The global revolution in sustainable forest policy - a European perspective

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The Global Revolution in Sustainable Forest Policy
A European Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

A century ago, Gifford Pinchot helped to bring about a revolution in forest policy and practice in the US. While very respectful of European forestry giants, such as Bernard Fernow and Dietrich Brandis, he pronounced these leading forestry figures to be wrong.

He attributed their error not to the fact of their unfamiliarity with American tree species or other biological aspects, but to the fact that their work had largely been done under an autocracy. Pinchot wrote: “But America was not an autocracy. What went in America wasn’t somebody’s say so. It was the widespread, slow-moving pressure of public opinion.” Education that would lead to the successful practice of forestry in America required a solid grounding in the sciences, but not just the sciences. As many foresters today can attest from personal experience, this is just as true today as it was when Pinchot wrote. Forest policy, and the “widespread, slow-moving pressure of public opinion” through which forest policy is made, still establishes the institutional and legal framework within which we practice forestry today.

In the future as in the past, the forestry professionals who are successful will be those who can combine a thorough knowledge of forest science with an understanding of “how things get done in a democracy.” Today, a similar revolution is taking place in forest policy and practice around the globe, which is the topic of Dr. Franz Schmithüsen’s 2003 Pinchot Distinguished Lecture.

Since its inception in 1986, the Pinchot Distinguished Lecture has advanced the understanding and current thinking about contemporary issues in natural resources conservation. In selecting the lecture for each year, the Institute’s Board of Directors seeks out individuals whose work, and thus their lecture, provides new historical perspectives on contemporary conservation issues, and/or stimulates new ways of thinking about natural resources and their conservation. These individuals are distinguished by his or her accomplishments, and are prominent contributors to the theory or practice of natural resources conservation.

Dr. Schmithüsen’s work certainly fulfills these requirements. I am pleased to present our 2003 Pinchot Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Franz Schmithüsen, of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.

Dr. V. Alaric Sample
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The Global Revolution in Sustainable Forest Policy  
A European Perspective

By Franz Schmithüsen

A major challenge in international and European forest policies is to develop consistent approaches and solutions to structure adaptive political and legal frameworks for sustainable forest management. There is need to redefine the roles of the private and public sectors, and to find equitable and effective balances between the benefits and responsibilities of stakeholders. Political processes move from government intervention to participation and joint responsibilities to ensure economic and social development in rural and urban areas, to safeguard the environment, and to protect flora, fauna and our cultural heritage.

More than a century ago, American and European forestry diverged when Gifford Pinchot and others adapted what they learned from their training in Europe to the unique situations of American forests. Now, with the advancement of a global perspective for sustainable development, such practices are re-converging.

The principle of sustainable development is today the political benchmark for judging the extent forestry and forest policies contribute to economic and social welfare. Sustainable development helps present and future generations maintain a worthwhile environment in which to live. Its essential content is that economic growth, social integration, and caring for a livable environment are on an equal footing. They influence each other, cannot be substituted for, and are the basis of progress and change in societies that create a common future for mankind.
1 The Move to Multifunctional Forestry

The total forest area in Europe is over a billion hectares or slightly more than a quarter of the world’s forests, according to recent Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) statistics. More than 80% of it is situated in Russia. Western and Central Europe forests extend over an area of 170 million hectares, of which 115 million are situated in the European Union (FAO 2001). Differences between countries are high, both with regard to the actual and potential wood production as well as to the economic and social benefits. The forest area per capita varies, for instance from 4.3 hectares in Finland to around 0.1 hectare in countries like Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. At present, timber harvesting amounts in the Scandinavian countries are about 70 % of the net annual increment, and are only 50 to 60% in other countries (UN-ECE/FAO 2000). This is a striking fact largely due to the unfavourable relationship between the high management and harvesting and the prevailing wood prices.

Looking at the long history of forest development in Europe, there are at least four decisive developments that qualify as revolutions in forest policy:

- The change from forest uses for subsistence and as a complement in agricultural production to large pre-industrial wood exploitation as a source of energy and as construction material;
- The transition period, mainly during the 18th and 19th centuries, from forest exploitation and devastation to sustainable wood production and a modern forestry sector economy;
- The expansion that took place after World War II from forest policies focusing on sustained wood production to policies promoting multifunctional forest management in largely urbanized societies;
- The change from societies in which forest policies were exclusively looked at as national and local domains, to a European and world-wide perspective with multi-level policy making.

This last development is the current revolution.
The period 1950 through 1970 brought a progressive change in European social demands and led to a wider perspective on the meaning and value of forests in many European countries (Corvol et al. 1997). Three causes have been at work:

- The first came from the rapidly increasing demand for recreational activities in open landscapes and forests;
- The second is the growing and now world-wide dimensions of the environmental and nature-protection movement;
- A third cause is superimposed on the other two and is derived from a growing number of people who identify forests as places for spiritual freedom, solitude, and contemplation.

The change coincided with a restructuring of fundamental concepts of state and politics. It led to the increasing identification of forests as spaces open to the public and questioned the idea of a sovereign forest administration managing state-controlled property. Throughout these transformations the forest services were forced to reconsider their role and authority and in particular their duty to the public. Inquiries concerning the attitudes of those using the forest for recreation purposes were launched in order to better understand the perceptions and attitudes of the population towards forests and their social benefits. A large proportion of the population considers forests as spaces for leisure and outdoor activities. The results clearly show that new demands on forest management have arisen, which require changes in forest practices and compel a new role for public forest services as mediators in the management of the common forest heritage (Schmithüsen et al. 1997, SAEFL 2000).

The public has contrasting views on forests as a means of production and as a particularly valued element of the physical and spiritual environment (Harrison 1992). Even if forested areas in Europe have been intensively used during the past, many people perceive them today as a manifestation of nature, which is supposed to be largely free from human intervention. For many people, forests are important as a place of recollection, of contemplative reflection and of personal freedom. These developments representing a fundamental current in many societies have put forests in a much broader political context.

The evolution of a network of policy programmes to address conservation and management corresponds to evolving perceptions and new political demands. In addition to sustainable wood production, forest policy considers more systematically the objectives of infrastructure protection, recreational use, nature and landscape protection and spiritual and aesthetic values. Significant aspects of change are:
• Forestry laws have been revised in practically all European countries;
• New interest groups have come into the scene;
• Non-governmental organisations now play a forceful role in policy making;
• Social needs and cultural values have gained in relative importance;
• Wood production and conventional forest management are questioned;
• Other public policies, such as environmental protection and rural development, strongly influence forest management;
• Process steering is more important than regulation.

The process of adapting forest policies and legislation to new social and economic developments has gained considerable momentum since the 1980s (Cirelli and Schmithüsen 2000). Examples of new and amended legislation range from Belgium and Finland to Sweden and Switzerland. They include France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Spain. Major changes are occurring at present in Central and Eastern European countries. With transition to an open civil society, democratic institutions and a market economy, they have a difficult task. They have to develop a completely new policy and legal framework for addressing agriculture and forestry, nature conservation and environmental protection (Mekouar and Castelein 2002).

The goals of forest policies and legislation are more diversified and comprehensive. Moving from a perspective which focused on wood as a sustainable resource, they now address a wide range of private and public goods and values, and acknowledge the equal importance of production as well as conservation. Policy goals are incremental and refer to the role of forests as multifunctional resources: for their economic potential and for their importance to the environment. Increasingly they address the variety of ecosystems, the need to maintain biodiversity and the potential development of forestry in rural and urban areas. A considerable number of environmental organisations promote the expectations and concerns of the public. They are actively involved in policy-making and forcefully articulate public demands on those in environmental and nature conservation groups to see more effective measures for the preservation of nature and landscapes. The environmental movement has also made it clear that espousing conservation as a principle does not necessarily prevent degradation and waste of resources. It targets for specific measures and regulations based on a more precise understanding of how resources can be used in a sustainable manner and which elements of the environment must be protected and preserved.
The evolution of forest policies in European countries shows that the public framework for using and managing natural resources depends on and is conditioned by the prevailing economic and social context (Schmithüsen 1999). Multifunctional forest management, as it has developed during the last 30 years, is an example of a strategy capable of functioning among divergent social interests and local conditions. It implies foremost:

- Decision-making processes involving the principal users and environmental groups;
- A workable arrangement for landowners facing public demands;
- A shift from regulation to joint management responsibilities;
- Realistic financial arrangements for providing multiple forestry outputs.

Forestry practices close-to-nature are another significant aspect, not everywhere, but in many European forests. This kind of forest management strategy maintains biodiversity to a large extent, leads to flexible and long-term production cycles and offers urban and rural populations attractive landscapes. By relying on natural site factors, silviculture close to nature satisfies the principle of sustainability. It offers open spaces and options for future actions.

2 Towards a Common European Space

For more than 40 years, Europe has been engaged in building or rebuilding a common continental space in which people and nations can live peacefully together. It is for Europeans a revolutionary process with success, but also drawbacks. Europe’s move toward open civil societies, democratic rule, progressive economic development and common political institutions has many faces. There is the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, which offers a political platform for more than 40 European countries. There is the European Human Rights Convention, which provides a common framework for fundamental rights of human beings and citizens. Also, there are many trans-national and pan-European institutions and processes that deal with economic, social and environmental issues of common concern (Tömmel 2001).

A cornerstone contributing to cooperation in many domains and to a new European identity is the European Union. The Union is by no means Europe, neither in its extension, nor in its global richness, nor in its great diversity. There are at present at least as many Europeans living outside the EU as within its member countries. However, its increasing momentum is a driving factor towards a more permeable and
integrated continent. It is a continent in which people can move according to their personal choice and in which trans-national and national political institutions coexist (Thiel 1998).

At the moment, we are building bridges and bringing together countries in Western Europe with countries formally situated behind the Iron Curtain. The expansion of EU that results from the joining of eight Central and Eastern European countries, anticipated in 2004, will bring new geographical and political horizons. Together with the two new members, Cyprus and Malta, the European Union will then have 25 member countries. The Treaty of Nice, which has entered in force in February 2003, creates the new institutional framework that allows for the functioning of the Union with 25 member countries. The population of the EU will then amount to 450 million people. Its land area will cover more than 3.8 million km², extending from Ireland to the eastern borders of Poland, and from northern Finland to Portugal and Cyprus in the South. The combined gross national product is estimated to be around 9,000 billion Euros, which are about equal to US Dollars. Economic disparities will be sizeable and an important challenge to the integration process.

What has been accomplished and considered a firm basis for the future is fragile and needs further consolidation in many respects. The contrasting views on the Union’s role between intergovernmental powers and decisions, and democratic decision-making by the elected members of the European Parliament continue to be a dividing factor and a source of institutional weakness. Efforts to design, agree upon and finally to adopt some form of EU constitution where European citizens, member countries, the EU Commission and the European Parliament will find a balance of power are now undertaken. It remains to be seen to what extent new workable institutional arrangements can be found. One statement concerning the future is, however, safe. The process of European integration is by no means at its end. In fact several countries are intensively negotiating and adapting their economic and political systems to the requirements of the Union. Countries like Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey have declared their aspirations to become members and hope to do this in a reasonable period of time. Suddenly governments and European citizens raise the question to what horizons the integration process may still lead and where the limits of it may lay.

The many steps towards more economic, social and political integration in Europe have obviously far reaching implications for the forest and wood industry sector. For the wood products industry a continental European space offers opportunities and challenges (European Commission 2000):
• New and larger markets;
• More market competition;
• A gain in efficiency and productivity; and
• Stronger positions in world markets.

The perspectives for European forestry development are manifold and lead to:
• A new vision for European forests;
• Forest ecosystem networks covering large European regions;
• Progressive adaptation in national policies and laws;
• Common management principles and standards; and
• Common research and education networks on a European scale.

The Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe has become an important Pan-European institution, which involves more than 40 countries, including the Russian Federation. It started with its first conference in Strasbourg in 1990 as a reaction to the dark years of forest threats from pollution. It developed rapidly to a common intergovernmental forum addressing fundamental economic, social and environmental issues. An important step was made at the 1994 Helsinki conference in developing a common definition of sustainable forest management (MCPFE 1993).

As a follow-up, an agreement was found on 6 relevant indicators combined with quantitative and qualitative criteria for evaluation, which were endorsed by a resolution of the Lisbon conference in 1998. This has allowed establishment of the Pan-European Forest Certification system, PEFC, as one of the leading certification systems in Europe. The Lisbon conference adopted a second resolution focusing on human resource development and socio-economic issues. Sustainable management, national forest programmes and socio-economic concerns remain on the agenda. The Vienna Conference of April 2003 follows this line under the far-reaching title “Living Forest Summit: Common Benefits, Common Responsibilities” (MCPFE 2003).

In the EU countries, common policies of the Commission are another important integrating factor. In spite of the fact that the EU has no competencies in forestry matters, a number of forestry activities are relevant in the context of important community policies. This is particularly the case for policies relating to agriculture, rural development, nature conservation and environmental protection. Community programmes on technology development, consumer safety, research and development
and education are other domains of importance to the forestry and wood-processing sector.

3 The Emerging International Forest Regime

As they are now occurring in all continents, developments in European forestry and forest policy are influenced by global changes. They have been brought about by the expansion of living standards and are based on personal freedoms and individual choices, market economies and democratic rule in Western societies. Significant driving factors which press for an ongoing revolution in forest policy are:

- Globalisation of the economy and trade;
- Internationalisation of environmental and nature protection;
- Privatisation and a new understanding of the role of the state;
- Demands for more participation of stakeholders and the public;
- Strong influence of NGOs in public decisions; and
- More diversified demands of society for forest goods and services.

The conditions for policy making have changed fundamentally as a result of trends towards multilevel policy-networks, privatisation and increased democratic participation. The distinction between private enterprise and public administration is increasingly permeable. The private sector has to deal with the incorporation of external effects in management and public authorities who are working with models from business administration. People expect that politics and laws to be transparent and responsive to their needs. They demand that measures taken by government and public administrations be effective and efficient. People want more information on economic and social issues and more participation in policy formulation and implementation. Society’s expectations are high and extend to new issues, in particular to environment protection and sustainable development. New demands, such as the use of forests as carbon sinks, illustrate that the social meaning of forests is a dynamic one. It can be subject to rapid and unpredictable changes.

These and other global trends are important because they:

- Determine increasingly the conditions of national policy making;
- Influence the attitudes and behavior of citizens, land users and land managers;
• Produce varying networks of political actors; and

• Establish complex multilevel policy frameworks.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, launched a new basis for international cooperation of the idea for sustainable development. Its central content is that economic growth, social integration, and caring for a liveable environment are on equal footing. They influence each other, cannot be substituted and are fundamental requirements of social progress and common advancement of mankind. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, which took place in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, reconfirms the outcomes of the major United Nation conferences and international agreements since Rio. It places forests into a multi-sector context of a sustainable natural resource base. It acknowledges the multiple and varying outputs from forests for poverty alleviation, as raw material and energy resources, and as natural habitats and environment. Achievement of sustainable forest management, nationally and globally, through partnerships among interested governments and stakeholders, is an essential goal of sustainable development. This includes the private sector, indigenous and local communities and non-governmental organisations (WSSD 2002).

An expression of the global political context in which forests are now placed is the emerging international forest regime (Humphreys 1996, Tarasofsky 1998). Its foundation is the UNCED and the follow-up processes which have occurred since. As for many other sectors, the goal of sustainable development is the benchmark for judging to what extent forestry and forest policies contribute to economic and social welfare and to a safe environment worthwhile for present and future generations. Altogether the international forest regime is based on two pillars:

• Worldwide and regional processes that involve governments, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and indigenous and local communities; and

• An increasing number of international legal instruments addressing directly or indirectly forests and forestry.

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is the major worldwide platform integrating national governments, NGOs, the private sector, and international organisations such as the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Environmental and Development Programmes (UNEP and UNDP) of the United Nations. Regional processes at continental or sub-continental scales have been institutionalised and are complementary to the worldwide international regime on forests. At present there exists nine regional processes in Africa, Asia, Latin America
and Europe (FAO 2001). In addition, eight initiatives cutting across national and regional borders are currently at work in order to elaborate common criteria and indicators on sustainable forest management. The purpose is to agree on what exactly the principle of sustainable management implies in a given ecological and socio-economic context.

International conventions and non-binding legal instruments are the constitutive framework for the increasingly complex system of international cooperation. They emanate from the initiatives of national governments, are signed and ratified by all countries of the UN system and are then translated again into national law and policies. They add new dimensions to existing patterns of governance at national, sub-national and local levels (FAO 2002).

Legal instruments adopted during UNCED or thereafter have produced a substantial expansion of international law on environment and development. Prominent instruments, which now form a complex worldwide legal framework for forestry, are:

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- The Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD);
- The Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC);
- The Kyoto Protocol; and
- The Forest Principles and Chapter 11 on Reforestation of the Agenda 21.

The outcome of the Rio Conference and its follow-up processes with regard to fundamental forestry issues is a mixed one. The non-binding instrument, adopted as the Forest Principles, is innovative and comprehensive by intention. Its content contributes to make international discussions more substantial, and has probably changed the thinking of many foresters. However, the crucial fact remains that there is a strategic gap between the non-binding statements on forest protection and management, and the formal obligations from conventions addressing broader objectives of climate change and biodiversity. In spite of great efforts during the last ten years, we do not have a firm international platform that acknowledges the global character of the social and political demands towards forests. Apart from the temporally functioning Forum on Forests, there is no political basis established which could facilitate coordination and implementation of common forest strategies.

The international community is not, or at least not yet, in a position to agree on workable measures, bringing together the economic importance of forest production,
the burning issue of social equity in using forest resources or the need to protect unique forest ecosystems and maintain biodiversity. The disagreement on how forests are to be used and managed continues in spite of a growing public perception to see the forests of the world as a common and holistic heritage.

4 Sustainable Forest Management in a Changing Social and Political Context

The ongoing revolution in forest policy, both at national and international levels, is driven by fundamental aspirations of society and rapid changes in politics, in economies and trade and in the environment. The implications are far reaching and concern the social meaning of forests, the role of forestry and the significance of the public policy network.

- Public perception of the meaning of forests moves from a largely sectoral view toward a global view of forests as economic resources, social space and a human environment. However, sustainable forest management is largely determined by local circumstances.

- Current forestry practices are not uncontented and have to demonstrate that they are in accordance with a large range of public demands and values. They have to balance economic, social and environmental requirements.

- Forest policies are not no longer the main or even the exclusive domain of government. They are only effective if conceived and implemented in conjunction with other public policies.

- The specialised university teaching facilities and closed research networks that have been successful in the past are being questioned and coming to an end. Today forestry research and teaching is part of environmental sciences, ecosystem management and human environmental research.

- The forestry community, meaning a well-structured mix of professionals, representatives of the forest sector, researchers and teaching staff and members of the public forest administration, is breaking up or is at least in full mutation.

The fundamental issue of the social, economic and political significance of forests in a particular society and at a given time remains, however. Problems that seemed solved in the past now need solutions to be found in a new economic, political and social context. How forests can be managed in a sustainable manner was the burning question when sustainable wood production was the backbone of forestry. It remains the central question now that the principle of sustainable development is the overarching principle. The following aspects are of particular relevance:
• Policy networks and linkages;
• Policy goals and regulations;
• Actors networks and consensus building;
• Balances between private and public interests; and
• Role of forest services.

Policy Networks: Key questions in assessing strengths and weaknesses of public policy frameworks regulating sustainable use of the natural resources are:

• Do they provide a positive regulatory environment for activities in support of sustainable development?
• Are they relatively free of unnecessary regulatory constraints that inhibit activities which are essential for achieving sustainable resource management?
• Are the mandates of public and private actors clear, coordinated and desirable?
• Do public interventions provide mechanisms by which people can obtain meaningful and secure rights to land and assets essential for their pursuit of sustainable livelihood?
• Do they enable the formation and empowerment of appropriate stakeholder organizations?

Different kinds of public policies are at stake depending on the particular situation of a country:

• Policies establishing a constitutional framework and a public security system guarantee the rule of law, provide a foundation for private activities as well as entrepreneurship and are fundamental to define state competencies and content of public policy domains.
• Economic, trade and finance policies that establish a framework for socio-economic production and cultural integration have strong backward links to the constitution and important forward links to sector and cross-sector policy programmes.
• Policies promoting development and security for subsistence, for instance through technological innovation, research and education and through environmental protection have important feed-backs to economic productivity, income generation and social integration.
**Policy Linkages**: Forest policies are no longer the exclusive domain of the government. To be effective they have to be conceived and implemented in conjunction with other public policies. Linkages between forestry policy and public policies addressing economic development and the environment are a key factor in the move towards sustainable development (FAO 2003). In European countries, policy issues refer to integrating forestry management into the broader context of rural and agricultural development, and to a more consistent approach in combining forestry practices, landscape management and nature protection (Schmithüsen et al. 2000). In the countries that are in transition to a market economy, important cross-sector linkages result foremost from constitutional changes such as privatisation and restitution of land and forests to private owners.

In North America, considerable impacts result from environmental and nature protection policies on forest resource development (Schmithüsen and Siegel 1997). Significant trends in the US are, for instance, the network of environmental regulations at the federal level that results from air, water and soil protection policies; the effects of landscape and nature protection regulations; and the importance of laws providing for a closer integration of natural resources management at national and local levels.

**Policy Goals and Regulations**: Comprehensive policy goals and regulations are required that fully address the economic, social and environmental role of forests.

- Protection regulations refer to the measures on the environment and biodiversity, nature and landscape protection and to the preservation of cultural and spiritual values associated with trees and forests.

- Land-use regulations provide for zoning of forest land, control of forest clearing, protection of a permanent forest estate and the establishment of new forest resources through afforestation.

- Utilisation and management regulations determine responsibilities of forest owners with regard to sustainable production of wood and non-wood products, the protection of soil and water resources, as well as public access to forests and recreational uses.

**Actors Networks and Consensus Building**: New actors and a large range of stakeholders have to be integrated in forest management decisions. More institutional arrangements for consensus building are required since current forestry practices are not uncontested and have to demonstrate that they are in accordance with public demands and values. As a result of the demands of stakeholders and citizens for more participation and constitutional changes in the role of government, a significant
acceleration in the revision of forest legislation is under way. Important changes in new regulations concern:

- Joint competencies of national, regional and local authorities in forestry matters;
- Integration of environmental functions in forest management regulations;
- Participation and joint responsibilities in management planning;
- More effective forms of cooperation, conflict resolution and public arbitration;
- Concerted and integrative approaches in policy implementation; and
- Providing more transparency and information to the public.

Prevailing forest uses and management practices are largely determined by local circumstances and actors. Management has to find locally accepted balances between economic, social and environmental necessities. In local stakeholder networks more opportunities exist for participatory decisions and for negotiating locally adapted solutions. National Forest Programmes are developed at present in a number of European countries in order to ensure increased stakeholder participation (Zimmermann and Schmithüsen 2002). The present trend in many countries to shift or delegate constitutional competencies in forestry matters to regional governments or local entities, favours such developments. Sub-national entities are becoming more strongly involved in policy formulation and implementation.

Balances between Private and Public Interests: Modern forest policies and laws are instrumental in generating a combination of private and public benefits. They define responsibilities of landowners, immediate beneficiaries and public entities. They address a large range of forestry outputs and services and provide a legitimate basis for joint management arrangements. Policy has to balance the rights and obligations of landowners against those of individuals, user groups and the community. A decisive point is that the provision of public goods and services must be financed with public financial resources (Schmithüsen 2000). The principle is of particular relevance since the situation of private forest owners changes as additional demands from external user groups and the public, then are gradually incorporated into public policies. There are clear limits to such developments that have to be qualified in accordance with the constitutional rights of ownership.

It is primarily the responsibility of the landowners to define the objectives of forest uses and to choose the management options which fit them best. It is up to them to decide to what extent they are able and willing to provide goods and services for
which markets do not, or do not yet exist. In most cases they are not in a position to carry the incremental costs of external benefits without compensation. Contributions from user groups as well as incentives and compensations from different levels of the political community are required. Cost sharing in relation to the benefits that accrue to different parties is an indispensable condition for the functioning of multifunctional forest management providing multiple goods and services to private users and to the community. Where public interests are at stake, governmental intervention has to rely on compensatory payments and financial incentives. This is the case in Europe for forestry measures protecting public infrastructure in mountain regions, for urban forest management and for measures promoting biodiversity.

**Role of Public Forest Services:** Successfully implementing the expanding policy framework—both in its multi-sector dimensions as well as in its relevance at the different political levels—requires a high degree of process-steering of public agencies. It means a shift from individual decisions and projects to comprehensive land management and resources conservation programmes that:

- Set minimum requirements and performance standards;
- Make use of services offered by the private sector;
- Promote contractual arrangements with third parties;
- Provide guidelines for best management practices; and
- Define precise duties and services to be delivered by public entities.

The change from hierarchically structured forest services to public service organizations is in several countries in full swing (Krott 2002). It is based on the allocation of financial resources in relation to specific targets. Global budgeting and service contracts subject to meaningful criteria of financial control are increasingly used. Measurement of efficiency (output/input), effectiveness (attainment of objectives) and economic performance (real costs/standard costs based on best practices) become a necessity.
5 In Conclusion

Sustainable forestry depends on concrete political, economic and technological conditions, and at the same time on fundamental human perspectives and social norms. Is what is going on in Europe unique when compared to other parts of the world, North America, for example? I think not.

European multifunctional forestry corresponds to multiple-use, sustained-yield forestry or its extension: ecosystem management, as practiced in North America. Europeans, like North Americans, are engaged through UNFF on how to implement international agreements, legally binding and otherwise, that comprise an emerging international forest regime, to reach consensus on how forests around the world are to be used and managed with a growing public perception of forests being a common heritage. Europeans and North Americans are both revisiting sustainable forest management because the political and social context has changed. The context seems common to both continents:

- More complex policy networks with many more linkages to non-forest sectors, institutions, laws and agencies both public and private;
- Broader, more comprehensive public policy goals;
- More actors in public policy formulation and, at the same time, the need for consensus building;
- An increased understanding of the private and public benefits of forests and, equally important, that landowners must be compensated for the public benefits they provide; and
- Recognition that government agencies responsible for managing public forests are, indeed, public service organizations.

The commonality between European and North American forestry today is striking in its dimensions. It is only exceeded in scope by the forests themselves. For today, with Russia extending from Eastern Europe to the Pacific, a virtually intact belt of boreal and temperate forests circles the globe. I think we have a high common interest and we can take up the challenge to respond jointly as Europeans and North Americans to the immense efforts which sustainable management and preservation of unique ecosystems of the world’s boreal and temperate forests require. Many of these forests are in good condition, a testament to the stewardship of the past and to the foresight of gifted foresters like Gifford Pinchot.


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NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Born in Oberkassel and raised in Karlsruhe, Southern Germany, Dr. Franz Schmithüsen is Professor and Chair of Forest Policy and Forest Economics at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH). He is an associated member of the Department of Environmental Natural Sciences. He studied forestry sciences in Freiburg im Breisgau, University of British Columbia, and obtained his doctorate at the ETH Zurich in 1969. From 1967 to 1984 he held various positions in the State Forest Administration of Baden-Württemberg, Germany. His research activities focus on policy conditions for sustainable forest management, developments in forest law and public administrations, on private utilization rights, and on combined resources management systems related to state and communal forest lands.

Schmithüsen’s background is as diverse as it is multitudinous. He has worked for several international agencies, in particular Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Bank, with assignments in forest development and education in more than 20 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. At present he is a corresponding member of the Italian Academy of Forest Sciences, honorary professor at the Agricultural University (Prague), and invited professor at the law faculty of Bordeaux University (France). Dr. Schmithüsen lead the Research Group on Forest Law and Environmental Legislation of the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) for many years and serves now as co-chair. From 1986 to 1992 he was Board member of the International Council for Research in Agroforestry, ICRAF, and from 1987 to 1997 Treasurer and Board member of IUFRO.

He was offered Honorary Membership in 2000 by IUFRO, the highest award offered by the Union, in recognition of his excellent and long-standing contributions to the advancement of international cooperation in research and teaching. His continuous efforts to document changes in forest law in North American and Europe is a remarkable contribution, which has been congratulated by IUFRO.

An author of numerous books, monographs, and research reports on forest policy and law developments in Europe, North America and a number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, published English, German and French, Dr. Schmithüsen is truly a Renaissance Man.

Dr. V. Alaric Sample
The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich) is an institution of the Swiss Confederation devoted to higher learning and research. Together with the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and four research institutes, it forms the federally directed and financed domain. The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich is the chief technical university in Switzerland and the most renowned, with regard to the quality of teaching in the natural sciences and engineering, and with regard to the Institute's success in cutting-edge research projects. The ETH Zurich has been home to some of the best-known engineers and scientists worldwide, including Gottfried Semper, Albert Einstein, Wolfgang Pauli, and Niklaus Wirth.

First opened in 1855 as a university-level training and research institute, the ETH continually looks beyond the confines of Switzerland for possible collaboration with research communities worldwide. It benefits from its urban location in Zurich and is involved in research projects in association with private businesses and technical colleges.

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