

PES - a policymix within a policyscape

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Voluntary forest conservation and payments for ecosystem services (PES) can be seen as a mix of PES rules, interacting with a mix of other policies across the landscape mosaic. We present a conceptual model of a 'policyscape' as a spatially explicit policy mix, and an argument for why conceptualising national PES programmes as policy mixes in their own right is useful. Drawing on examples from Costa Rica, Finland and Norway, we discuss implications for PES policy design and analysis.

Remaining sensitive to the case specific nature of the exemplified voluntary forest conservation schemes, we seek to draw some general policy lessons relevant for policy mix analysis. Highlights of our findings include; PES plays different roles in the conservation policy mix at different stages of the forest transition; regulatory conservation is a precondition for the success of PES; forestry certification and forestry subsidy schemes are often precursors to national PES; PES mode of compensation is conditional on the property and use rights specified in the broader regime; perceived threat of regulation decreases perceived opportunity costs and increases the supply of voluntary conservation by forest owners; threat of regulation thereby increases the potential forest area that can be covered by a fixed PES budget ; the perceived distribution of conservation opportunity costs across landowners determines compensation demands as much as absolute levels of opportunity costs.

We discuss methodological lessons learned from applying Ostrom's (2005) Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework to the comparison of PES programmes. We find that the IAD framework can be a useful tool in identifying indirect incentives for forest conservation stemming from 'rules-in-use' that go beyond PES specific payoff rules. IAD rules-in-use provides an approach to identify possible foci of interaction between PES and other instruments in a policy mix. The IAD framework can be biased towards a description of PES based on 'formal' rules-in-use and under-specifying 'informal' rules about how intermediates and administrations operate. In-depth on the ground case knowledge is important for identifying and interpreting the different types of rules.

References

Barton, D.N., E. Primmer, A. Chacón-Cascante, D. Caixeta Andrade (2014) Cross case comparison of payments for ecosystem services in forest (PES). In: R. Santos, P. May, D. N. Barton, and I. Ring (Editors) Comparative assessment of policy mixes across case studies - common design factors and transferability of assessment results. POLICYMIX Report No. 1/2014 (forthcoming).