

# Participatory Forest Governance in Ibero-America: Social and Political Impacts of the Model Forests Approach

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# THE MODEL FOREST CONCEPT



$$y = f(x)$$

$$MF = f(\text{partnerships})$$


$$MF = f(\text{LS, FS, CS, Govts, A})$$

$$\underline{\text{MF}} \rightarrow f(\text{SV, SP, CB, N})$$

*Adapted from Washington Alvarado, Aracaurias del Alto Malleco Model Forest, 2011*

A Model Forest is a **participatory management model** that is focused on **people**, working together voluntarily in partnership towards a common vision of the sustainable human development of...



A scenic landscape view of a valley. In the foreground, there are green trees and a small plant with orange flowers. The middle ground shows a wide river flowing through a valley, surrounded by lush green forests and fields. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with light clouds.

...a large **landscape**,  
with different land uses and values, and in which  
forest ecosystems play an important role.

*A Forest+ Approach*

# Where?



## International Model Forest Network

- member
- candidate
- ★ Regional Model Forest Secretariat
- ★ IMFN Secretariat

Canadian Model Forest Network



Mediterranean Model Forest Network



Russia and Northern Europe



Ibero-American Model Forest Network



African Model Forest Network



Regional Model Forest Network - Asia

# Regional Networks

### Guatemala

- 1. Lachuá
- 2. Los Altos

### Honduras

- 3. Atlántida
- 4. Yoro
- 5. Sico-Paulaya
- 6. Noreste de Olancho

### Costa Rica

- 7. Reventazón
- 8. Chorotega

### Colombia

- 9. Risaralda

### Ecuador

Sitio en desarrollo

### Perú

Sitio en desarrollo

### Bolivia

- 10. Chiquitano

### Chile

- 11. Cachapoal
- 12. Alto Malleco
- 13. Panguipulli
- 14. Chiloé

### España

- 15. Urbión

### Cuba

- 16. Sabanas de Manacas

### Puerto Rico

- 17. Tierras Adjuntas

### República Dominicana

- 18. Sabana Yegua
- 19. Yaqué del Norte
- 20. Colinas Bajas

### Brasil

- 21. Mosaico Sertão  
Veredas-Peruaçu
- 22. Mata Atlántica
- 23. Caçador

### Paraguay

Sitio en desarrollo

### Argentina

- 24. Jujuy
- 25. Formoseño
- 26. San Pedro
- 27. Tucumán
- 28. Norte de Neuquén
- 29. Futaleufú







# How?

## 6 principles

- Partnerships
- Large Landscape
- Commitment to Sustainability
- Participatory Governance
- Strategic Program of Activities
- Commitment to Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Building & Networking



A common  
philosophy



The Basis for a  
Shared Vision

# The Model Forests of Ibero-America: Two Major Sociopolitical Ingredients

## **Adaptive Governance** (Hatfield-Dodd 2007)

*...the ways in which institutional arrangements evolve to satisfy the needs and desires of the community in a changing environment.*

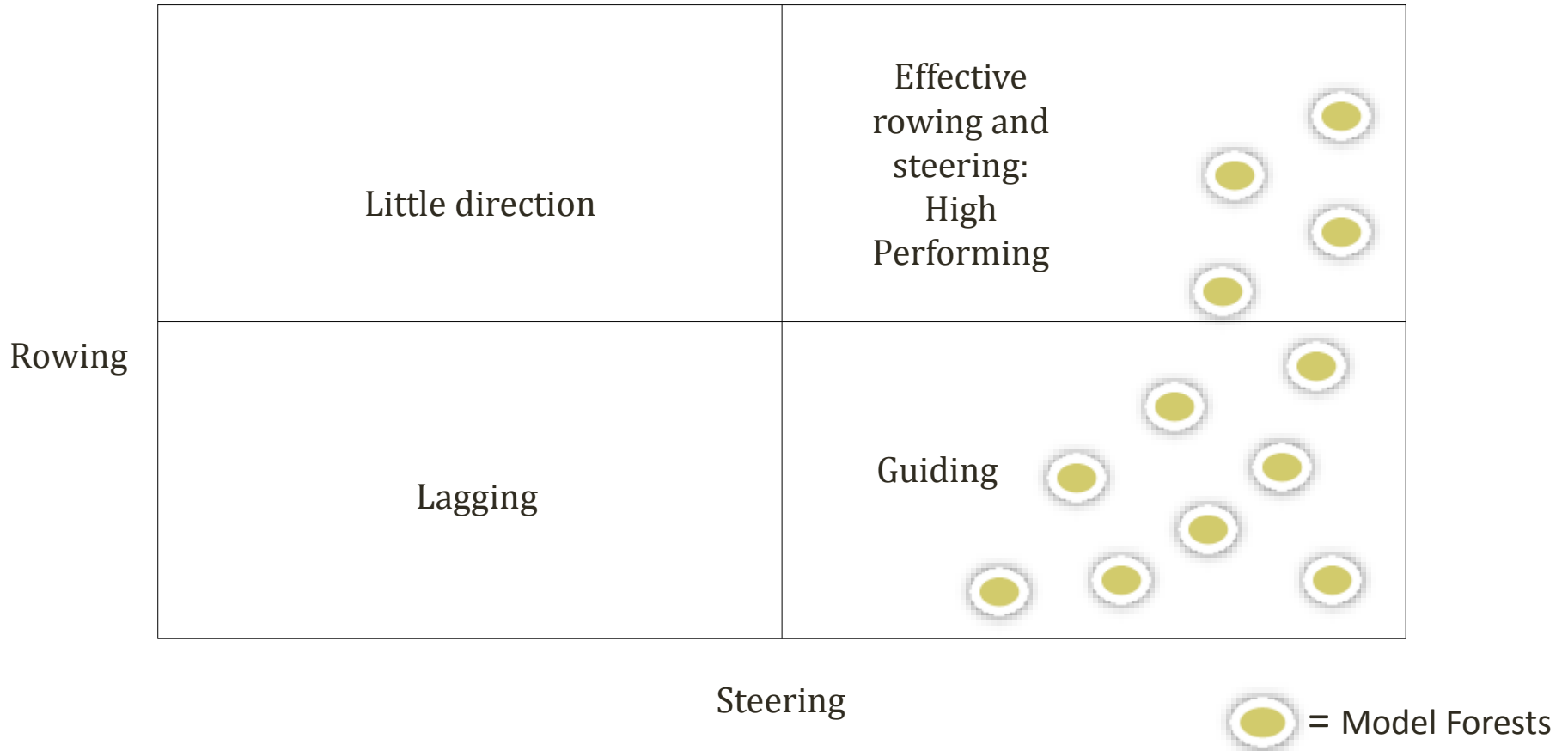
## **Transformative Participation** (White, 1996)

*...alters the structures, institutions, social relations and capacity gaps that are at the source of exclusion.*



# Steering, not Rowing

*Governance is most effective in steering, i.e. providing direction to Society and enabling collective choices (Peters, 2010)*



# Question

What are the positive social and political impacts of the Model Forests?

# Objective

Understanding better these impacts to improve practice



# Methods

- Practice-driven rather than theory-derived
  - Ongoing & exploratory – over 20 potential case studies identified
  - Interested in both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the landscapes
  - Perceptions are considered valid and important data
- Interpretive
  - Based on the review and analysis of reports submitted to the Secretariat in the last decade and the data collected through open interviews of MF managers
  - Impacts identified and related to levels and frequency
  - Lessons derived from case studies



# Examples of social impacts

Beyond landscape  
(national ,  
intl.)

**Cross-landscape  
learning increased  
regional  
interactions**

Landscape

**Inclusion of  
traditionally  
marginalized  
groups**

**Enhanced  
social cohesion**

**Change in  
forest culture**

**Secured  
financial  
resources for  
the landscape**

**Enhanced  
culture of  
medium- and  
long-term  
planning**

**Increased income  
(ex. ecotourism,  
ecological  
modernization,  
provision of grants)**

**Self-reliance and  
self-governing**

**Greater sense of  
community,  
creation of a  
collaborative  
culture**

**Improved  
access to  
knowledge,  
development of  
capacities**

**Enhanced  
relationship  
between citizens  
& science  
/academia**

Individuals  
and  
communities

In all Model Forests

In many Model Forests

In a few special cases

# Examples of political impacts

Beyond  
landscape  
(national,  
intl.)

Landscape  
level

Individuals  
and  
communities

**Change in  
national political  
system**

**Enhanced  
dialogue and  
cooperation  
among sectors**

**Creation of new  
formal and  
informal  
institutions**

**Enhanced  
mutual trust  
between State  
and non-state,  
community  
institutions**

**New  
priorities  
brought on  
the policy  
agenda**

**Greater  
legitimacy of  
CSOs**

**Enhanced  
stability**

**Improved  
decentralized  
application of  
laws**

**Public  
participation  
in  
international  
governance  
processes**

In all Model Forests

In many Model Forests

In a few special cases





# Lessons



- Well-orchestrated use of the **medias**
- Ability to generate their own creative, powerful discourse.
- Moved successfully from confrontation to proposals: professional proposals, based on science



- Good analytical reflection on their own experience
- Openness to change and adoption of new attitudes
- Importance of creating new partnerships and **involving the private sector**



- Wide participation process, building on existing laws
- Importance of paying attention to local and **municipal** levels.
- Effective inclusion of 'non-experts' citizens into the planning process



- **Clear vision** concerning the impact they want to have
- Non-state actors can play critical roles in shaping positions adopted by the governments in relation to international agreements

# Reflections

- Model Forests contribute to the maturity of civil society and to building strategic/organizational capacity which is essential to long term sustainability
- Leadership of organizations and individuals is a key factor of success
- A Model Forest is a social *process* rather than a project. Need to focus on longer term horizons.

## Next steps

- Systematization and cross-validation
- Development of impact indicators
- Identification of barriers to success





# Thank you

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[www.bosquesmodelo.net](http://www.bosquesmodelo.net)



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