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*Change in Governance as Collective Learning Process: Management,
Politics and Ethics in Forestry.*
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Forestry governance and collective learning process in Italy: Likelihood or utopia?



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Outline

1. Introduction
2. The conceptual framework
3. The research questions
4. Method (case studies)
5. Preliminary results (a qualitative assessment of actual governance structure in Italy and options for collective learning processes)
6. Final remarks

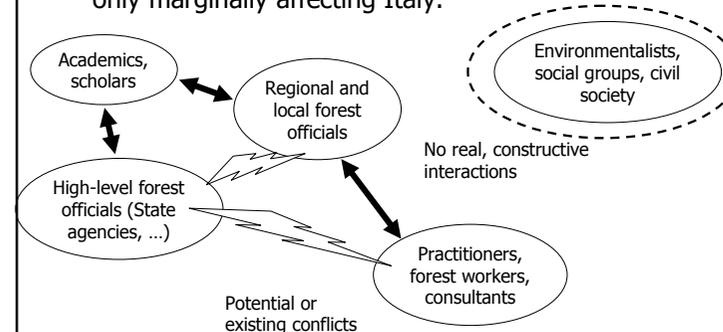


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Introduction

- The globally evident shift from government to **new participatory governance** in forest policy formulation and decision-making processes is only marginally affecting Italy.



Introduction

Italian forest and rural policy makers are now **forced to apply new concepts and tools like participation**, accountability, networking, ...

Main drivers:

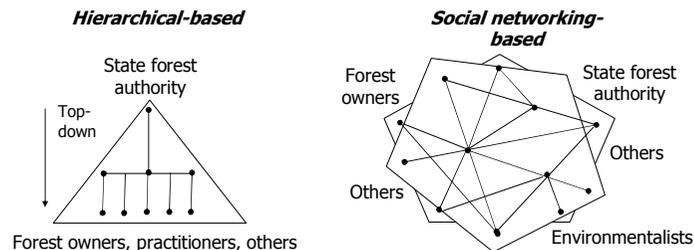
- European regulations (e.g. Regulation 1698/2005, Directives 2003/4/EC and 2003/35/EC) and programmes (Agenda 21 Local Programmes, LIFE, Nature 2000)
- Spreading of voluntary forest-based policies instruments (e.g. forest certification, PES)
- Local factors (e.g. in mountain areas: community-based ancient institutions like Regole, Comunalie, etc.)



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A. Governance structure as type of relationships chains

Governance relies on the distribution of authority among actors within a certain sector or relationships chain (Cashore, 2002), with two main types of decision-making processes with different roles of public authorities and deliberation systems (Shannon, 2006; Chan and Pattberg, 2008; Buttoud and Kouplevatskaya-Buttoud, 2009)



B. Public participation as a common tool to introduce changes in governance system

PP as **a common tool to introduce changes in governance** (Jiggins and Röling, 2000; Buttoud, 2000; Colfer, 2005; Shannon, 2006); see stakeholders' consultation in forest certification (Cashore, 2002; Gulbrandsen, 2004; Chan and Pattberg, 2008).

But several participatory processes "are carried out for appearances only" (Cortner and Shannon, 1993 – cit. in Shannon, 2006; Secco and Pettenella, 2006) and in general there are several limitations and risks (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Buttoud, 2006; Samyn, 2006;)

⇒ Risks of forms of **participatory washing** initiatives

C. "Good governance" principles

Key indicators to assess governance: transparency, accountability, legitimacy, law enforcement, stability, public participation, actors' capacity to influence policy, social justice, equity, mainstreaming of environmental and social aspects (Hemmati, 2001; Kaufmann and Kraay, 2002; Dowdle, 2006; Nakhooda *et al.*, 2007; CIFOR, 2009)

Principles	1. Transparency	2. Participation	3. Accountability	4. Capacity
Baseline Indicators	1.1 Public access to relevant documents	2.1 Number and type of actors	3.1 Clear roles of various actors	4.1 Availability of resources
	1.2 Reporting	2.2 Legitimacy of novel actors	3.2 Monitoring of operations and processes	4.2 Expertise and technical skills to analyse the issues
	1.3 Procedures for complaints/appeals	2.3 Type and number of public participation mechanisms	3.3 Clear rules/format for decisions	4.3 Pro-actively participation
	1.4 Criteria for allocation public	2.4 Efficacy of public participation mechanisms	3.4 Legal system	4.4 Independence and impartiality of actors
	1.5 Time frame for documents consultation	2.5 Actors commitment to participation	3.5 Redress mechanisms	4.5 Capacity for ongoing learning



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The research questions

- Which is the prevailing structure in decision-making processes? How is participation applied? How are the "good governance" principles implemented and made effective?
- Why are there differences at various scales (national, regional, local)?
- Finally, how the options are for governance as collective learning process in Italy?

A research hypothesis-generating process:
only two rather pessimistic scenario are likely to occur in practice in Italy: 1) "no real changes" scenario
2) "slight changes" scenario

⇒ *Forestry governance and collective learning processes in Italy: Likelihood or utopia?*



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Method

- **Qualitative research approach** based on **6 case studies** in forestry and rural sector in Italy, representing the 3 main decision-making levels (national, regional and local), on contemporary events
- **Multiple-case studies, explanatory-exploratory case studies**, analyzed by applying a **pattern-matching logic** (following Trochim, 1989; Yin, 2009)
- **Data collection:** 2006-2009; direct observations, document review, key informant informal interviews (n = 2 or 3 per case study)



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Method: case studies classification (on selection criteria)

Level of decision making	Unsuccessful examples	Encouraging examples
National	EU FLEGT Action Plan in Italy	Strategic Framework Programme for the Forestry Sector in Italy
Regional	EU Programme for Rural Development 2007-2013 in Veneto region	Forests in plain areas in Lombardy region
Local	Camping site in Dolomites (municipality of Comelico Superiore – touristic area)	Peri-urban forest in Mestre (municipality of Venezia – urban area)

- No case-studies on forest certification: focus only on new types and most recent initiatives related to governance changes in Italy

A tentative qualitative assessment of forestry governance in Italy

Case study	Transparency	Participation	Accountability	Capacity
EU FLEGT Action Plan in Italy	Low	Low	Low	Low
EU Plan for Rural Development 2007-2013 in Veneto region	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Camping site in Comelico (Dolomites)	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Strategic Framework Programme for Forests in Italy	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Creation of forests in plain areas in Lombardy region	Medium	Medium	High	High
Creation of a urban forest closed to Venice	High	Medium	Medium	Medium

Findings from "unsuccessful" case studies

Case study	Type of decision making process	Authority distribution	Negotiation and adaptation processes	Key factors in influencing governance
EU FLEGT Action Plan in Italy	Hierarchical	Dominated by national public authority	Lack of communication. Very limited attitude towards collaborative learning.	Command and control instruments. Strong internal hierarchy. Lack of understanding global issues.
EU Plan for Rural Development 2007-2013 in Veneto region	Hierarchical in practice, networking in statement.	Dominated by regional public authority (despite efforts in participation)	Notification of PP by public authority; high quantity of stakeholders input. Very limited adaptation process, no negotiation on important themes.	Inadequate expertise in participation. Weak accountability. Lack of political willingness to share authority.
Camping site in Dolomites area	Hierarchical	Dominated by national (officially unknown) actors. Very limited authority to local community.	Latent and real conflicts about land uses even within the local community.	Centralized decisions on high public interests issues (Nature 2000). Inequity in authority distribution among actors at different scales.

Findings from "encouraging" case studies

Case study	Type of decision making process	Authority distribution	Negotiation and adaptation processes	Key factors in influencing governance
Strategic Framework Programme for Forests in Italy	Hierarchical (networking)	Very limited role to <i>Corpo Forestale dello Stato</i> .	Effective, but with the involvement of only public authorities.	An external input (EU obligation) has launched the process.
Creation of forests in plain areas in Lombardy region	Hierarchical (regional context), networking	Shared responsibility between public authority and other actors.	Large and relatively effective.	Political willingness: strong public commitment of regional authority, availability of resources.
Creation of a forest closed to Venice urban area	Networking (hierarchical)	Shared responsibility between two public administration recently merged	Formal involvement of various local NGOs and stakeholders.	High variability of financial resources affecting long-term planning.



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Conclusions - 1

Key factors:

- **limited willingness** to pro-actively adopt new governance approach (but some external requirements, like the European regulations for RDP are inducing some changes)
- **lack of skills**, training and expertise in negotiation, participation and networking techniques
- unclear and uncompleted process of **decentralization** has brought about new forest institutions fighting for increasing their authority → **neo-centralism**
- **politicians seeking for consensus** might lead to changes at local/regional scale (e.g. afforestation programme in plain areas in Lombardy)

Conclusions - 2

Empirical pattern almost coincident with predicted one:
only "no real changes" or "slight changes" have occurred in
forestry governance in Italy so far



Forestry governance as a collective learning process **more likely to be an utopia** than a likelihood.

Need for further research: scale of application?

No interest and commitment by top level policy makers:
forestry is not a strategic field of policy action!

Thank you for attention!

