

# Future of Public Forestry Institutions

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People, Land Use and Forests in the ASEAN Region: Policy Challenges in the 21st Century  
Eighth Executive Forest Policy Course

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# Outline

- Discussion questions
- Evolution of national public forest agencies
- Challenges compelling Change
- Reinventing public forest agencies
- Change management issues

# Questions for Discussion

1. Based on what you have learned so far in this course, do you think your current agency – its vision, mission, mandate, and structure – is adequate to meet the challenges identified?
1. Ten years from now, will there still be national forest agencies? How will they look like?

# Colonial Origins of Forest Agencies

- Hierarchical structures and processes preserve, protect and sustainably harvest high-value timber to meet the needs of industry and defense forces.
- Simultaneously forest bureaucrats were policy-makers, landowners, resource managers, entrepreneurs, knowledge creators, educators and police.

\*Source: Muthoo

# Evolution of forest agencies

- From being "supervising subjects", as the de facto owners of forest resources, to "supporting citizens" as custodians of a public resource (Brown *et al.* 2002).
- From the traditional "command-and-control organizations" to "coordinate and connect" modes of operation
- New players, challenge role and even existence of agencies

\*Source: Maharaj Muthoo, *Are forestry institutions failing to adapt?*

# New actors in forest space

- Traditionally: Industry, academe
- First wave: Indigenous peoples and local communities (already there but invisible)
- Second wave: Environmental organizations, national and international, media
- [?] Third wave – Local governments
- Fourth wave – Biodiversity, climate change, etc. stakeholders

# From Muthoo Article

	Till Late 1970's	Late '70's – '90's	'80's - 2000	21 <sup>st</sup> Century
Trends	<p>Forestry for Commercial / Industrial Purposes / Hunting</p>	<p>Social Forestry Forestry – Poverty Alleviation Concerns Forestry for Commercial / Industrial Purposes / Hunting / Wildlife</p>	<p>Community / Joint Forest Management Forestry – Livelihood Linkages Tribal and indigenous people's rights over forest resources Increased environmental concerns Watershed Management Commercial needs</p>	<p>Community / Participatory / Joint Forest Management Forestry – Livelihood Linkages Tribal and indigenous people's rights over forest resources Increasing environmental concerns Commercial needs Climate Change Desertification Biodiversity, Land Degradation</p>
Actors	<p>Government Industry</p>	<p>Multilateral / Donor Agencies Government Industry Forest Dependent Communities Research Institutions</p>	<p>Multilateral / Donor Agencies Government Non-government Organizations Forest Dependent Communities Civil Society Organizations Research / Scientific Institutions Industry</p>	<p>Non-government Organizations Civil Society Organizations Government Forest Dependent Communities Multilateral / Donor Agencies Research / Scientific Institutions Industry Media Citizens groups &amp; others</p>

# Absolute power, political patronage

“These mutually re-enforcing functions, although contradictory and conflict-ridden, created a peculiar stability in the forestry departments. As a consequence, government-run forestry departments enjoyed absolute power and political patronage. The outcome was a system often characterized by arrogance, insularity, complacency and an inherent inability and unwillingness to adapt to the changing environment.”

\*Source: Maharaj Muthoo, Are forestry institutions failing to adapt?





# Challenges compelling change

- Exponential change in science and technology, both in hard sciences like biology and in such areas as communications
- New issues in environment (biodiversity and climate change), economic trends (trade), and governance (transparency and accountability)
- Developments in human resources – gender, diversity, disciplines
- New (old) stakeholders – IPs, etc.

# The future of forests

*“Due largely to continued deforestation in the tropics and climate change, there will be fewer natural forests in the tropics and expanded forests in the boreal zone in coming decades. Fires, pests, droughts and related climate disturbances will be much more frequent. Expanded investments in mining, agriculture and energy development in forest areas will lead to the construction of more highways, railroads and pipelines that cut through the remaining natural forests. Forests everywhere will be younger, simpler in structure, and more fragmented. Overall, these changes will make forests much more difficult to manage, and in many ways much more costly, and the products from them will be less predictable, affecting the potential supply to markets, employment, the livelihoods of local people, and revenues to governments.”*

Source: MegaFlorestai (2014)



# Forest markets changing

“National and global markets for forest products are also changing rapidly and in novel ways. For example, there is a rapid shift towards plantations as the leading source of commercial fiber; domestic markets remain important in many countries but continue to be largely overlooked in global policy development; demand is increasing for wood as energy and for both new and traditional non-timber forest products, including biofuels, and new products using nanotechnology; and there is an emerging understanding of the need to conserve natural forests for their ecosystem services, such as the provision of clean water.. Some countries are still sorting out how to allocate their lands between forests, agriculture and energy production, as they contemplate food and energy security with growing populations.”

*Source:* MegaFlorestai (2014)



# PACE OF CHANGE

*“The pace of change is only likely to accelerate, forcing the institutional actors, particularly the state forestry services, to question their roles, seek a strategic space in the sector and reinvent themselves in order to remain relevant.”*

\*Source: Maharaj Muthoo, Are forestry institutions failing to adapt?

# Resist or adapt?

- What is needed most is convenor/facilitator/shepherd of all inputs, stakeholders, and changes that are happening?
- Can forest agencies play this role?
  - No, if they remain the same – hierarchical, rigid, stranded in the past
  - Yes, if they reinvent themselves

# Reinventing public forest agencies

- Multidisciplinary teams required – best practices of all relevant natural (forestry, ecology, climate change) and social sciences (economics, sociology, anthropology)
- Inclusive governance, including public participation, transparency and accountability
- Land tenure must be clarified
- Cultural sensitivity and appropriateness
- Must become learning institutions
- Adaptive, matrix, and interagency management needed

# Transparency an imperative

- Data on forests should be freely available, easily accessible  
Citizens must have a voice in creating and adapting forest plans, strategies, laws and regulations that affect them
- Clear and fair grievance procedures for resolving disagreements
- Bidding for forest products from publicly held forests must be fair, open and competitive.
- Monitoring by community groups and other stakeholders
- Use of new technologies

*Source:* MegaFlorestai (2014)



# Land tenure reforms

- Recognizing the rights of communities and Indigenous Peoples is an essential step in advancing human rights, alleviating poverty in forest areas, and preserving the forest.
- Recognition of rights must come with the right regulations to encourage sustainable use and capacity building
- New policies and capacity-building are required to enable people to take advantage of their new rights to forestlands.

*Source:* MegaFlorestai (2014)





# Interganecy approach needed

“A universally urgent theme is the need to create effective mechanisms to work across ministries that affect forested lands and to encourage policies that promote regional or landscape scale management. Policies in the mining, water and agricultural sectors often circumvent or undermine policies on forests and forest- dependent communities. Such conflicting policies must be reconciled if countries are to manage their forests sustainably and to address challenges related to the ownership of and rights to forestlands.”

*Source:* MegaFlorestai (2014)



# How to get there

- Change management strategy must be deliberately adopted
- New vision/mission
- Law and policy reforms might be necessary
- Institutional and organizational analysis would be required, must be participatory
- Rethinking structures, must be participatory
- Phased implementation

# CONCLUDING WORD

# LEADERSHIP



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