Collective Forest tenure reform in China

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(2012-6-7, Whistler, Canada)
Forest resources
Forest Cover in Historic Period

- 60% 4-5千年前
- 50% 2千多年前
- 40% 1千年前唐宋
- 12.50% 明末清初
- 8.60% 1948年
Forest cover
Forest area and Forest standing volume
China’s forestry in world

- No.5 in terms of forest area, No.6 in terms of forest stocking volume.
- No.1 for forest plantation

--- Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 by FAO
▪ Successful Forestry?
Outline

- Why reform?
- Reform what?
- How to advance?
- What had happened?
- What can learn from?
Forest ownerships in China

◊ Land Ownerships

State-owned forest land
--39.94% forest area and 65.77% volume;
-- Managed by state forest enterprises and farms

Collective forest land
--60.06% area and 34.23% volume (21.73% collective, 12.50% individual)
-- Diversified models of forest management

◊ Diversified tree ownership
Reasons resulted in the reform

- Supply couldn’t meet demand: ecological products and economic products. (No.144 for per capita forest area, No.112 Per capita forest stocking volume.)
- Low productivity of forest land and poor quality of forest.
- Governmental investment and administrative measure are the main driver for forestry development. Lack of inner incentive.
- Imbalance between state-owned forests and collective forests.
Collective forestry problems

- Low output, low quality.
- Poor farmer
- Unease relationships:
  -- farmer and village leader.
  -- farmer and forest sector.
  -- farmer and local government.
  -- farmers rely on agriculture and farmers rely on forestry
Something must be wrong with collective forest.

Farmers have no interests on collective Forest management.

Then what?
- Large scale survey carried out by SFA.
- Pilot: 3 provinces
  - Get consensus and get focused
    -- Forest sector
    -- Cross sector
    -- Central government
    -- Central committee of communist party
- Issuing document: goals, task, content, measures, time line
  ---- 2008
Reform What?

- Contents:
  - Giving 70 years land use right to farmer for free or pay some money.
  - Issuing forest rights certificate for farmer.
  - Empowering farmer with managing forest land right.
  - Safeguarding farmer get benefit from land use right
- Purposes: environmental concern— Increasing forest land and improving forest quality; economic and social concern—improving farmers’ life.
- Timeline: 5 years

--- No. 10 Document issued by CCCP and state council
How to advance?

- Implementation
  --training: policy, technical
  --supporting policies: subsidies to advancing reform; to afforestation; PES; Preferential moneary policies; insurance policies reform timber cutting policy.
  --responding mechanism: problem solving.
  --Monitoring
  ....
- 26 provinces have finished the initial reform.
- Finishing issuing forest rights certificate to farmers in 2012.
Positive Results

- Increased Forest area.
- More income.
- Harmonized relationship.
- Forest sector from “control” to service
- …..
Benefit for different stakeholders

- Government: forest and good environment, improving farmers’ income
- Forest sector: position, recognition
- Local government: social stability, rich farmer, rich forest
- Enterprise: better environment and better supply
- Farmer: asset
Challenges

- Forest fragmentation;
- Lacking of skill and information
- Urbanization

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Rich farmer and sound environment
What to do next?

- Improving public policy toward forestry
  -- afforestation subsidy policy
  -- Infrastructure investment
  -- increasing subsidy to public-benefit forest
  -- reducing or exempt fees
- Improving forest administration policies and revising forest law.
- Supporting formation of forest farmer cooperative
- Providing better service to farmer

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Long way to go
Something to share

- Strong political willing to support reform from party, government and different sector.
- Setting clear goal and design steps.
  --identify problem;
  --participatory process
- Multi-win strategy.
- rules to follow.
  --observing law
  --respecting people’s will
- Not a single reform but a systematic one with supporting policies: subsidies; investment, tax and fees
Creating enabling Environment For Reform

- New countryside building:
  --Addressing Income gap
  --social security
  --democratic governance
  --culture construction
- Successful agriculture reform
- Legal systems
  --law on rural land contracting
  --law on village committee self-regulation
- Common desire for change: central government, forest sector, farmer
Thanks!