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The European forest policy process

Interests and their intersections

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Outline

- Background
- Broad interests behind the European forest policy processes
- Compelling interests
- Narrow interests
- The intersection of interests
- What can be learnt from this
- Moving forward

Background

- University project to analyse major European forest policy processes
- Academic study, but also develop practical advice for decision-makers
- Involved document analysis and participant interviews from Forest Europe and EU processes

Recap of the policy processes

- Forest Europe initiated LBA
- European Commission Green Paper
- EU Forest Strategy review
- International Negotiating Committee

Broader interests

- Increased visibility of forestry
- Greater political attention to forestry
- Forestry on a level playing field
- Legal basis for funding
- Improving coordination and cooperation

Compelling interests

- Production or Protection?
- Subsidiarity and sovereignty
- Rules of the game

Narrower interests

- Differing interests *within* countries
- Different national priorities
- Self-preservation, protection & self-promotion
- Not meeting obligations in other conventions
- Financial gains
- The choice of experts
- What is the European Parliament up to?

The intersection of interests

- Countries that want to protect their forests for various reasons vs. Those that wish to increase production
- Willing to give up sovereignty vs. Applying subsidiarity
- Different rules for different reasons

What can we learn from this?

- Interests don't always align
- Better coordination within countries
- Longer term perspectives needed
- Further research
 - Forests are not a common good like many other resources

Moving forward

- Better communication between researchers, policy-makers and sector stakeholders
- Clear, transparent and understandable governance rules
- Research and Think Forest
- INTEGRAL Project



ThinkForest

- High-level forum with the aim to educate EU level policy-makers
- Foster communication between scientific community and EU policy-makers
- Integrate forests and forestry into EU policies

INTEGRAL

- Major discrepancies between social perspectives & demands
- Incoherent policy objectives & inconsistent instruments
- Methodology for connecting policy processes to local forest management
- Methodology for participatory processes