



NINTH EXECUTIVE FOREST POLICY COURSE

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, CLIMATE CHANGE
AND THE FUTURE OF FORESTS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC**

24 May - 2 June 2016, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

**POLICY PROCESS:
BALANCING THE DIVERGENT
DEMANDS ON FORESTS**

CTS Nair



THE CHALLENGE

- Conflicts are inevitable in the use of a resource like forests which has very diverse uses.
- Land, forests, trees and the multitude of products can be used in diverse ways.
- And in a situation of limited resources every one wants to have a share of the pie and if possible a larger share and sometimes the entire pie.
- This is the fundamental challenge of policy making in the sphere of forestry.



WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO

- ❑ Provide an overview of the policy process focusing on the entire cycle of formulation, implementation and review and how actual practice diverges from theory.
- ❑ Outline the different approaches of policy formulation and their pros and cons.
- ❑ How the process of policy formulation addresses resource use conflicts and acceptable trade offs are established.
- ❑ Outline some of the complexities in policy formulation especially in the context of wicked problems.





WHAT IS A POLICY?

The word “Policy” is a very elastic term and there is a need to have clarity as to its precise meaning. So what is a policy?

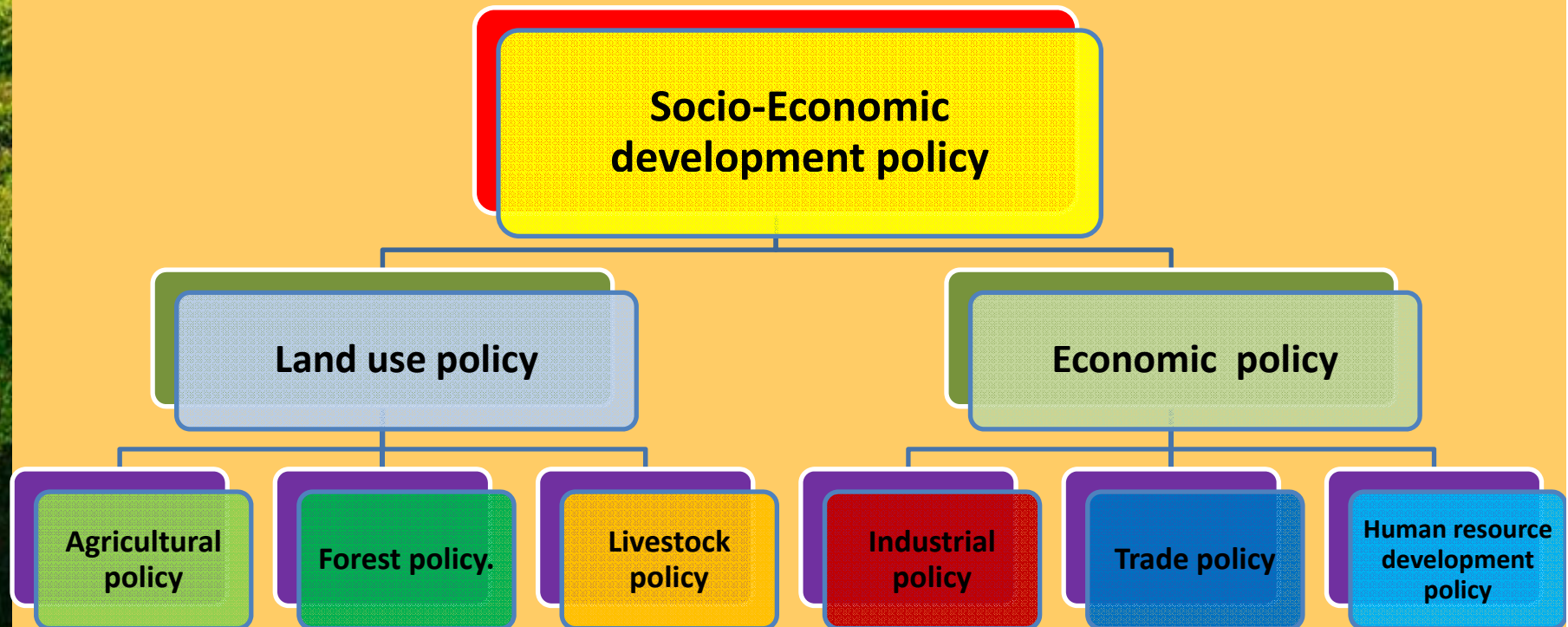
- A proposed or adopted course or principle of action
- A cohesive set of responses to a problem
- A set of decisions oriented towards a long-term purpose or to a particular problem.
- Public policy as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity.

A national forest policy is a negotiated agreement among stakeholders on a common vision and goals for the country’s forests and trees adopted by the government



WHAT IS A POLICY?

- ❑ A policy could address any issue and its scope could be extremely varied.
- ❑ It could have a hierarchy and often policies could overlap: For example a climate change policy could encompass policies relating to land, energy, transportation, industry and so on:





WHAT IS A POLICY?

- ❑ Even within a sectoral policy we could think of a wide array of sub-policies. For example we could have policies relating to plantations, natural forests, forest industries, wild life, national park management and so on.

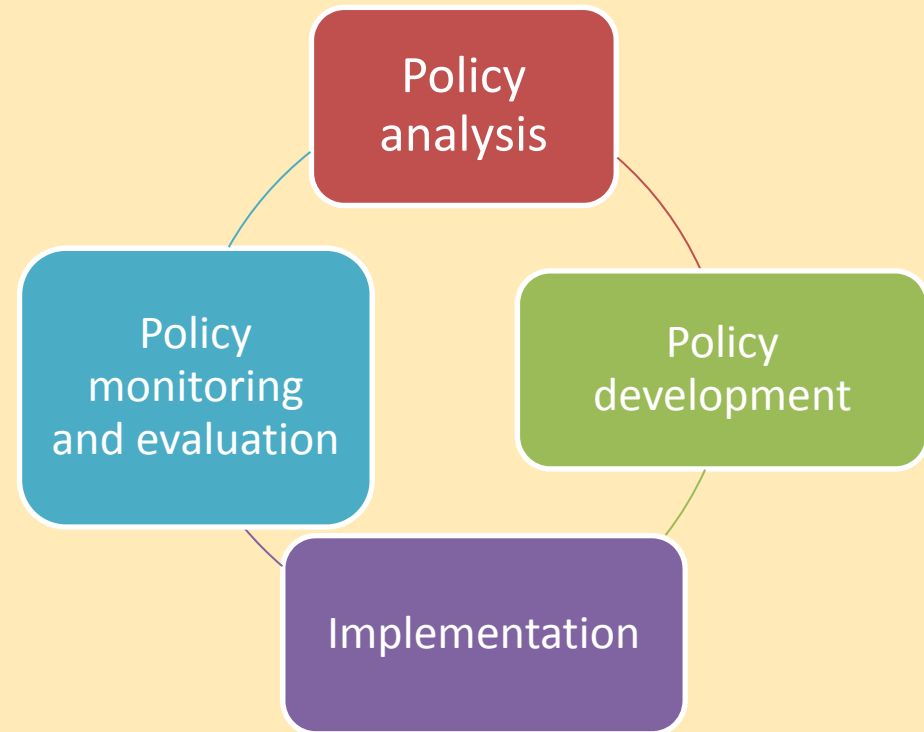
- ❑ Most important is to very clearly define:
 - ❖ What we want to accomplish;
 - ❖ Consistency with the higher level policies;
 - ❖ Coherence and synergy with policies in related areas.
 - ❖ How the policy is proposed to be implemented.

- ❑ We can always define the space- time dimension and develop a policy for a specific sector, subsector, area, time and so on.



THE CONVENTIONAL PROCESS

- ❑ In theory it is a continuing cycle involving in-depth assessment of issues leading to the articulation of a set of actions, then their implementation and then an assessment.
- ❑ But in the real world the situation may be different.
- ❑ The broader the scope of the policy, greater are the chances of deviation from the theoretical framework.



STEPS INVOLVED IN POLICY ANALYSIS

1. **Define the problem**
2. **Assemble evidences**
3. **Identify alternatives**
4. **Select criteria to identify preferred alternatives**
5. **Anticipate outcomes**
6. **Establish trade offs**
7. **Select the best option**
8. **Build the story**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There are two main steps in the policy development phase

1. **Alternative policy proposals to accomplish a set of goals are identified, discussed and put forth.**
2. **Choosing the policy prescription including selection of appropriate policy instruments ideally through a consensus building process.**

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- 1. Prepare strategies (including financial strategies) and action plans.**
- 2. Develop institutions or strengthen the capacity of existing institutions.**
- 3. Develop a financial plan.**
- 4. Develop a system of monitoring and evaluation.**
- 5. Set up mechanisms for coordination between the different actors involved in policy implementation.**
- 6. Develop appropriate communication strategy and raise awareness.**

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

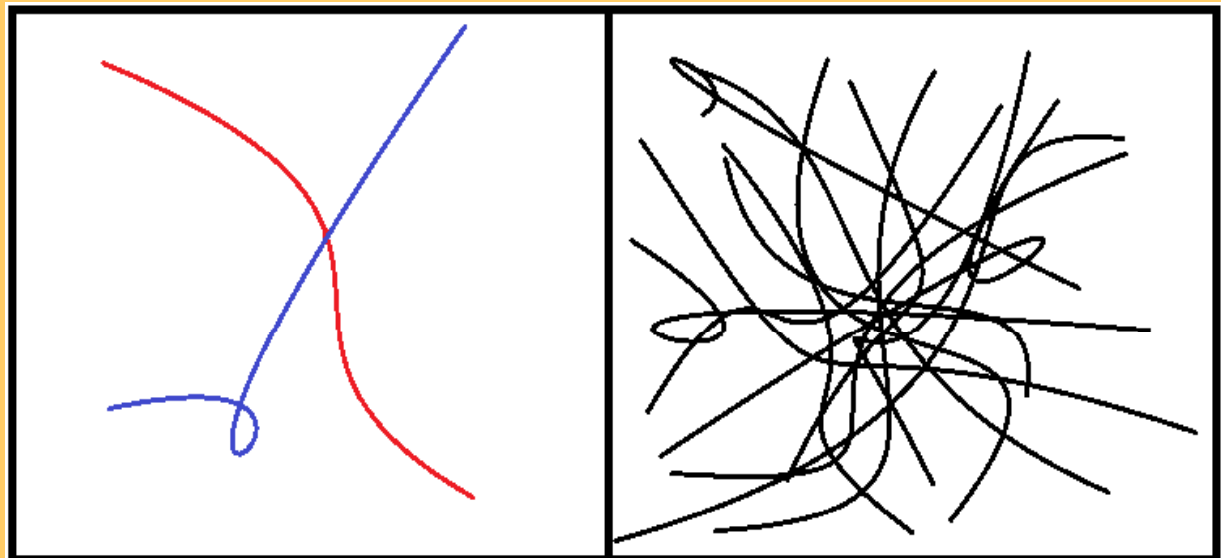
- 1. Selecting the elements to be monitored and evaluated and define the criteria and indicators.**
 - Identifying the information needed
 - Measurement of indicators.
- 2. Data collection and analysis.**
- 3. Document and analyze the lessons learned.**
- 4. Communicate the findings.**

DIVERGENCES BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

- ❑ **The political context of policy development.**
 - ❖ **Largely related to the system of governance (which may consist of a whole spectrum ranging from highly centralized system to a true participatory democracy).**
 - ❖ **Dominant interest groups/ players influencing policy formulation/ policy changes (for example logging companies, investors, industries, mining companies) .**
- ❑ **Depending on the political, social and economic context the actual policy process will be quite different from the widely taught theoretical process.**
- ❑ **Forest policies become irrelevant as soon as the socio-economic context changes.**
- ❑ **Many of the problems relating to policy process are “wicked problems”.**

WICKED PROBLEMS

- ❑ On the whole we usually adopt a very structured approach to deal with the problems.
- ❑ But in the real world, there are too many factors/ issues that pull in totally unpredicted directions making the structured approach unworkable.
- ❑ They are often referred to as “Wicked problems”.



Traditional Problem

Wicked Problem

WICKED PROBLEMS

- ❑ Wicked problems are characterized by:
 - ❑ You don't understand the problem until you have developed a solution.
 - ❑ There is no definitive solution.
 - ❑ Solutions are not right or wrong.
 - ❑ Every problem is unique.
 - ❑ Every solution is a one-shot operation.
 - ❑ No well defined alternatives.

- ❑ Forestry is replete with "wicked problems". In fact most forest policy formulation and implementation are wicked problems.



WICKED PROBLEMS

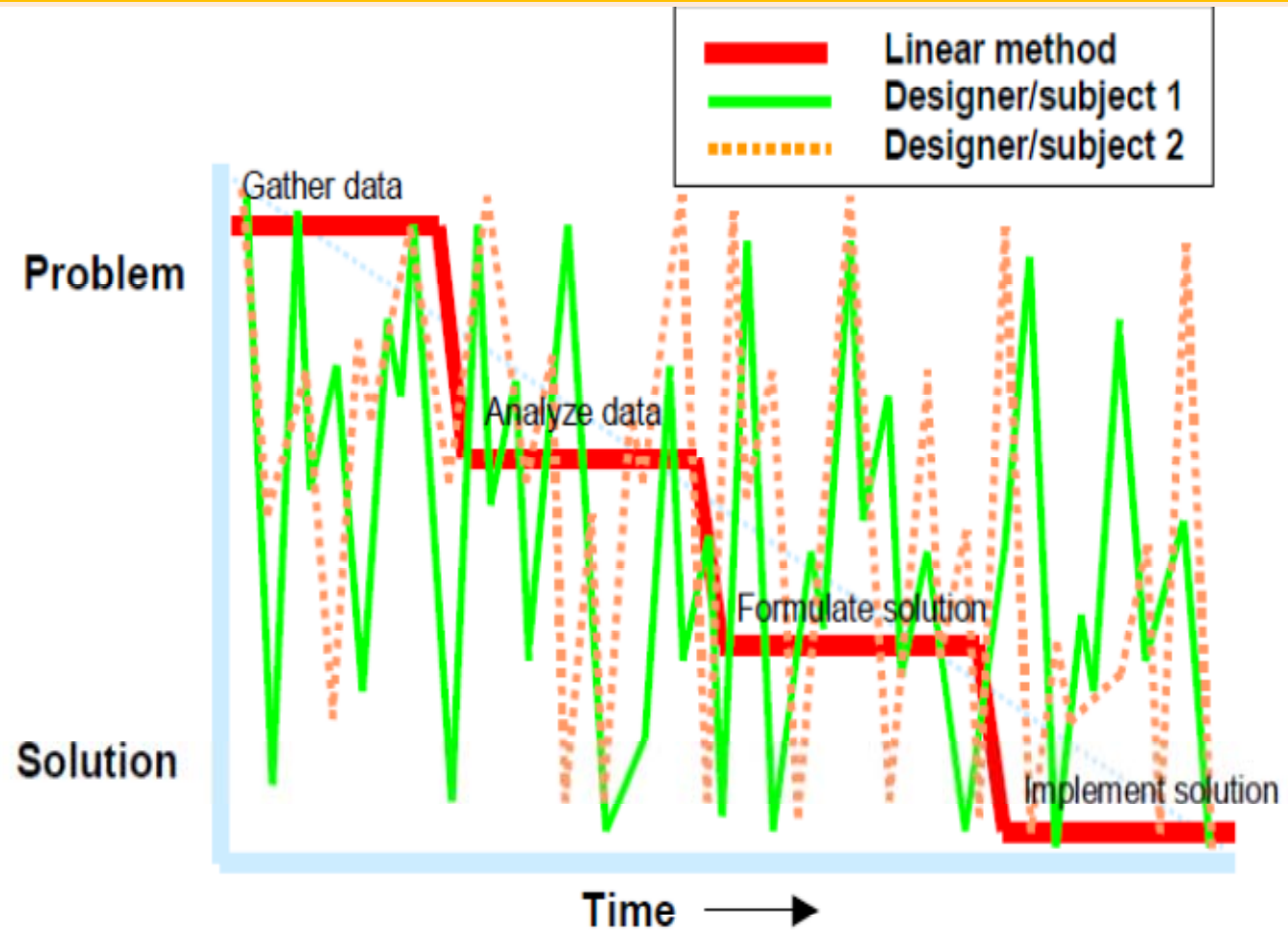



Figure 3: A wicked project with a second designer working on the problem



ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

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- How are forest related policies actually formulated?
 - Top down – experts driven approach.
 - Bottom up consultative process: But this could be extremely demanding requiring very different kinds of skills to manage the process.
 - Linkage between governance system and the process of policy formulation.
 - Who calls the shots in developing forest policies?
 - Are there mechanisms for effective and meaningful consultation and participation in the policy development process.
 - How do we assess the policy process?
 - How do we handle “wicked problems” in the policy process.



THANK YOU



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