

What is Forest Governance?

Forests can be seen in many ways - as rich ecosystems, assets, recreational hubs, resources and homes. They provide timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs), shelter animals, sustain livelihoods and create wealth for individuals, communities and organisations. In order to be sustainable and there for future generations to benefit, forests need to be well managed. But what happens when there are competing interests? Who determines how forests are used? This is the domain of forest governance.

Illegal logging and other predatory forest-related behaviour are serious outcomes of weak forest governance. Illegal logging, or the breaking of laws on cutting, processing and transporting timber or wood products, is often the result of power imbalances and the lure of quick profits. But the removal of forest resources without consent from local people or government has dramatic and far reaching consequences. Illegal logging and the associated trade in illegal timber is responsible for vast environmental damage and impoverishes rural communities that depend on forests for a living. It also costs governments 10 to 15 billion dollars in lost revenue annually.

Initiatives dealing with "Forest Law Enforcement and Governance," otherwise known as FLEG, examine the way in which decisions about forests are made and implemented. FLEG is a manifestation of efforts to try and curb illegal logging and reduce its negative impacts from loss of livelihoods to degradation of landscapes.

In 1998, the Group of Eight Nations (G8)

forest governance reform, as described above. Furthermore, a variety of local,

employment with WWF in Switzerland, as a Forest Policy Officer, and later in Cameroon, as WWF's Regional Forest Coordinator for Africa. This background has provided Wale Adeleke with extensive knowledge about forest policy and governance issues, in Africa especially, with practical facilitation and negotiation skills.

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Sri Lanka - Prof Shantha K. Hennayake

Hailing from a village in the vicinity of the Knuckles Forest Range, the pilot site in Sri Lanka, Prof. Shantha K. Hennayake received professional training in environmental