



The World Bank's Common Property Resource Management Network

The World Bank's CPRNet Newsletter

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In this issue

Read about the Advisory Committee, including about its function and role, as well as a first batch of members; a proposal to create a network of nonprofit institutions to provide peer-review capabilities, a new World Bank publication assessing the impact of the Asian crisis; a new perspective under the ESSD Core DataBase, and new literature. Enjoy!

Lars T Soeftestad, Editor – LSoeftestad@worldbank.org

Membership and network issues

New members. Arati Belle (Environment Dept, World Bank; Washington DC, USA), Linda Norgrove (Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester; UK), and John Waugh (IUCN-the World Conservation Union; Washington DC, USA).

Advisory Committee. The tasks and function of the Advisory committee will, initially, be as follows: It will only communicate electronically. The members, Bank staff and others, will be people that have an active interest in CPRs, and in the continued existence of CPRNet within the Bank. They will have a responsibility for giving me advice in the running of CPRNet, on their own initiative (that is, their involvement could take some time, or very little time, depending on the time they have at disposal). For me, the existence of this Committee will be invaluable: I will be able to receive advice/corrections when wrong decisions are taken, and I will be able to ask for concrete advice. Finally, the Committee is part of my efforts to broaden the basis of CPRNet, and thus increase the chance that it, as well as its focus, will survive in the Bank. The members are on the committee in their own capacity. In the case of World Bank staff, they are, in addition, in an informal and unofficial manner representing the unit, department or region where they work.

A first batch of the members of the Advisory Committee, in alphabetical order, include the following (the World Bank staff are located in Washington DC, USA): Veit Burger (Economic Development Institute, World Bank), Maria C J Cruz (Global Environment Facility, World Bank); Concepcion E Del Castillo (Social Development Group, Middle East & North Africa region, World Bank); Chris D Gerrard (Operations Evaluations Department, World Bank); Narpat S Jodha (International Center for Integrated Mountain Development; Kathmandu, Nepal); Sue Nichols (University of New Brunswick, Dept. of Geodesy and Geomatics Engineering, University of New Brunswick; Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada – presently with FAO's Land Tenure Service in Rome).

Selection of Adv. Committee members is ongoing, and further names will be included in the next issue. If you would like to become a member, or would like to suggest that a person becomes a member, please contact Lars T Soeftestad.

Networking

Proposal to create peer-review network. Staff at the Land Tenure Center (LTC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Madison, Wisconsin, USA) has written me proposing that CPRNet collaborate on setting up a peer-review network for review of relevant papers, reports and research proposals. The email, dated 19 January 1999 is included in the following:

“We at the Land Tenure Center are having difficulty finding persons to peer review LTC Research Paper series publications. Similarly focused, multidisciplinary research organizations may confront the same sort of periodic (not more than 6 times per year) dilemma. As a possible

solution to this common problem, we propose that a network of nonprofit research institutions be established to provide peer-review capabilities for publications of increasingly specialized academic endeavors.

"In essence, we propose a "you scratch our back, we'll scratch yours" network of cooperation. LTC will provide access to competent personnel who are skilled in various and specific areas of the development field. We will serve as a resource of peer-review personnel for your research organization if you would do likewise for ours.

"LTC can provide the peer-review assistance of such professionals as Richard Barrows, Peter Bloch, Marion Brown, John Bruce, Michael Carter, Malcolm Childress, Jim Delehanty, Peter Dörner, Herman Felstehausen, Don Kanel, Scott Kloeck-Jenson, Susana Lastarria-Cornhiel, Mark Marquardt, Timothy Moermond, Michael Roth, Tom Schweigert, J David Stanfield, Paul Strasberg, John Strasma, Gene Summers, William Thiesenhusen, and Joseph Thome.

"These people can assess research output in such fields as agrarian reform and communication, agrarian reform and gender issues, agricultural productivity, ecology and conservation biology, economics and tenure reform, economics of land reform and taxation, economics of natural resource management, economics of tenure and agrarian structure, geography of resource tenure, institutional aspects of tenure policy reform, legal aspects of tenure change, land markets, land policy and reserve protection, land rights, land reform and natural resources, land and resource policy, land tenure and food security, property privatization, sociology of tenure change, sociology of community resource management, and tenure change and community development.

"LTC resource professionals can analyze developments in numerous regions of the world including Southern, East, West, and Horn of Africa; the Caribbean and Central, South, and North America; Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; Central, South, and Southeast Asia; and China depending of course upon the individual's availability and other commitments.

"LTC is willing, in addition, to provide information-dissemination services such as review or advertisement of your research publications in the LTC Newsletter.

"What do you think? Do you consider a peer-review network to be a viable option for processing your research publications? What personnel, areas of expertise, and geographic focuses can you contribute?

"We remain open to your suggestions and expansion on the idea. Sincerely, Kurt Brown, Editor <kdbrown@facstaff.wisc.edu>, Jane Dennis, Ass Editor <jadennis@facstaff.wisc.edu> and Beverly R Phillips, Information Services Coordinator <brphilli@facstaff.wisc.edu>."

I have written back informing that I find the idea interesting and that I would post it to the CPRNet Newsletter. I have also forwarded it to selected colleagues, and have already received some encouraging replies. Please write back to me (Lars) with your comments on this proposal.

Projects

Asia: World Bank's success rate hit by Asian crisis. According to an evaluation by the World Bank published yesterday, the long-term effectiveness of its projects in East Asia and the Pacific has dropped sharply following the Asian financial crisis, reports the Financial Times. The Bank had generally reduced its project failure rate over the last two years, but too many projects still neglected to address the development of institutions within borrowing countries, the Bank also says in its 1998 Annual Review of Development Effectiveness.

Strong institutions – Including legal systems, government bureaucracies, and arrangements to supervise banks and protect property rights – have come to be seen as essential for economic development and stability. Yet only 40 percent of Bank projects have a substantial impact on the development of institutions, the report says.

The average of Bank projects with a satisfactory outcome increased from an average of 65-70 percent in 1990-1996 to 75 percent or higher in 1997 and 1998, the study says. This resulted in part from significant quality improvements in two poorly performing sectors: finance and public sector management, and Africa.

Projects with long-lasting or sustainable outcomes rose from 46 percent in 1990-1996 to 54 percent in 1997. But this percentage dropped to 50 percent in 1998 – largely because of a sharp drop in the long-term sustainability of projects in East Asia and the Pacific. There was at the same time a doubling of the projects in that region at risk of not achieving their objectives.

The report points out that improved project performance alone is not a sufficient objective because the international environment has become much more hostile as financial crises have hit more and more borrowing countries. Also, the report notes, part of the higher success rate occurred simply because project objectives had been outlined more modestly since 1996. Thus the improved project outcomes were not matched either by gains in project sustainability or by development of institutions.

Institutional development has been emphasized by World Bank President James Wolfensohn as an important goal, notes the story, but although Bank projects are performing better than they did with respect to improving institutional development, there remained scope for much further improvement and the issue needed greater emphasis.

News of the report's findings comes as Institute of Economic Affairs General Director John Blundell writes in the Wall Street Journal Europe that among the multilateral agencies, most notably the World Bank, there is now a greater sense of realism about the impact of Western aid, which is now given mainly in return for economic reform, as a kind of bribe to virtue. But even judged in this light, the record is dismal.

Source: World Bank Development News, 22 January 1999

Tools

World Bank: ESSD Core DataBase Perspective on CBNRM/CPRs. A perspective on "Community-Based Natural Resource Management & Property Rights" is now available under the ESSD Core DataBase. This perspective comprises all World Bank supported community-based natural resource management projects, as well as such components in other World Bank supported projects. It also includes such projects, or components thereof, that addresses common property resources. The perspective is jointly sponsored by EDI's CBNRM Initiative and SDV's CPRNet. The rationale behind this perspective is to provide one common interface to this important Bank-wide and crosscutting type of projects. The relevant projects from each region will be added as they become available. Management will be decentralized, as an appointed person from each region will be able to add/delete projects from her/his own region.

[Ed. comment: This tool resides on the World Bank's intranet, and is available only to World Bank staff.]

URL: <http://esd.worldbank.org/coreedb>

Literature

Borrini-Feyerabend, Grazia, ed. 1997. *Beyond fences. Seeking social sustainability in conservation*. 2 vols. IUCN, Gland (Switzerland).

Review: "Beyond fences," published this month, is designed to help professionals involved in conservation initiatives to identify the social concerns that are relevant for their work, assess options for action and implement them. Volume 1 is a companion to a process of planning, evaluating or re-designing a conservation initiative – an experience of 'learning by doing' expected to involve a series of meetings and field-based activities. Volume 2 is a reference book to be consulted, as needed, at various stages in the same process. I have been using the draft version extensively over the past year, and, like so many people, I find it a very thorough and compelling volume. Its strongest advantage is perhaps the emphasis given to defining the task ahead as an ongoing process, and giving guidance to how to work with and within such an approach.

There is a strong emphasis on tenure and common property resource management, both directly and in connection with a host of related issues, including collaborative management, traditional / traditional knowledge, gender, local institutions and conflicts.

[Ed. comment: Can be ordered through IUCN, see below.]

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World Development, vol 25, no 8 (August 1997).

Review: This issue contains several interesting papers on property rights issues and gender. Ruth S. Meinzen-Dick (International Food Policy Research Institute, IFPRI) and a CPRNet member, has co-authored two of the papers on “Gender and Property Rights: Overview” and “Gender, Property Rights, and Natural Resources” respectively.

Fingleton, J S. n.d. *Legal recognition of indigenous groups*. The Legal Office of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Review: Mr. Fingleton’s article is the first in a new series of electronic publications entitled “FAO Legal Papers Online,” a series devoted to the exploration of important contemporary legal issues in the areas of food policy, agriculture, rural development, environment, biodiversity and natural resource management.

Community-based natural resource management has received a great deal of attention in recent years, with respect both to its potential and its difficulties. In his article, Fingleton sheds new light on a critical aspect of the relationship between law and community-based management – the problem of how national laws recognize community-based land-owning or resource managing groups.

As Fingleton explains, legal recognition is a matter of growing importance to indigenous or customary groups trying to survive in a world characterized by increasing interdependence and escalating threats to local resources. Legal recognition is important for strengthening a group’s ability to negotiate and transact with non-group members. At the same time, it can be a valuable tool for protecting the group against undue interference from government and other outsiders.

On the other hand, recognition can also have detrimental effects, particularly if recognition involves the excessive imposition of rules, procedures and institutional forms that are alien to a group. The dilemma, therefore, is how to provide the potential benefits of legal recognition without at the same time undermining a group’s cultural integrity and disrupting its ability to operate according to community-based laws and institutions. As Fingleton puts it, the central question is “how to recognize a group without converting it into something else.”

In exploring this problem, Fingleton presents detailed case studies of two countries in which the legal experience on this issue is relatively extensive: Papua New Guinea and Australia. His traversal of the relevant national and provincial laws provides detailed comparative insights into the potential benefits and pitfalls of different legislative approaches, particularly in light of the diversity of techniques that lawmakers in both countries have tried over the years. The concluding section of the paper then draws upon the case study material to provide a thematic overview of the central issues in legal recognition, including the process of group recognition; group membership; group functions and powers; group decision-making; and dispute resolution. Though derived from the unique experiences of the two case study countries, these themes will resonate in many contexts around the world.

[Ed. comment: The article is available in PDF format from the FAO web site (see below), or by following the links from the FAO homepage to the FAO Legal Office Legal Studies page, or by following the links from the FAO home page to ‘Publications’ and then to ‘FAO Legal Papers Online’. For those without web access, email or paper copies of the article may be requested from the FAO Legal Office (see below).]

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