

Environmental Governance and Four Decades of Gender Research

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Since at least the 1970s, researchers have documented the differing opportunities for women and men in environmental and development programs. But, where have these four decades of gender research, knowledge expansion, and implementation taken us? To what extent has this research been put into practice, and what have been the effects? Last but not least, what might this mean for the future of gender research but also for environmental governance?

These were the main issues discussed at the 3rd Gender and Forestry Conference organized by IUFRO Research Group 6.08.00 “Gender and Forestry” in cooperation with the Faculty of Forest Sciences, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Wondo Genet Forestry College, Ethiopia and the project: Gender and REDD - Global Instruments and Changing Forest Governance. Fifty researchers and students from Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Philippines, Poland, South Korea, Sweden, Tanzania and Uganda, gathered for three intense days (November 27-29 November) in the beautiful environment of Wondo Genet Forest College.



Group photo by Mahesh Poudyal

From the presentations and discussions we can conclude:

Gender studies have brought women to the fore as agents in their own right

Relative to the field of environmental studies, the literature in gender and environment is small, and when it comes to gender and forestry it is even more limited.

More research is done in the Global South than in the Global North.

Generally, research in gender and forestry in both contexts have been very applied, although there are examples of research related to gender-based analysis or feminist theory.

Despite years of research, public statements of purpose, and general policies on gender mainstreaming in Scandinavia and gender equity in North America, very few jurisdictions there have moved towards effective understanding of gender dimensions of forestry or have had much impact on the broad culture of forestry.

Gender research, particularly in the Global South, emphasize the importance of women’s empowerment and participation in decision-making on land use and management.

The discussions and knowledge exchange on these important topics will continue at the IUFRO 3.08 Small-scale Forestry & 6.08 Gender and Forestry International Joint Conference in Fukuoka, Japan, 8-12 September, 2013.

IUFRO Research Group 6.08.00

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