

Exploring forest landscape restoration: Tenure, multi-level governance, and community impacts

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GIZ-CIFOR Workshop on “Accelerating restoration of degraded forest landscapes: The role of tenure security and local forest governance in catalyzing global restoration initiatives”

Bonn 3 November 2017



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Forest Landscape Restoration: Ambitious Goals

- Widespread and long-term behavioral changes in resource use and management will be needed
- Tenure rights can motivate long-term investments in restoring deforested and degraded lands

“Tenure matters because it provides a foundation for local governance, the stewardship of land and natural resources, and local livelihoods including benefit-sharing, and empowerment and human rights”.

Quote from: Larson, A.M., Springer, J., 2016. Recognition and respect for tenure rights. Natural Resources Governance Framework Conceptual Paper. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, CEESP, and CIFOR.

Research questions

Do rights devolution and higher levels of tenure security influence FLR in ways that:

- 1) Provide more equitable livelihood benefits?
- 2) Benefit women and marginalized communities?
- 3) Contribute to better forest outcomes?



Research Approach

- *Tenure and governance: Key concepts*
- *Lessons from REDD+*
- *What are we learning from FLR efforts?*

Key question: How can tenure and governance reforms for FLR be operationalized?

10 Guiding Principles for Landscape Approaches*

- Incorporate continuous learning and adaptive management
- Begin with zones of agreement
- Pay attention to connectivity at multiple scales
- Recognize landscape multifunctionality
- Involve multiple stakeholders in design, implementation and evaluation
- Ensure transparency in planning and decision-making
- **Clarify rights and responsibilities to land and resources**
- Implement participatory and user-friendly monitoring
- Focus on enhancing resilience
- Strengthen stakeholder capacity

→ *Recognize rights and responsibilities*

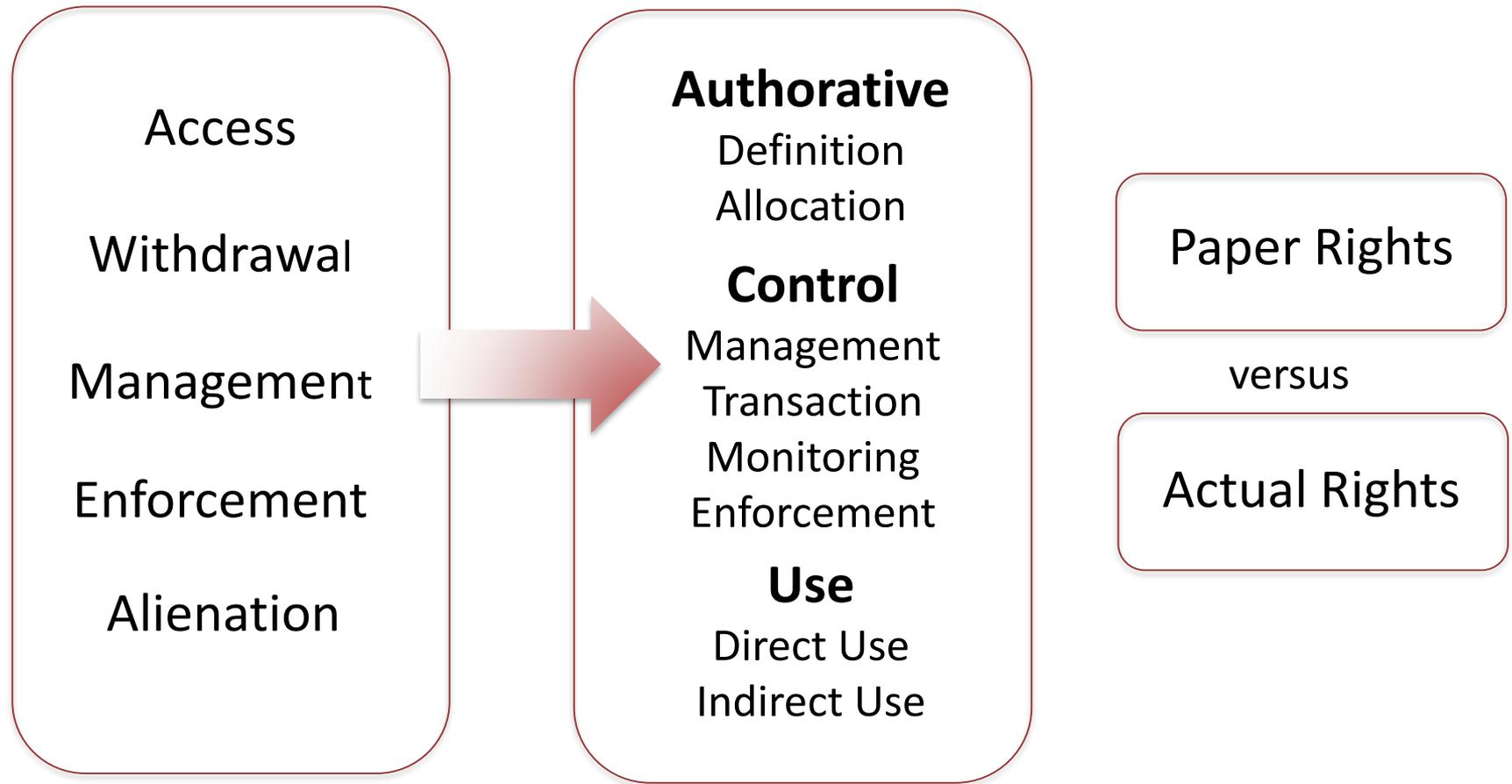
*Sayer, J. et al. 2013. Ten principles for a landscape approach to reconciling agriculture, conservation, and other competing land uses. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 110, 8349–8356.)

Tenure: “the social relations and institutions governing access to and use of land and resources” (Larson and Springer 2016: 5).

Determines:

- *Who is allowed to use which resources,*
- *How resources can be used*
- *How long resources can be used and under what conditions*
- *Who can transfer rights and how*

Bundle of Rights



Schlager and Ostrom 1992

Sikor et al. 2017

Tenure security: “reflects a “landholder’s confidence or belief (real or perceived) that agreed-upon rights...will be enforced and upheld by society more broadly” (Robinson et al. 2017: 4).

- *Reduces the uncertainties associated with making investments*
- *Increases the likelihood that rights holders will perceive that they will benefit from restoration*

Governance: “the ways and institutions through which individuals and groups express their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences” (Colfer et al. 2010: 26).

Affects:

- *whether rights can be exercised,*
- *whether de jure rights translate into de facto rights*
- *whether acquiring land rights improves social and economic outcomes*

“Key factors which influence the success of community forestry in development countries”

1. Secure property (tree and land) rights **(necessary)**
2. Material benefits to community members **(necessary)**
3. Socio-economic status and gender based inequality
4. Intra-community forest user group governance
5. Government support

Baynes, et al, 2015, Key factors which influence the success of community forestry in developing countries, *Global Environmental Change*, 35, 226–238



Lessons from REDD+: Tenure Challenges

- *Lack of rights, unclear rights, and tenure insecurity*
- *Overlapping tenure claims (multiple types)*
- *Inconsistencies in statutory laws and policies*
- *Lack of government and/or community capacity or will to enforce regulations*
- *Legal and customary norms that conflict with conservation goals*

Lessons from REDD+: Tenure Strategies

- *Formalizing rights and strengthening enforcement*
- *Expanding alternative livelihood opportunities*
- *Broad-based stakeholder engagement*

From REDD+ to FLR

- REDD+ focuses on *reducing carbon emissions*; enhancing ecological integrity and social well-being are co-benefits.
- FLR focuses on *improving ecological integrity and social well-being*; enhancing carbon stock is a co-benefit.

Tenure and Governance in FLR Principles

Enabling conditions for FLR listed in the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology handbook:

- *“clear and secure (formal or customary) rights to the benefits that would accrue from restoration”*
- *“clear and enforceable regulations on land-use change”*
- *“enforcement of regulations that require forest restoration or that clearly regulate the conversion of natural forests”*

Tenure and Governance in FLR Practice

Barriers to FLR in Ghana:

- *Communities lacked formally recognized tenure rights to forests*
- *Merchantable timber, including trees planted by farmers in their field, belongs to the state*

Solutions:

- *Community management agreements*
- *National-level policy reform to let farmers have a percentage of timber revenues*

Tenure in FLR Practice: Common Themes

- It is important in some cases to devolve or recognize rights to land and trees.
- In other cases what is needed is devolution of a broader array of rights.
- In all cases, rights enforcement needs to be strengthened.



Governance in FLR Practice: Common Themes

- Need to strengthen community capacity to engage meaningfully in FLR (design, implementation, M&E)
- Need to ensure transparency and accountability exists in FLR initiatives
- Need to increase connectivity within and across scales, sectors, and types of social actors

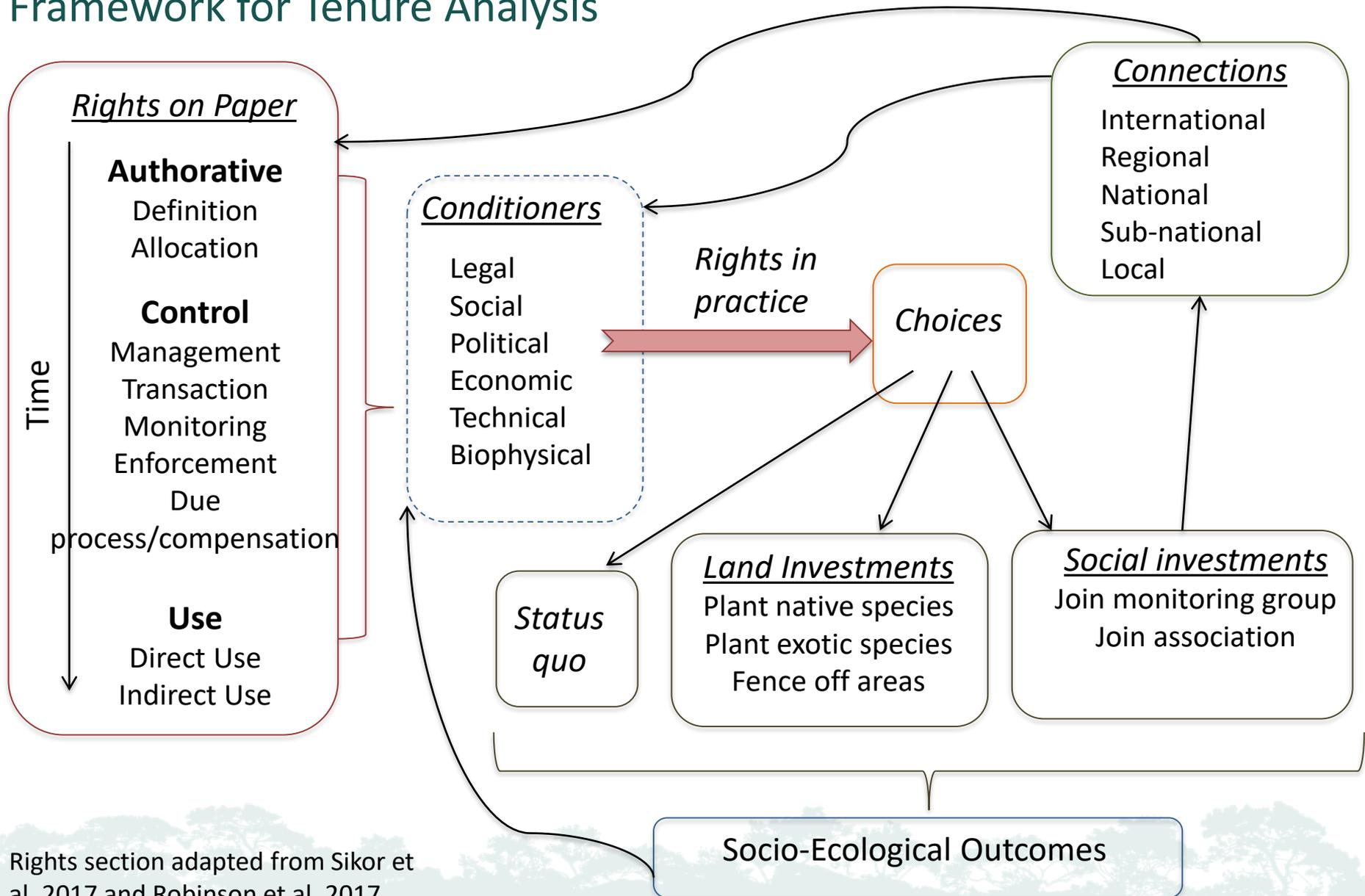


Policy Implications for FLR Interventions

- Tenure security
 - Rights recognition
 - Rights actualization
- Program designs that generate widely shared benefits
- Support for technical and institutional capacity building
- Support for expanding forest agencies' extension role



Framework for Tenure Analysis



Rights section adapted from Sikor et al. 2017 and Robinson et al. 2017.

A rights-based approach to FLR

- A focus on community rights gives people agency to choose and manage forests and other land uses.
- Evidence suggests that where they have clear tenure and forest-related benefits, communities will choose to maintain and extend areas in land in forests.
- Where rights are absent the scope for sustained uptake of FLR is probably low.
- If the intention of FLR is to benefit poor people and improve livelihood conditions, then FLR needs to align itself with contexts where communities have clear rights to land and forest and provide added incentives for people to take up forest related investments.

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