

Community forest management and REDD+: Lessons from Mexico, Brazil and Bolivia

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FOREST GOVERNANCE, DECENTRALIZATION AND REDD+
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

THINKING beyond the canopy

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Summary

- CFM can reduce deforestation and degradation
- How to create conditions conducive to CFM?

Lessons from Latin America

- Secure forest property rights crucial first step, but
- Without strong multi-scaled governance institutions, the success of CFM is limited



Community Forest Management

CFM: use, manipulation and control of forest resources and services with future intent by self-defined communities or groups within communities under shared rules or collective rights.

Community management reducing forest emissions?

- Brazilian indigenous territories halted deforestation despite high rates along boundaries (Nepstad *et al.* 2006)
- Nicaragua - in areas of the BOSAWAS reserve under indigenous control deforestation 16 times lower than in surrounding areas (Stocks 2007)
- Brazil's Alto Juruá RESEX maintains 99% forest cover after a decade (Ruiz-Pérez *et al.* 2005)

Emergence of CFM in Latin America

The three Latin American cases

- Mexico -- *Comunidades/Ejidos*
- Brazil – Extractive Reserves
- Bolivia – *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCO)

Key difference

- Mexico: mature CFM, manageably sized territories, lengthy period of learning, strong governance
- Brazil and Bolivia: emerging CFM, huge territories, parallel tenure and forestry reforms, large properties w/landscape scale governance institutions





Mexican CFM

Rooted in agrarian reform (early XX century)

- Creation of *comunidades* and *Ejid*os, (article 27 of constitution)
- Rural communities control 60 – 70% of Mexico's forests

Agrarian reform introduced universal governance template

- Legally defined members
- General assembly, w/elected leadership, regular meetings

Emergence of CFEs based on common property (1970s)

Brazil: Extractive Reserves (RESEX)



Rooted in rural resistance to Amazon development policy (late 1980s)

- Conservation areas that recognize inhabitants' extractive livelihoods
- 48 RESEX , 12 million hectares in Amazon

Huge properties with secure boundaries

- Combine multiple communities, strict conservation rules
- Governed by RESEX management council, not linked to community institutions, loss of local control



CFM in RESEX

- Official CFM projects have had limited impact
- Emerging grassroots efforts to negotiate local CFM

Bolivian Indigenous CFM

Rooted in indigenous demands for property rights (1990s)

Tierra Comunitaria de Origen, TCO

- Communal properties, recognize ancestral claims and livelihoods needs
- Governed by indigenous '*usos y costumbres*'
- 54 TCOs, 7 to 10 million hectares of forest, multi-community, multiethnic properties

Demarcation and titling of TCOs slow

- Weak property rights,
- Governance weakly linked to community level institutions

Communities have turned to CFM to establish control over forest

- 48 CFM plans, 1.5 million hectares of forest



Discussion

- **Creating conditions for CFM entails both secure property rights and support for the development of multi-scaled governance institutions**
- **Properties need appropriate scale, clear demarcation and membership**
- **How to developing multi-scaled resource governance institutions (involving community organization, government and NGOs at multiple scales)**
 - Introduce templates and guidelines
 - Build on traditional or customary systems
 - Build capacity to engage technical support, establish alliances and build networks w/ multiple social actors
 - Expect cycles of learning and adaptation (medium term 3 – 5 years; i.e. ‘patient money’)

Conclusions

- CFM could be a mechanism that produces optimal REDD+ outcomes (reduced deforestation and degradation)
- Requires producing conditions supportive of CFM development
- CFM in REDD+ programs will entail focus on governance at multiple scales (especially local)
- Creating conditions for CFM:
 - Forest property rights crucial first step,
 - insufficient without strong multi-scaled governance institutions



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