

# MARGINAL POLITICAL ROLE OF FORESTRY AND THE NEED FOR CROSS-SECTORAL POLICY COORDINATION

**Davide Pettenella**  
 University of Padova - Italy  
[davide.pettenella@unipd.it](mailto:davide.pettenella@unipd.it)

Taking a bioregional approach in forest management:  
 Origin, methods, results, and application in the USA and Europe  
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## Paper organisation

Italy as a case study

- Forestry: a sector with **minor political relevance**
- Forest policies = a cluster on (badly) coordinated external policies
- **Instruments** for policies coordination
- Conclusions

## 1. Forestry in Italy: a sector with minor political relevance

Forests = mountains

95% of the forests in hilly and mountain regions:

= less developed areas

(income= tourism and some quality farm product)

→ multi-functional forests (soil protection, water cycle regulation, fuelwood and timber production, recreation, ...)



## Local & small owners

forestland ownership:

- 60% private (former farmers): 3 ha/farm
- 40% public
  - Local municipalities
  - Local communities

→ No owners' associations

→ Low productive forests

→ Very important role of public, non commercial services

→ Strong public "command and control" instruments

Basic assumption of forest policy: public non-market functions must be defended with instruments of command and control

Public institutions tend to demonstrate that they are effective making use of their power of bureaucratic control



to use these instruments you need strong public institutions



*In the forest everything is forbidden*



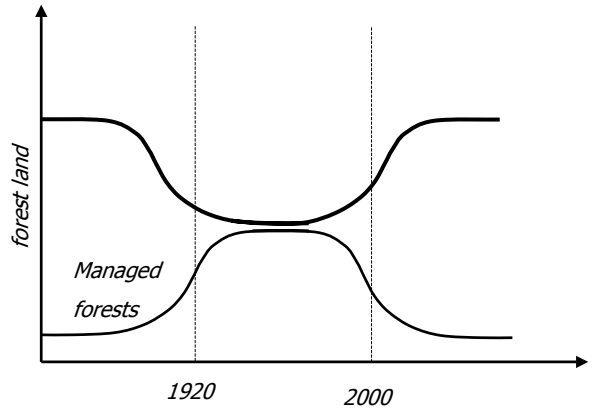
Low commercial interest in forest management → abandonment → expansion of forest cover

2-3 million hectares under natural conversion to forests (mainly in mountain areas)

1950 = 5.5 M hectares  
2000 = 10 M hectares



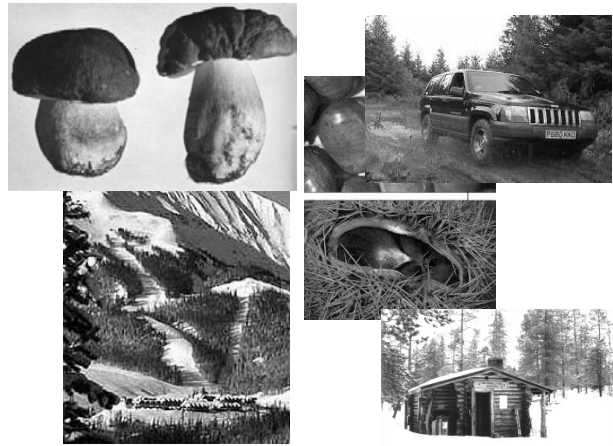
Pink areas = mountain  
Black spots = land under conversion



2. Forest policies = a cluster on (badly) coordinated external policies

Large forest resources + Role of the forestry sector in GDP: 0.001% = No many conflicts

New **small scale** demands = new **local** conflicts



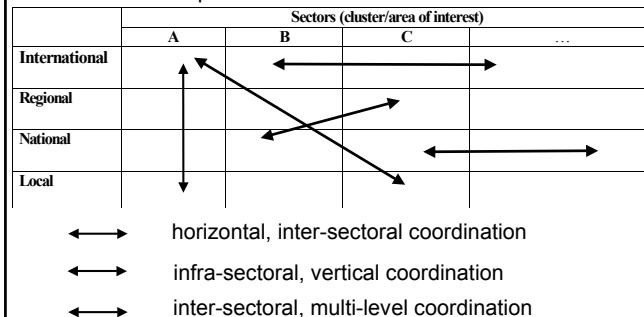
Mountain forest activities are more influenced by **external** than by internal factors/policies

Some examples:

- Main financial resources to the sector: the EC Common Agricultural Policy to finance new plantations in intensively used agricultural areas (a real "shadow forest policy")
- Energy policy: creation of a network for fossil fuel distribution in remote rural areas
- Social policies: employment of 26.000 seasonal workers in Calabria Region for fire fighting

### 3. Instruments for policies coordination

Different level of policies coordination



## Decision making tools in cross-sectoral coordination

	Market	Hierarchy	"Comitology"	Participation	Negative coordination
<b>Explanation</b>	Free market forces are responsible for inter-sectoral development	Single (leading) official/agency with a mandate/commitment to coordination	Inter-agency administrative unit/team with coordination mandate/power	Decision making power is distributed among all the concerned agencies/stakeholders	Setting of formal rules to prevent or reduce the degree of interference among agencies/actors

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<b>Main instruments</b>	Prices	Command and control	Decisions taken by a limited expert group/committee	Negotiation, decentralisation with distribution of role and responsibilities	Definition of formal procedures (eg. in planning, in budgeting, in controlling ...)
<b>Knowledge sharing</b>	Symmetric information based on payment	Asymmetric information (with power concentrated on a leading authority)	Asymmetric information (with power concentrated on the committee)	Symmetric information based on mutual exchange and confrontation	Symmetric information
<b>Distribution of the decision rights</b>	All actors involved in the market	The single authority	The committee	All the participants	All the regulated actors
<b>Main Pros</b>	No direct costs of the decisions process by public authorities	Swiftness and reduced costs in the decision making process	Limited costs of the process; integration of different competences/interests	Comprehensive approach; mediated solutions; decisions supported by stakeholders	Limited costs; transparency; clearly defined responsibilities
<b>Main Cons</b>	No consideration of non-market effects	Biased decisions; limited support by stakeholders; reduced transparency of the process	Representativeness of the team; limited transparency of the process	Length of the process	Rules setting does not always reduce/prevent conflicts and needs for coordination

## Time span and frequency

Time span	Frequency			
	continuous and regular coordination	irregular, formalized coordination	irregular, non formalized coordination	"spot coordination" (one-time coordination)
strategic planning				
medium-term planning				
short-term planning				

## 4. Conclusions

- Decentralisation, new participatory approaches in decision making, privatisation, ... are inducing a radical change in traditional public forest institutions
- Very different time span for changes in:
  - market conditions (few months/years)
  - policies (3-5 yrs) **An under-estimated problem**
  - institutions (many yrs to reach a maturity)
  - forest management systems (some decades)

Forest public institutions and forest policies are often weak and exposed to the risk to be dominated by other institutions/policies



... it is not a matter of trying to protect and isolate the forestry sector but of coordinating public policies