FOREST POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

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FORESTRY INDABA

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Background: setting the scene

2. Policy and Legislative Framework: SA Perspective
   - Policy evolution
   - Restructuring

3. Current Challenges Impacting on Sustainable Forest Management and Livelihoods
   - Lessons Learnt

5. Policy Options / Recommendations

6. Conclusions
BACKGROUND

- The Forestry Resource Base in South Africa
  - Indigenous Forests cover about 492 700 hectares;
  - Plantations cover approximately 1,29 million ha of SA land area (1.1%);
  - Woodlands contribute the bulk of wooded land area of South Africa

- Forestry potential area is in the region of 39 -42 million hectares

- Commercial forestry employs 170 000 people in the formal sector

- 868 000 South Africans are dependent on the sector for their livelihoods

- Plantations produce 22 million m3 commercial roundwood and contribute R18,466 billion annually to the GDP (9% of agricultural output) (2007 contribution)

- Net foreign exchange earnings of R9 billion (30% of net RSA earnings)

- Forestry also contributes to social development through education, infrastructure and health
Policy and Legislative Framework

There are several legislations in South Africa governing the sustainable forestry management, including the:

- South African Constitution, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996);
- White Paper on Sustainable Forest Development in South Africa, 1995;
- National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998);
- National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 1998 (Act 101 of 1998);
- National Forestry Action Programme / National Forestry Programme
Policy Evolution: Pre and Post 1994

Pre-1994
- Focus on industrial production for timber
- Limited access and rights to resources, particularly with respect protected forests
- Limited community participation in the management of forests

Post 1994
- More focus on community forestry;
- Provision of access and sustainable utilization of forest resources;
- Provision in participation in forestry management;
- Conservation of biodiversity;
- Meeting the country’s demand for timber;
- Land use planning in South Africa;
- International requirements and obligations
RESTRUCTURING

➢ Post 1994 – decision taken for government to
  - move away from direct management of commercial plantations and
  - to concentrate on policy development and regulation

➢ Decision challenged by ownership implications presented by the land reform process:

➢ This gave rise to restructuring and privatization of state forestry which focused on:
  - Promoting equitable access to benefits through equity sharing;
  - Promoting equity throughout the forestry value chain;
  - Ensure speedy resolution of land claims by communities; and
  - Facilitating the entry of small and medium forestry entrepreneurs by minimizing barriers
PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE SHIFT IN POLICY

- Promotion of good governance
- Promotion of democratisation
- People driven development
- Sustainable forest development
- Decent employment conditions
- Capacity building
- Transformation
- Equity
- Participation of all, including previously disadvantaged communities and individuals
GOVERNANCE

- is "the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good. This includes:
  - (i) the process by which those in authority are selected, monitored and replaced;
  - (ii) the capacity of the government to effectively manage its resources and implement sound policies, and
  - (iii) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them. " (World Bank)

- It is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic, social and natural resources for development

- Effective governance in the forestry context involves maintaining good forest conditions while meeting human needs
To promote good governance the following interventions have been put in place:

- A clear policy which promotes the needs, interests and participation of rural communities in forest management.
- The National Forests Act which provides a balance between use and protection of forest resources.
- The Forest Sector Transformation Charter provides a platform for economic participation of the previously disadvantaged communities whilst promoting growth of the industry.
- The implementation of the Participatory Forestry Management programme.
- The implementation of tools for Sustainable Forestry Management (*Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Standards*).
- Linkages / dialogue with institutions such as farmers associations, forestry entrepreneurs organizations.
Current Challenges Impacting on Sustainable Forest Management and Livelihoods

- **Climate Change**
  - Climate change will affect current and future initiatives to ensure sustainable forest management;
  - Previous policies and strategies did not take into account the implications of climate change on sustainable forest management;
  - There is a need of appropriate country and sectoral response mechanisms on climate change

- **Competing Demands on Land**
  - The availability of land suitable for afforestation is declining
  - Land that has been identified as being suitable for afforestation is in some instances suitable for other land use types such as agriculture
  - Water scarcity - increasing demand for water for rural poor
  - Another threat is deforestation through development of land for other economic opportunities
Current Challenges Impacting on Sustainable Forest Management and Livelihoods

- Socio-economic demands on resources
  - Communities who live adjacent or in forests would depend on these resources for their livelihoods (firewood, medicinal plants and other household products)
  - Leads to increase in rate of harvesting exceeds carrying capacity of forests resulting in degradation and deforestation
  - Implementation of PFM practices although successful did not work in all communities
LESSONS LEARNT

- Privatisation and community involvement
  - Resulted in the creation of economic opportunities for communities and individuals;
  - Communities and individuals became forest owners and as such had a say in macro policy formulation and governance;
  - No one size fits all – some communities benefited better than others
  - Post settlement support key to success of these ventures.

- Socio-economic demand on resources
  - Policies should focus on how rural communities can benefit better
  - Awareness important for communities
  - Government support is key (technical & financial)

- Restructuring – ongoing
  - Strategies needed to ensure that good plans do not suffer due to restructuring
Policy Options / Recommendations

➢ To ensure sustainable forest management and good governance, government should
  ▪ Regulate the forest sector fairly
  ▪ Enforce the regulations
  ▪ Promote the wellbeing of the forest sector
  ▪ Protect common rights and interests
  ▪ Facilitate the management of conflict about equitable use of land, water and other natural resources, through the participation of interested and affected parties
  ▪ Ensuring participation of stakeholders
  ▪ Exercise leadership in the forest sector by developing policy and strategy and overseeing its implementation
CONCLUSION

➢ To make forest policy work in a changing environment there is a need for:
   ▪ Delivery institutions at local level and alignment of national, provincial and local government plans
   ▪ Capacity building to ensure empowerment of local level institutions and to promote forestry as a driving force of social and economic development
   ▪ Effective mechanisms to ensure compliance with forestry legislation
   ▪ Strong feedback mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation
   ▪ Alignment of sectoral policies to avoid clashing policy directives
   ▪ Continuous research
   ▪ Fostering competitiveness of the forest sector locally and internationally
   ▪ Creating a domestic market demand for locally produced products
THANK YOU