

Engaging with reflexive governance.

Tom Dedeurwaerdere

Centre for the Philosophy of Law

Université catholique de Louvain

***Introductory session of
“Change in Governance as Collective Learning Process: Management,
Politics and Ethics in Forestry”***

IDDDRI-AgroParisTech-REFGOV-IUFRO International Symposium

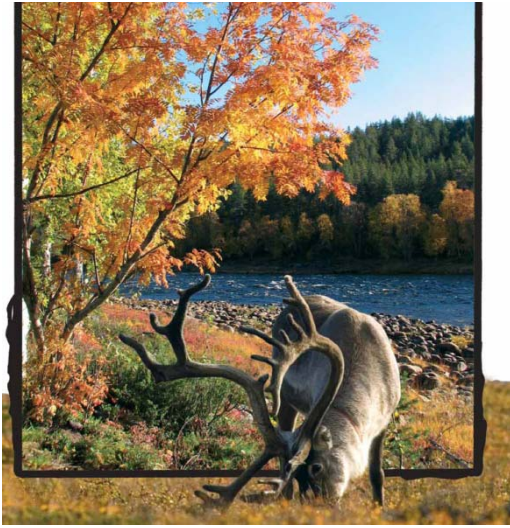
Nancy, France, 21-24 June 2009

Overview

1. Introducing reflexive governance
2. An example of empirical research on reforming approaches to learning in governance theory
3. Concluding / opening remarks

1. Introduction on reflexive governance

Joint conference Refgov-IDDRI-IUFRO – AgroParisTech Engref A brief history



Saariselka, august 2007



Gerardmer, june 2008



Nancy, june 2009

Introducing REFGOV : Three models of institutional design in governance theory

1. Realism : self-interest based bargaining
2. Rational choice institutionalism : coordination devices (each individual gains from setting up common coordination devices)
3. Reflexive governance : cognitive procedures organizing a feedback on the multiple regulatory frameworks and the governance regimes : change in norms and beliefs

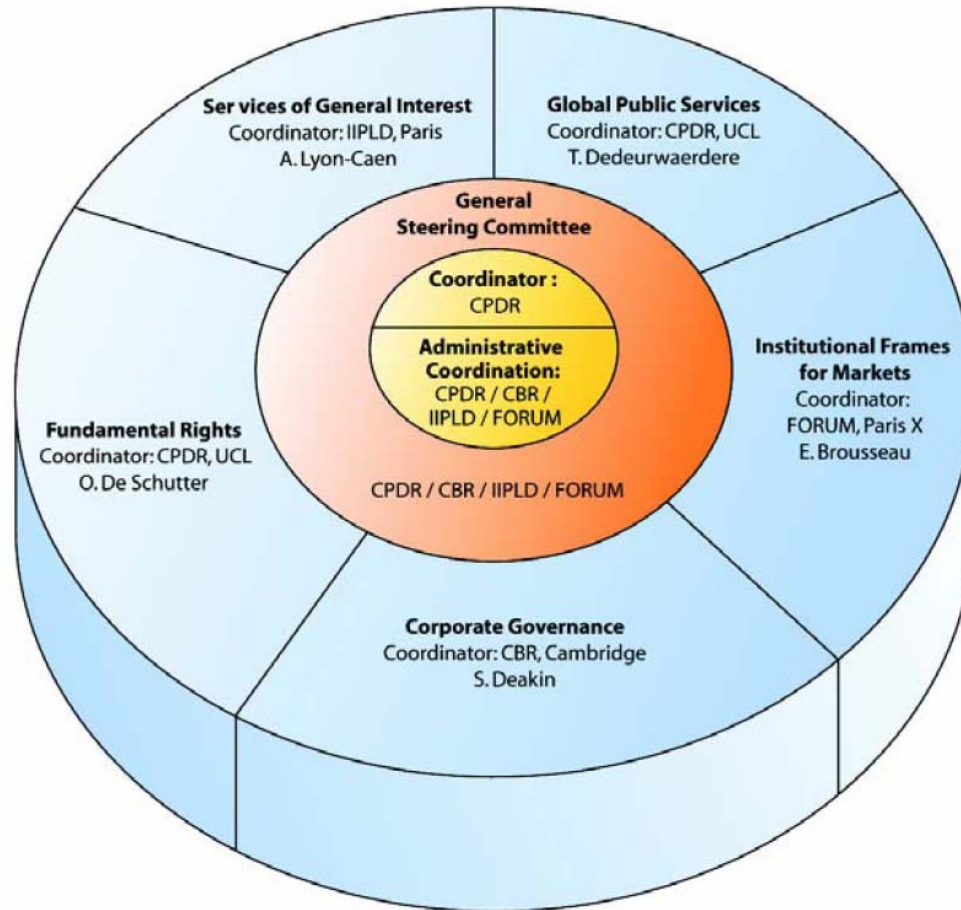
Two main components

- Design perspective : designing rules for reflexive learning processes ... within a given normative framework
 - Models of self-organization (Ostrom), regulation of self-regulation (Gunningham), stakeholder fora (Brousseau), ...
- Normative perspective : building of reflexive capacities ... leading to the selection of new design rules
 - Democratic experimentalism (Sabel), civic education (Ostrom), deliberative governance (Habermas), double loop learning (Argyris and Schön), ...

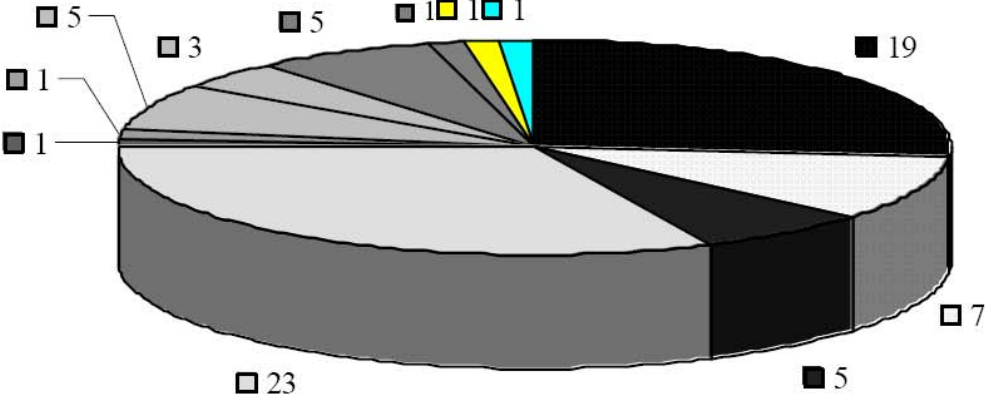
- Problem of reflexive governance : reflecting on the form of governance that should govern collective action in order to satisfy the public interest expectations of a group/society's members in the best possible way
- So
 - Definition of public interest cannot be presupposed, but is the result of the social learning process
 - Implies a normative conception of the governance framework (oriented to the satisfaction of the collective interest of the concerned actors) : so building of the reflexive capacities as a normative goal

- Epistemological question addressed at current theories of governance : how are the conditions of success of the satisfaction of the normative expectations of the participants in a collective action addressed ?
- A form of governance qualifies as reflexive if it explicitly constructs the conditions of success of the learning operation on the satisfaction of the normative expectations

29 EU partner institutions

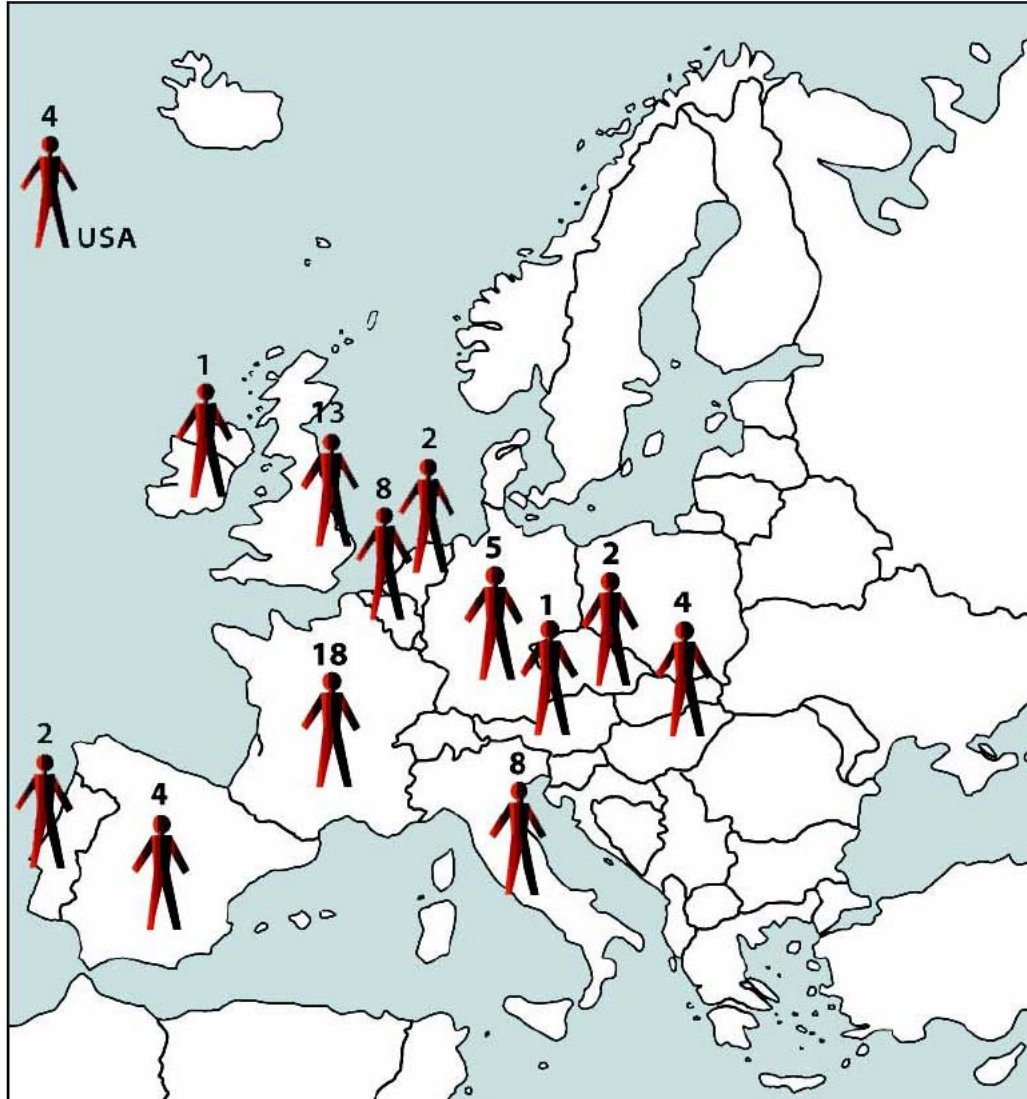


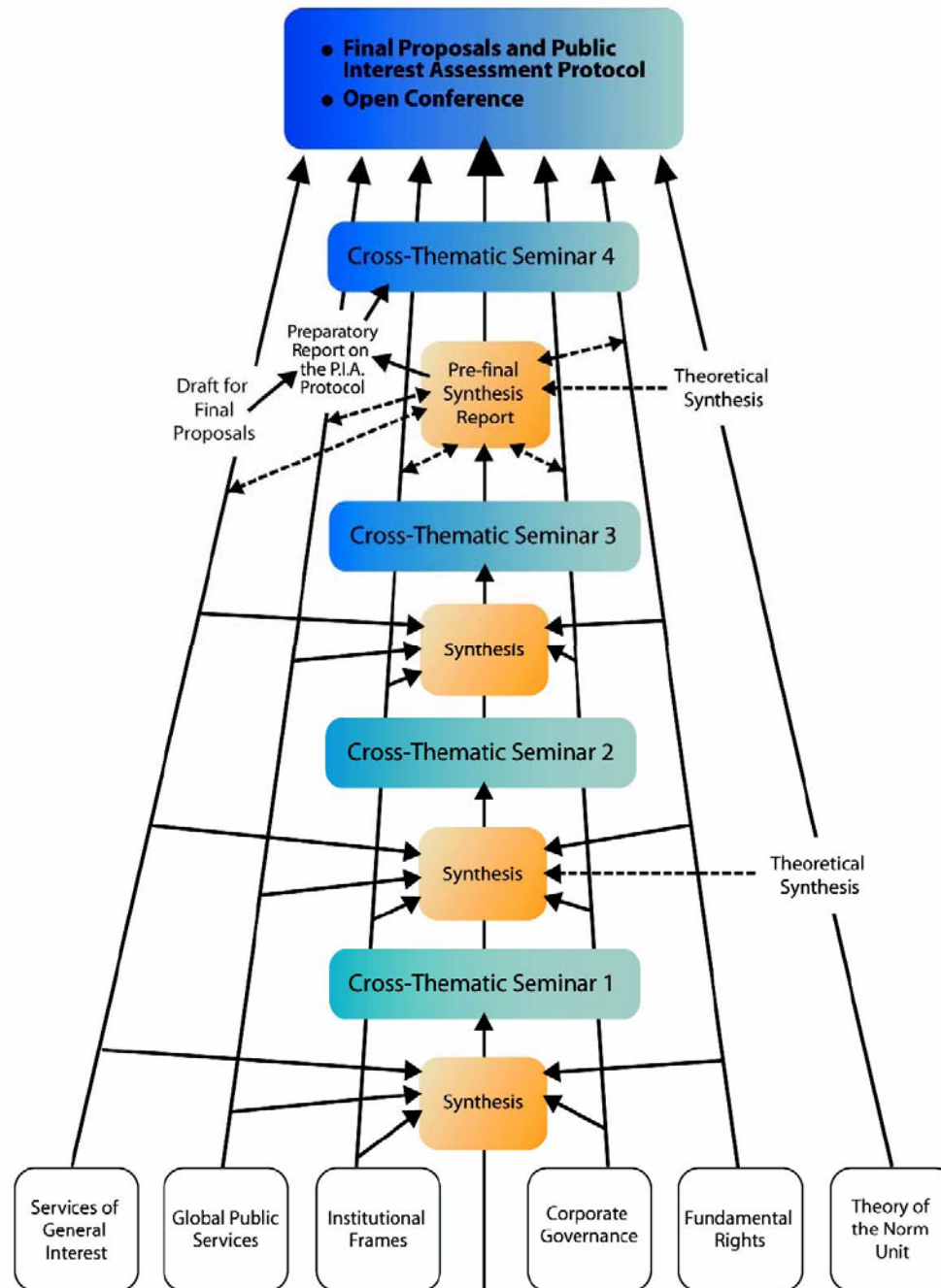
Graph 1 B5: Number of Researchers per Discipline



■ Law - 19	□ Law & Economics - 7	■ Political sciences - 5
□ Economics - 23	■ Anthropology & Economics - 1	■ Economics & Political Sciences - 1
■ Business Administration - 5	□ Legal Sociology - 3	■ Legal Philosophy - 1
■ Philosophy - 1	■ Philosophy & Polytech. Sciences - 1	■ Geography - 1

Number of Researchers per Nationality





2. An example of empirical research on reforming approaches to learning in governance theory

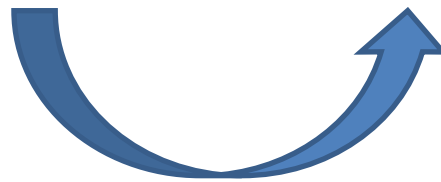
The challenge of conversion to biodiversity rich ecosystems : the case of the heathland in Flandres



« forest nursery project »



« production of forest related ecological services »



The governance problem : from command and control to groups as participatory hierarchies

- How to move from
 - the governance mechanism of the first forest decree : centralized bureaucratic control of multifunctional forest management in designated eco-regions (network induced coordination, “IBM” type of hierarchy)
 - to participatory hierarchy (cooperation induced coordination, “team work”)

Institutional change through learning by monitoring

- Model of the non-standard firm
 - Practical incentives for exploring “disruptive possibilities”
 - Benchmarking : survey of products and processes superior to those of the firm
 - Simultaneous engineering based on the benchmarking
 - Error correction based on the new action possibilities
 - Institutional context defining a set of rules of engagement
 - Mutual monitoring of each participants’ contribution
 - Information sharing
 - Mutual assessment of each participants’ reliability in relation to the joint activity

Institutional change through learning by monitoring

Evaluation of the effect on the productive action strategies

1990 Flemish Forest Decree : Subsidy for joint forest management

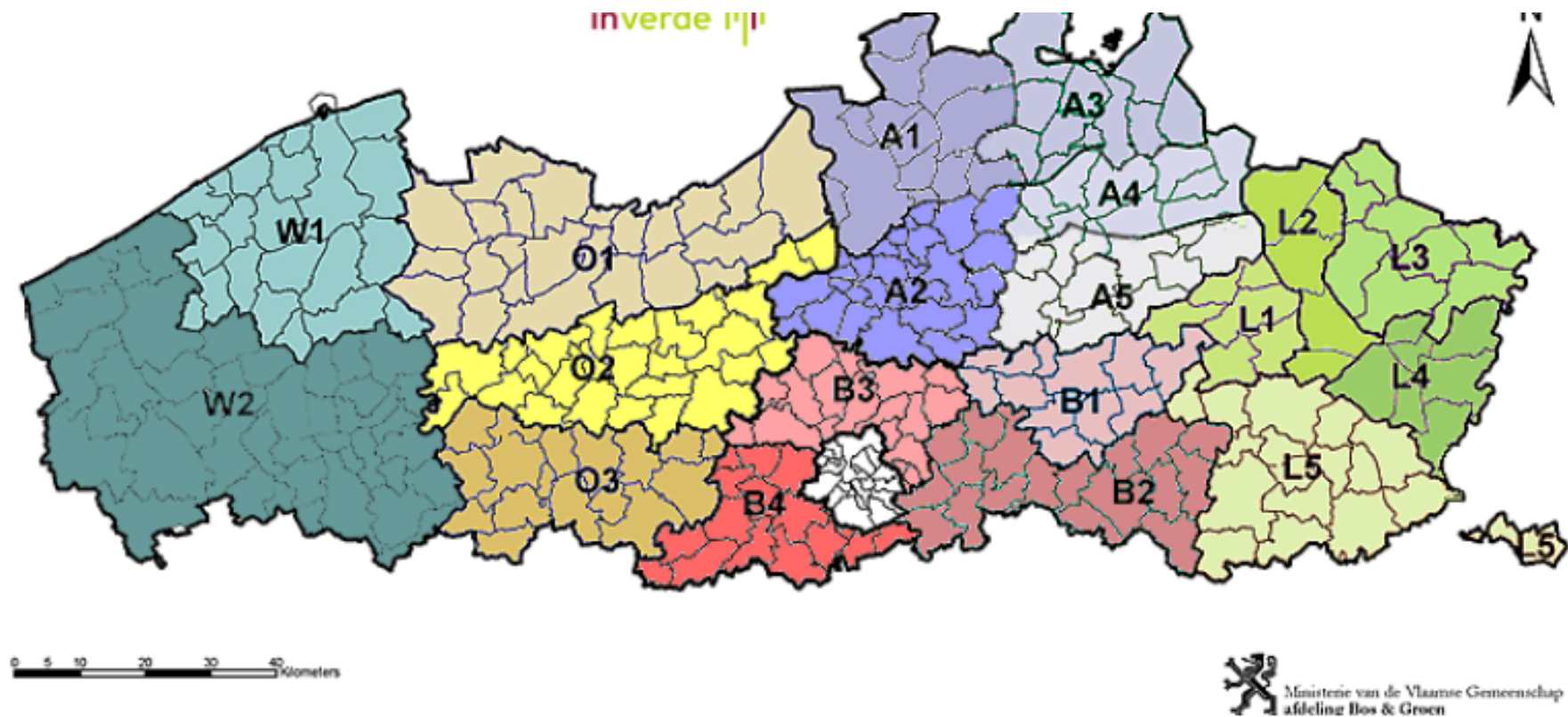
Socio-economic evaluation (Fefecon) : higher subsidy, new fiscal policy

1996 Pilot Project : Build trust and agency

Belief : main problem is to make economy and ecology mutually enforcing

Belief : main problem is to change the cooperative attitudes amongst the forest owners

Slide with map of forest groups in Flanders

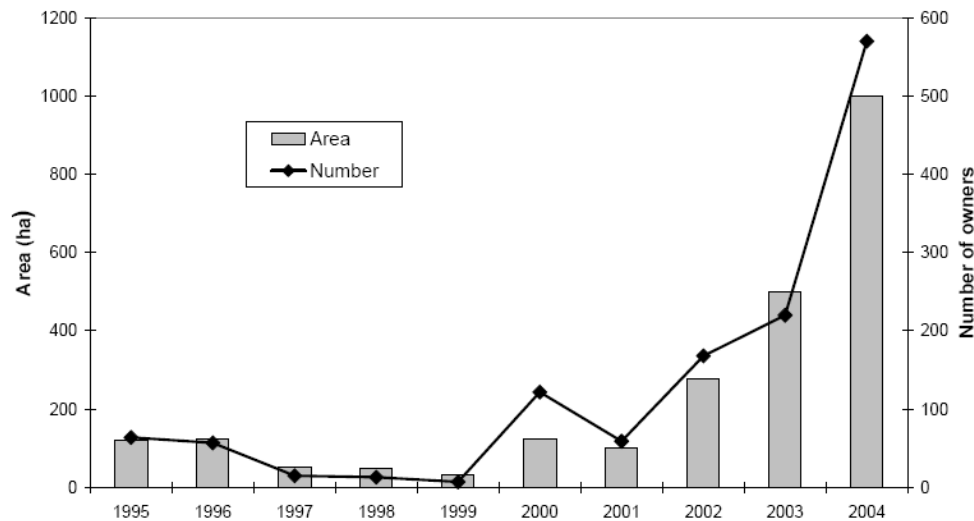


Institutional change through learning by monitoring

- Hypothesis : productive learning in the forest groups has been made possible through the use of criteria and indicators (C&I) as a flexible and open-ended monitoring device

Institutional change through learning by monitoring

Success with benchmarking and monitoring : Joint forest management plans, organisation of wood selling, combatting of invasive species



Source of illustrations: aminal 2005 and website bosgroepen

Addressing a revision of the basic beliefs : old growth trees, indigeneous trees, access management and biodiversity management



The generation of the learning capacities

- As a result of the “reframing” of the mental model that conditions learning
 - Successful for bridging nature associations and private forest owners
 - But reproduces “blocking” between users and forest owners in general
- Supplementary mechanisms for the generation of the capacities for cooperative learning
 - Move from users as instruments in the C&I compliance to users which are “associated” to a process of transformation of the identity of the forest group
 - New tools : joint access management plans with user groups, workgroup on process for dealing with forest biodiversity

Concluding /opening remarks

- Importance of the fit between the governance institutions and the reflexive capacities of the actors (democratic skills, empowerment, etc.)
- Forest governance as a test field of innovative learning on reflexive governance
 - need of cooperation amongst a hybrid set of actors
 - limits of economic incentives only
 - importance of social learning for the provision of nonmarket forest related services

- Thank you for you attention ...