable ways of sharing benefits are found, and if different stakeholders can agree on appropriate forest use and policy objectives, then the result will be long-term efficiency and effectiveness in reducing and removing greenhouse gases, as well as equity.