

Positioning civil society in forest governance: the rise from advising and facilitating roles towards legitimate influencing



WFC 2021
XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS
2-6 May 2022

Flyer



The event will promote a legitimate role for civil society organizations in good forest governance, and showcase good practices, opportunities and challenges in the Mekong region and beyond.

The voice of civil society organizations (CSOs) is increasingly acknowledged by all stakeholders in the forestry sector. CSOs participate in shaping reforms, facilitate and promote transparency in the implementation of policies, and contribute to enforcing good forest governance. But to what extent are they allowed to meaningfully influence the process? What challenges to participation do CSOs face? And how are they addressing them? How can we further recognize and enable their participation?

Governments have started to appreciate the contributions of CSOs as they revise policies and laws governing forests. They also appreciate CSO contributions to agreements such as the Voluntary Partnership Agreements of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative. However, CSOs have demanded that governments be more responsive to their inputs, and to recognize their growing role in implementing and monitoring governance efforts. While there are many examples of progress, more work is needed to build on these successes and overcome entrenched issues. Policies and laws will be more effective if the people they affect have a say in their design and implementation.

Views about legitimate participation vary among stakeholders. In the best case scenario governments and CSOs work in partnership to develop, implement, monitor and improve policies and laws. However, challenges remain to make these processes widely accepted and for them to be truly effective.

This session is organized as a roundtable debate. As an entry point to the debate, a statement will argue in favour of a more effective and influential role for civil society in shaping, implementing, monitoring and enforcing forest governance. Panelists representing different stakeholder groups will share their views and experiences related to the statement. The moderator will further stimulate debate among the panelists with additional questions and the audience will be invited to share questions or their own experience on the subject.

Through this session, participants will learn about the roles CSOs have and can play in forest governance and how various stakeholders can play a role in empowering them. By the end, the initial statement will be revised and proposed for inclusion in the declarations of the Congress.



4 May 2022

5:30-7:00 p.m. KST



Participants

Representatives of national and international civil society organizations, governments, donors, development agencies and experts



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