Publications

Collaborative Governance of Tropical Landscapes edited By Carol J. Pierce Colfer and Jean-Laurent Pfund (2010), 304 pp., Earthscan, London, UK. ISBN 9781849711777 (hbk), GBP 60.00.

I'm not sure quite what I expected from this publication with the lofty title of *Collaborative Governance of Tropical Landscapes* but this collection of in-depth case studies and analyses by researchers from the Centre for International Forest Research (CIFOR) and their partners is full of surprises. It commences with an evocative imagining of journeys through the places studied, illustrating the profound relationship between the land and the people whose livelihoods shape, and are shaped by, these landscapes.

The introductory chapter sets the tone for the rest of the book with its remarkably frank account of the divergence between what the research teams had planned to do and what they were able to achieve in practice. The core of the book covers selected governance-related topics to illustrate each site's particular characteristics while addressing issues with broader applicability.

One chapter examines the role of district government in managing landscape dynamics and livelihoods development in Jambi district of Sumatra, Indonesia. A subsequent chapter unpacks the complex issues arising from two very different examples of displacement: direct resettlement from areas bordering a national park in Laos; and economic displacement in the East Usambara Mountains in Tanzania. The Madagascar and Tanzanian case studies in particular yield interesting insights into the place of customary forest governance systems and institutions in the 21st century.

An exploration of the role of wild species concludes that despite the fact that many species of megafauna are reported to have strong cultural or religious beliefs attached to them, the ability of such values to shape contemporary governance practice remains largely unproven. The Cameroon case study examines the governance of value chains for non-timber forest products, clearly illustrating the economic and other links between even remote areas and the wider world in this era of globalization.

For readers with a particular interest in any of the landscapes studied, as I have for Indonesia, the research presented provides a fascinating picture of the complex, multi-level governance processes that play out in each of the local contexts. There is, however, also some more pragmatic content with wider relevance, including the presentation of a simple method for assessing governance indicators in forest landscapes and the benefits and challenges of applying such a tool in one of the case study sites.

The importance of taking a multi-disciplinary approach, of spending significant periods of time within the studied landscapes and communities, of recognizing and responding to the complexity of different contexts, are all stressed throughout the book. The humanity of the researchers shines clearly through both in their use of language and in their obvious empathy for the communities whose lives they have touched in the course of their work. References to 'wicked problems' (as defined in Wikipedia), to 'minefields in collaborative governance', and to the necessity of 'muddling through' all illustrate that these are researchers grounded in messy reality, rather than academics preaching from their ivory towers.

Of particular note for me is the ethical dilemma expressed by the authors of promoting collaborative governance systems that seek to bring closer to the state, communities who have, in many cases, maintained their cultural identity precisely because they have remained largely outside state control. If I was seeking to end on a pessimistic point, I could highlight the fact that the section entitled The Bad News in the final chapter is twice as long as that entitled The Somewhat Good News. But at the end of the day, I'm left with a feeling of at least partial optimism that there are people out there undertaking rigorous multi-disciplinary research, and supporting adaptive learning and collaborative management, with a genuine commitment to maintaining our planet's rich biodiversity in a way that also protects people's livelihoods and socio-cultural well-being.

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Climate Savvy: Adapting Conservation and Resource Management to a Changing World. By Lara J. Hansen and Jennifer R. Hoffman (2011), x + 245 pp., Island Press, Washington D.C. ISBN 978-1-59726-685-7 (hbk); 1-59726-685-X (pbk).

Climate change was recognized as one of the five major drivers of degradation in biodiversity and ecosystems in the 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, and the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change recognized its profound implications for human well-being. The two main responses to climate change are mitigation (roughly speaking, reducing the emission of greenhouse gasses such as carbon dioxide and methane) and adaptation (again roughly speaking, developing management, engineering and behavioural responses to the coming changes). While most of the effort and financial investment to date has gone into mitigation, the results have been deeply disappointing and the periodic reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have been increasingly alarming about the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. It is hard to ignore the growing evidence of their impacts, judging from the rate of extreme weather events, melting polar icecaps, retreating glaciers, melting permafrost, changing breeding seasons, increasing acidification of the oceans, and so forth, but viable mitigation solutions remain elusive.

Alternatives to fossil fuels such as the various forms of renewable energy (wind, solar, biofuels, hydro, tidal, geothermal) all carry varying degrees of negative impacts on the world's ecosystems. This leaves conservation and energy efficiency as the most reasonable responses, though they are insufficient by themselves to address the problems of climate change or energy consumption. Sadly, neither governments nor the general public seem willing to take the necessary painful step of reducing dependence on carbon-emitting fossil fuels, even while recognizing that their supply is ultimately non-renewable and their effects on climate will change both ecosystems and the course of human civilization.

While efforts at mitigation must continue, despite their frustrations, it is long past time to accelerate plans for adapting to the climate changes that seem inevitable, and to implement at least some of these plans. *Climate Savvy* is a good recipe book for helping resource managers start adapting to the coming changes, however uncertain these changes may be at any particular site. It starts with a brief introduction to climate change and its relevance to natural resource management, emphasizing the point that new approaches will be required. The remainder of the book is divided into three main parts. Part 1 devotes four chapters to building adaptation