

# Learning to be resilient: reflexivity of the forest service and local elites to change in forest governance in Morocco



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# Conceptual framework

- System dynamic: evolving contexts, causal relations (Forrester, 1975) *but*: system is persistent
- Political system: evolving organizations and institutions (capacity to adapt, reproduce and change) (Easton, 1979)
- Discourse: power produced by «architecture» of social relations/antagonism of different strategies (Foucault, 1982); networks of actors and coalitions (Forrester, 1975; Sabatier, 1999)
- Resilience: preservation of basic functions

# Reflexivity of a policy system

Dynamics: New properties emerge from Inter-actions;  
« units » of policy system are not value neutral;

- *Learning*: accumulation of social know-how (stockage of learning, exchanges of knowledge, adaptation);
- Competition of policy choices produces dynamic behaviors and creation of coalitions

- flexibility of conversion rules and mechanisms.  
permanent evolution;

- change in mechanisms of search for balance:  
« changing without changing whilst changing »:  
resilience

# Governance as a perturbation

- Governance: new political steering +shared goals;
- Informal, non governmental mechanisms: system of rule dependent on inter-subjective meanings created in an discourse
- new social dynamic & patterns of interaction; (state is less dominant)
- Governance contributes to power shifts
- Change in power as a reflexive adaptation to perturbations introduced by governance?

# Reaction to governance

- **Learning**: element of iterativity: new knowledge, re-defined positions, assessment, new values and new demands for changes
- **Social policy learning**: on social constructions of policy problems; reflective, lead by personal interests, can challenge the resilience of policy (sub)system
- **Instrumental political learning** – on viability of policy instruments, lobbying dominant policy ideas (advocacy coalitions): adjusting policy without challenging overall policy paradigm. Can change institutional structure to promote (break) further learning (adapted from Hall, Sabatier, May)

# Governance in a traditional policy system (eg. new forest policy in Morocco)

- General societal changes: from rural to industrial society, new environmental priorities, democratization, AND rural tribal (closed) society's values and practices
- New forest policy aimed at sustainability (SFM) and local people involvement
- New official discourse vs. traditional forest use practices

# Traditional elite

- Based on family lineage, landholding, networking
- Hierarchically organized, narrowly concentrated power
- Strictly regulated political competition
- Dominate where market is not developed

Risks: change in society-change in values (rural vs. urban); governance, representation of interests



# New discourse

- « forestry is a human problem »
- « 4 cultures : project, report, consortation, integration”
- Participation as a means promote acceptance of changes
- participation through compensation:
- « Forest is a political issue » - official elites keep away from it

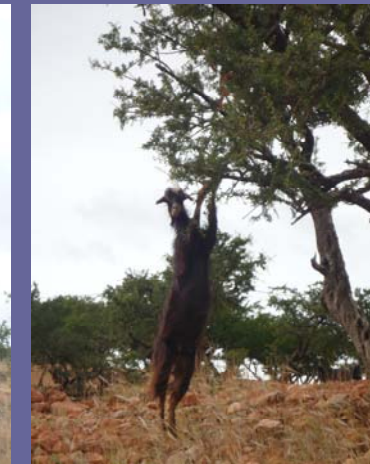
# New discourse vs. traditional practice (case 1: High Atlas mountains)

- Afforestation area: closure: compensation
- Responsibility – users association
- Different strategies: new elite- common good construction, opening to intersectorality.  
traditional elite-alliance with foresters and egalitarian distribution (old mechanisms)



# New discourse vs. traditional practice (Case Study 2: argan forests, South East Morocco)

- Argan: a specific silvopastoral practice and a new label in fashion
  - Common management vs individual profit
  - Written norms vs unwritten practice
  - Technical decisions with « no negotiated social face » and legitimacy
- = Open confrontation



# Learning to be resilient...

- 1 case: alliance: forest service + traditional elite + governance as « bonbon motivation » = resilient « power » ? – *instrumental policy learning + adaptation*
- 2 case: confrontation, resistance and no (evident) signs of learning
- ... in both cases: traditional forest use practices as risk minimizing strategies (but not recognized by the Forest Code)

# Learning for a « better » governance?

- **Governance and power strategies (power balance): defines and is defined**
- **Symbolic (traditional) vs. Economic (« modern ») values: what is more open to change? Unwritten practices or written norms?**
- **Governance changes discourse (institutional architecture), and creates new leaders, but:**

**When learning can start to promote governance? (in which conditions)**

Thank you!