

FLEG in CEEC – policy and practical experiences of Private Forest Owner Organisations

Morten Thorø
Secretary General

Atilla Lengyel, Ph.D.
Policy adviser CEEC



CEPF experiences on FLEG

1. Members from several CEEC (Baltic, CZ, SL, HU, AL)
2. Project experience for World Bank Profor program which are financing project in SEE (Albania, Macedonia, Serbian):
 - Non state forests participation in NFP
 - Project addresses:
 1. Livelihood and property rights
 2. Forest Law issues: legal regulations on forest management and required changes
 3. NFP: concrete action of implementation of NFP
 4. Governance: Partnership approach within the frame of NFP
 - Currently at the stage of implementation at country level
 - Project has clearly identified a number of shortcomings of regulations and stakeholder involvement



Why FLEG is needed in CEEC

- **Stakeholders** responsibilities in forest management can be overlapping or contradictory to new circumstances
- Management **regulation** in private forestry is needed after system changes in CEEC
- **Property right** of forests is often not clearly regulated or contradictory
- Consequence: Problems of SFM in practice in both state and private forestry, resulting in FLEG as „issue“ – conflicts of interests, illegal logging, organised crime, absentee forest owners, no tradition of SFM, corruption, FO poorly organised.....

The stakeholders

- **Private forest owners / PFO organisations**
 - how well organised and interested in SFM?
 - Is the owner seen as partner or as burden to poorly administrative acting?
 - How is the owners legal and financial stability (property right, taxation, incentive systems...)?
 - Ownership, entrepreneurship traditions?
- **State forest administration**
 - how does responsibilities match new situation of property conditions and law implementation?
 - Administration's dilemma: overregulation to save SFM in fragmented PFs and „we are the professionals only“
 - Tradition/heritage: administration dominates FM



The stakeholders (2)

- **Consumers/citizens**
 - What is their level of information and readiness for taking responsibility and bear consequences for consumer behavior
 - Many are directly involved as family members of PFOs
- **(E)NGOs**
 - Even legal & regulated forest management is often seen as problematic /immoral – bad atmosphere of exchange to FM actors, if any
 - Employee Unions lost greatly their importance
 - NGO sector is rather unbalanced – ENGOs dominate debates
- **State**
 - What is its level of commitment/ability to enforce citizens' individual rights (e.g. on property) or common wealth issues (right for healthy environment , legal security...)
 - How far can heritage/traditions be overcome against personal interests



CEPF's policy level recommendations

Regulation:

Balanced and encouraging for PFOs:

- **Property right must be safeguarded consequently in the whole legal system in all countries, where the constitution enables private forest**
- Overregulation of FM is a „blind alley“ – it states the administration inability for changes and is not having the desired results
- Must be recognised that contradictory regulation is socialist/communist heritage – the state's role as regulatory and executive body is not yet divided - clear source of conflicts of interests – it must be resolved if SFM and FLEG is to be implemented
- Structural decision needed to overcome personal interests of state employees. But here probably time is needed.....



CEPF's policy level recommendations (2)

Clear identification of the stakeholders own role in SFM is needed:

- Forest owners should recognise their rights and obligations of property management
- Administration should recognise its role as a state executive body dealing with citizens and not only „acting technically“ – be partner!
- NGOs
 - PFO organisations are key partners in SFM on private land as organised PFOs act according to laws and illegal activities decrease if being organised = FLEG implemented
 - ENGOs should seek compromises and partnership
- State should clear up structural and legal heritage concerning FM to overcome management problems and resolve conflict of interests of its bodies.
- **The state must finally see the PFO as the key actor in putting trough national policies and legal regulation on private land**



The result:

- a) partnership approach in SFM,
- b) participative decision making on FM,
- c) less illegal activities and trading of FP



FLEG will address in CEEC to large a extent

Take home message:

Private forest owners a part of the solution
not the problem!

But they need to be included in the process
to allow them to participate



THANK YOU FOR THE ATTENTION !

Contacts:

Morten.Thoroe@cepf-eu.org

Atilla.Lengyel@cepf-eu.org

www.cepf.eu.org

