

December 2014

Forest Governance Learning Group

South Africa

Stimulating sustainable forestry development in
the midst of a complex land reform programme

Author information

This report was written by FGLG South Africa

About the project

For more information about this report, or the Forest Governance Learning Group and the Social Justice in Forestry project, visit <http://iied.org/forest-governance-learning-group>, or contact: James Mayers, James.Mayers@iied.org.

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Acronyms

B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DEDT	Department of Economic Development and Tourism
DLA	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
dti	Department of Trade and Industry
ETG CoGP	Emerging timber grower codes of good practice
FGLG	Forest Governance Learning Group
FLEGT	Forest law enforcement, governance and trade
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IPAP	Industry Policy Action Plan
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEZ	Strategic and integrated economic zone
SMFE	Small and medium forest enterprise

1. Introduction

A number of practical activities within the FGLG framework were identified for implementation during the operational period 2009 to 2013. In some of the years, ambitious workloads were adopted by the team according to assessments of other teams, but FGLG-SA gave it their best. Table 1 provides a consolidated extract of the different yearly implementation plans for the period between 2009 and 2013 for the purposes of reporting on the targets, approach, methodology, main activities and impacts.

Table 1. A consolidated extract of the final draft FGLG-SA implementation plans, 2009–2013.

Activities	Targets / anticipated impacts	Timing
1. Forest rights and small forest enterprise		
Support the existing strategies and development programme	Provide a podium and assistance for the small enterprise to have access to all support they require for their business	During 2013
Sharing and holding information, sharing workshops with communities	Increase the link between the government and private sector stakeholders in relation to business development.	During 2013
Monitor the implementation of small and medium forest enterprise (SMFE) strategy	Effective resource prioritisation, allocation and utilisation by SMFE, especially in community	2011–2013
Monitor implementation of the National Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP)	Development of support mechanism for SMFE; effective resource prioritisation, allocation and utilisation by SMFE, especially in community	2011–2013
Monitor implementation of the SMFE strategy	Ensure that policy review process is sensitive to stakeholders' views	2012–2013
Monitor consolidation of stakeholders' inputs into land reform policy review process	Provide for support framework and cooperative governance mechanism	During 2010
Provide inputs on the development of land reform post-settlement support mechanisms	Pro-SMFE land reform policy and land reform programme geared to forestry sustainability and progressive enterprise support	2012–2013
Share the timber development programmes before the land is transferred	Minimise the possibility of business collapse of the productive assets	
Provide and share the business models available to them as early as possible	Provide information on all available structures and support services that are provided by	

	government and the private sector	
3. Business sharing models		
Document and share lessons on benefit-sharing business model(s)	Wider understanding of possible and alternative models to do business with different stakeholders	2012–2013
4. Legitimate Forest Products		
Convene learning event on access to state and private production resource assets for non-timber forest product (NTFP) based enterprises	NTFP learning event	During 2013
Establish a steering committee for NTFP development	Functional NTFP committee	During 2013
Provide inputs on the development of SMFE sustainable forest management system and standards	Ensure enabling Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) provisions for SMFE and provision of appropriate tools	2010–2011
5. Pro-poor climate mitigation and adaptation through forestry		
Provide inputs into development of forest sector climate change response strategy	Ensure that strategy makes provision for real pro-poor benefits	2011–2012
Pioneer and stimulate SMFE and climate change issues' dialogue and actions	Ensure that national climate change policy position is pro-poor and make provision for real benefits	During 2010
6. Transnational learning and preparedness		
Provide inputs to SA's position on the forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT) processes	Ensure that key forest governance issues are covered and discussed; influence decisions on FLEGT thereof	2010–2013
Convene at least two FGLG-SA learning events on NTFP and benefit-sharing business enterprise models	Create platform for the group's contact dialogue; workshop and generate group's inputs on key issues; group's visioning and capacity building	2012–2013
Benefit-sharing business enterprise model(s)	Document and share lessons on benefit sharing business model(s)	2012–2013
Convene at least four SMFE-related events	Create platforms to raise and/or discuss key relevant issues	2012–2013
Engage Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' Portfolio Committee on forestry issues	Raised profile of forestry in the strategic political dialogue platform	2012–2013

Partake in FGLG international event	Facilitate learning on forest governance tactical approaches	4 th Quarter, 2010
Publicise articles on forest governance issues	Raise profile of forestry; stimulate change; position FGLG-SA	During 2010

This report reflects on the progress and/or outcomes, impacts, challenges and recommendations relating to the abovementioned milestones for the period between 2009 and 2013. In addition, generic governance developments with potential impacts on FGLG-SA activities are briefly reviewed for this reporting period.

2. The team

The FGLG South Africa (FGLG-SA) team was convened by Forestry South Africa (FSA) and brought together representatives of the state, civil society organisations, forestry enterprises and industry representative groups in support of a more open and equitable forest sector in the country. FGLG-SA's core members remained unchanged during the operational period between 2009 and 2013, with the only exception being the addition of Norman Dlamini to the team in 2013 as convener support. Core members included Mr Steven Ngubane (Convener), Mr Siphon Masuku (DAFF – KZN), Ms Nomalanga Mosala (independent SMFE), Mr Thulani Bhengu (independent SMFE), Mr Msa Madlala (independent SMFE), Mr Falakhe Malunga (forestry-based community organisation), Mr Nkosiphindile Quvile (DAFF – EC), Mr Matome Kgowedi (dti), Ms Tsholofelo Motaung (dti), Mr Nkosinathi Matiwane (DEDT), Mr Motsamai Nkosi (DAFF), Mr Chris Nicholson (IDC), Mr Renny Madula (DAFF), and Ms Pumeza Nkwashu.

In addition to the core members, other invitees and an administrator (Mr Nathi Ndlela, FSA) have been very supportive; their patronage is greatly appreciated.

The learning group – being a mix of junior to senior professionals, of local to national government representatives, and of forestry and non-forestry practitioners – brought together groups across relevant sectors and geographies that would normally interact with each other on issues of forest governance. This created opportunities for engagement among groups who otherwise would not have forums to confer on such issues. A special emphasis was put on engaging members to broaden their learning on practical forest governance issues that would influence policy and programme development at the provincial and national levels.

3. Approach, methodology and main actions

FGLG-SA adopted a method of conducting regular learning sessions that brought together stakeholders from regional and national levels of government and representatives of private-sector forestry. This enabled the ongoing sharing of experiences and discussions on options and approaches to improve governance conditions for small forest enterprises. The learning group process provided a platform for discussion and engagement on barriers to small forest enterprise development that provided input and feedback into forest governance processes in line with FGLG outputs.

FGLG-SA held SMFE business events to bring together support agencies and facilitate the establishment of collaborative partnerships. FGLG-SA capitalised on existing national initiatives and provincial planning processes (particularly in KZN and Limpopo) to provide lessons on approaches to improving the enabling environment for SFEs. FGLG-SA was particularly useful in sharing lessons between provinces.

FGLG-SA team members have contributed in their own right to a number of the key governance developments in the forestry sector in South Africa through analysis and the suggestion of policy options (governance-related advocacy). FGLG-SA created a space for multi-stakeholder dialogue and experience sharing.

IIED staff continually provided strategic support in the form of focus for the group and advice in terms of analysis and learning.

4. Impact

- FGLG-SA mobilised SMFE support of US\$650,000 from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) to enable 96 community forestry projects, covering about 13,000 hectares, to undergo land-use planning and acquire water-use licenses.
- The group facilitated the establishment of an additional US\$3 million Forestry Development Grant facility by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) to develop community forestry projects to a stage of bankability.
- Within the framework of the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) of dti, community forestry projects covering 6,500 hectares are being supported and developed by the IDC.
- The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries announced that an SMFE support programme will be established, signalling an end to ad hoc support mechanisms.
- A task team to design, resource, establish and operationalise a state Forest Enterprise Development Fund was assembled by DAFF and the Forest Sector Charter Council.
- In 2011 South Africa published a Green Paper as part of a review of land reform. FGLG-SA critiqued the Green Paper – in particular, the team found the proposals to be too complex – and presented a policy brief on land rights to the DLA. Some of the issues highlighted in the policy brief were subsequently taken into the policy review process, and stakeholder input is much improved. There is a need to put instruments in place so that business continues when land is distributed to communities; for example, about 60 per cent of forest plantation land is being given back to communities, so it is essential that these communities know how to manage the land. The exercise resulted in the change of the state's mindset on land reform.
- FGLG-SA, through its networks, participated in the Land Rights Management Board Commission as part of the land reform review process, and the production of land tenure security policy and eviction policy proposals.
- A number of submissions were made to the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform on numerous bills published by DLA, particularly the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill published on 23 May 2013, which greatly threatened the sustainability of the forestry industry in the country (see <http://www.forestry.co.za/fsa-submissions/>).
- Through its networks, the group participated in the SADC FLEGT process and the production of the FLEGT Programme and the SADC Timber Association concept proposal.
- The Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Forestry Development Forums continue to provide leadership and coordination on forestry development in the value chain.
- SMFE development partnerships were achieved, and as a result the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) of dti is assisting to register all small-scale timber growers as proper business entities in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo. Most of the community projects are registering as cooperatives and are being trained in elementary business management skills.
- The KZN Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) commissioned a provincial forest sector competitiveness analysis within its broader framework of promoting strategic and integrated economic zones (SEZs) in support of the sector. This developed into a yearly Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) conference and the inclusion of forest enterprises in the business award ceremony.
- FSA's Industry Business Development Committee hosted a South African Forest Industry Indaba (conference) aimed at optimising the support provided to small-scale timber growers in South Africa

(a brief report can be accessed at <http://www.forestry.co.za/south-african-forest-industry-indaba-small-scale-grower-support/?nocache=true>).

- The Forest Sector Charter Council approved the emerging timber grower codes of good practice (ETG CoGP), which were widened not only to direct and control contracts between emerging growers and partners in company affiliated schemes, but to inform the negotiations and content of contracts entered into between all forms of strategic partners and growers (see <http://www.forestry.co.za/uploads/File/fsa%20notices/2013/Nov%202013%20-%20Final%20ETGS%20Codes%20as%20approved%20in%20FSCC%20on%2012%20Nov%202013.doc>).

5. The changing context of forest governance

In order to stimulate sustainable forestry development and do better than just maintaining the balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects, governance must be excellent. Land reform and programmes of land restitution posed serious challenges to the already complicated context of forest governance in South Africa. Other important aspects of good forest governance, especially for rural communities, are not so obvious to forest specialists. Only a good mix of junior to senior professionals, of local government to national government representatives, and of forestry and non-forestry practitioners (as was the case with the FGLG-SA team) can jointly identify these aspects, which include amongst others cultural, spiritual and recreational aspects.

6. Stories of change

Government supports rural forestry development to the tune of US\$650 000

The government of South Africa, through the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and the Department of Trade and Industry (dti), jointly supported the land-use planning of 96 community forestry projects to the tune of US\$650,000. The financial support funded an Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) process in order to acquire water-use licenses for a total area of about 13,000 hectares to be afforested. The communities would have not been able to raise such sums of money under any circumstances. Thanks to the advocacy intervention of FGLG-SA, these communities will now be able to grow their asset (plantations) and at the same time provide employment to many jobless members of their communities. According to Terry Stanger (MD of a large forestry corporation in South Africa), 500 hectares of afforestation will create decent direct job opportunities for around 10 people and other spin-offs.

Small-scale timber growers have an organised voice

From 2006, the FGLG-SA programme started to organise scattered and small-scale timber growers in South Africa into district, and thereafter provincial, structures. Today growers in the KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo provinces are well organised into functional and efficient structures headed by chairpersons. As a result, growers in these provinces are represented even in the highest body of Forestry South Africa (the FSA Executive Committee), as well as in other forestry forums, including the Industry Business Development Forum, the Licensing Assessment Advisory Committee, Forestry Stakeholders' Forums, and also the Forest Sector Charter Council. Growers are now able to escalate their matters from the grassroots level to district structures to national level; they now have a voice. A huge amount of work still remains, however, in the Eastern Cape Province (the province with greatest potential for afforestation) and the Mpumalanga Province. These structures require continuous capacity building to remain sharp and efficient.

Land reform threats to the forestry landscape thwarted by FGLG-SA

Numerous amendment bills get published by the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform, most of which have a direct bearing on the sustainability of the forestry industry in the country. Although the bills are directed at land reform with the objective of seeing land exchange hands, if left unchecked they pose a great threat to the sustainability of forestry and other forms of agriculture being practised on the land in question. This is mainly because the bills disregard the forestry operations on the land and the future thereof. FGLG-SA, through its partners, has made it its responsibility to make sure that every bill is scrutinised as soon as it is published and the necessary submissions are made to the Portfolio Committee, before it is passed onto parliament for further consideration.

7. Looking ahead

The Forest Governance Learning Group has provided a platform for collaboration amongst role players in forestry, which is one way of ensuring the sustainability of natural resources and the livelihoods of the people who depend on those resources. In South Africa these mainly include historically disadvantaged individuals living in rural parts of the country. It has initiated some programmes that are key to the sustainability of forestry in South Africa and will therefore be maintained beyond the life span of the IIED-funded FGLG-SA. These include the Industry Business Development Committee, which will continue to operate indefinitely under the auspices of DAFF. FSA will convene the group at least twice a year and concentrate on South Africa's peculiar Land Reform and Policy Development and also transnational learning and preparedness. Upon securing the appropriate funds, the group will pursue some form of forestry and grasslands social justice in order to cater for the real needs of the poor communities in South Africa, who normally practice mixed economic activities involving renewable resources.

Annex 1: Self-evaluation

A self-evaluation questionnaire was completed by the team towards the end of the period in 2013, as part of the evaluation conducted by Peter Branney on behalf of IIED. The whole process of evaluation benefited the FGLG-SA team's learning and this is reflected in the responses to the questionnaire below:

Forest Governance Learning Group – Evaluation 2013: Self-evaluation

Country:	Date of assessment:
South Africa	21 October 2014
Approach of FGLG initiative (in your own country)	
1.1 What were the major forest governance issues and opportunities in your country since 2005? [List them]	<p>IPAP (inputs into the Industrial Policy Action Plan)</p> <p>SMFE Strategy</p> <p>Land reform policy review process (making inputs)</p> <p>SADC FLEGT process (making inputs)</p> <p>SADC Timber Association Task Team</p> <p>Climate change strategy (inputs in the pro-poor strategy)</p>
1.2 What have been the most effective methodologies that FGLG has used since 2005? [Describe as many as you wish. You could refer to the country level methods from page 23 of the project document]	<p>Nominating Task Teams to monitor certain policy developments and processes, and then report</p> <p>Issuing media release and/or an article during process engagement and after completing an activity</p> <p>Conducting learning events to discuss and equip core members on issues relevant to forest governance and policy</p> <p>Allowing core members to influence processes and policy decisions where they can at their normal places of operation</p>
1.3 What changes have there been in approach of FGLG in your country since the start of the initiative? Why have these changes taken place?	<p>There have not been any major changes in the approach of FGLG in SA since the beginning. The only change was the rotation of the chairing of learning events and meeting, which was initiated in order to retain the interest of core group members and to exploit the different expertise of members to the fullest. The team adopted an approach of having a series of regular learning sessions focusing on governance issues that affected small forest enterprises, with the aim of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different institutions in enabling small-scale forestry operations. This provided the opportunity for team members to engage with and have input into ongoing processes in their own spheres and to report back.</p>
1.4 How effective has the team-based structure and approach of FGLG been?	Strengths

Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this.

The composition of the team, with representatives of state and civil society organisations, forestry enterprises and industry rather than a comprehensive representation of stakeholders and geographic locations, which enabled the team to become more provocative and stimulate governance, rather than to provide the fully legitimated multi-stakeholder position.

The mix of a small number of core members and a larger number of *call-in* members allowed for both agility and continuity in all activities.

The team members are individuals who are active and influential in their own right in their separate circles, which made it more practical for FGLG-SA to influence governance processes effectively.

Weaknesses

The team is composed of highly active people in the industry who are relatively engaged most of the time, so convening the group takes a lot of planning and synchronising of events with their normal schedules.

Industry, mainly the corporate organisations, tend to focus on their core business and only release members who are less active on their side, leading to frequent change of members and thus poor continuity.

Performance and impact of FGLG (in your own country)

2.1 To what extent has FGLG has contributed to improved forest governance in your country [*tick the best box and provide an explanation for your answer*]

- No contribution at all
- Minor contribution only
- Significant contribution
- Highly significant contribution

Explanation:

FGLG-SA has initiated a paradigm shift in government – which has traditionally the sole custodian and maker of policy – to share, welcome and value the inputs of other organised groups in policy development.

Through FGLG-SA, other organised groups who are better positioned to influence policy, like the Small Grower provincial committees and the Industry Business Development Forum, were established.

2.2 For each of the 4 outputs of FGLG – how do you rate the performance of FGLG [*give a score where: (1) = governance impacts have been widely achieved that have had wider impacts on the ground; (2)*]

Output 1: Forest rights and small forest enterprise
Score = 1

Explanation for score given:

= governance impacts have been achieved that have had some impacts on the ground; (3) = some governance impacts have been achieved but with little actual impact on the ground; (4) = there have been only limited learning or governance impacts with no signs of tangible impacts on the ground]. Give an explanation for your assessment score

Small growers have been organised into functional district, and provincial structures in KZN and Limpopo.

Two community enterprises (1200 ha) were supported with capital funding in KZN from the IDC.

27 licence applications supported in Eastern Cape by funding EIA process by DAFF and dti.

Minister announced that DAFF would consider establishing a forest enterprise development support programme.

Output 2: Legitimate forest products

Score = 3

Explanation for score given: FGLG-SA team members participated in the processes to support the certification of small growers.

Output 3: Pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry

Score = 3

Explanation for score given:

South Africa now has a pro-poor climate strategy to which the FGLG-SA team contributed immensely.

Output 4: Trans-national learning and preparedness

Score = 2

Explanation for score given:

Involvement in the SADC FLEGT process.

Participating in the workshops for drafting the SADC Timber Association constitution.

Participation in the SADC Timber Association Task Team to establish and operationalise the SADC Timber Association.

2.3 What external factors (outside the control of FGLG) have affected the impacts that FGLG has had? *[describe them]*

The extended period of absence of a person in the seat of the business development director at Forestry South Africa to convene the group adversely affected the organisation of learning events, and hence their impact.

<p>2.4 Describe the performance of IIED as overall coordinator of FGLG in terms of (a) its capacity support and (b) overall management support for your in-country team and your team's actions.</p>	<p>IIED has been very supportive throughout the period. Officials from IIED have been in frequent contact with the convenor of the FGLG-SA team, providing guidance, support and constructive feedback on reports. IIED was also very instrumental in fine tuning our 2013 approved programme.</p>
<p>2.5 To what extent will partnerships and working approaches developed under FGLG continue after the end of the current phase? Comment on the sustainability of the FGLG initiative. What needs to happen for the effective approaches to continue?</p>	<p>Two initiatives developed under FGLG-SA will continue for as long as they are relevant: small grower provincial structures and the Industry Business Development Forum.</p> <p>Small grower provincial committees are already established in two out of the four provinces with active forestry in our country (KZN and Limpopo) and act as a mouthpiece for small timber growers to reach government and any other organised body.</p> <p>The Industry Business Development Committee will also continue to be effective as a vehicle for most Forestry Enterprise Development support in the country. On 19 November 2013, this forum will host an Indaba on small grower support whose outputs will feed into the work programme of the forum. Currently the forum is housed under Forestry South Africa, but will as time goes on be transferred to DAFF, which is actually the sector leader.</p>
<p>2.6 Describe any changes in the relationship between government and civil society in your country as a result of FGLG?</p>	<p>There now exists an element of tolerance and respect between government and civil society as a result of FGLG and other organised mixed bodies (not solely as a result of FGLG-SA)</p>
<p>2.7 Has the FGLG had any unexpected impacts? Describe these.</p>	<p>Not any measured impacts, but we have witnessed other industry bodies – like the South African Sugar Association (SASA), Grain South Africa (Grain SA), Wine South Africa (Wine SA) and Fisheries – intensifying their enterprise development support programmes, which may have been stimulated by the achievements of FGLG-SA.</p>
<p>2.8 What evidence is there to show that the various activities that you have carried out have had impacts on the ground (for target groups)? Describe this evidence – or list any documents/sources of evidence</p>	<p>Strengthened the integration of forest, empowerment and land reform policy with practical small enterprise work.</p> <p>Secured funds from new government small enterprise programmes to enable community forestry to become investable.</p> <p>Contributed to the process of drafting emerging timber grower codes of good practice (ETG CoGP) as a key component in the implementation of the Forest Sector (empowerment) Charter.</p>

Produced a document on models for community benefit sharing in forest enterprises.

KZN & Limpopo Provincial Growth and Development Strategies that reveal sound small and medium enterprise support programmes.

Lessons learnt from FGLG

3.1 Describe any innovative approaches that FGLG has followed in your country

Submitting all responses and comments from SMFE to the decision making structure and reporting back through electronic, workshop and print media.

Linking information sharing sessions with organisations that are holding any event in the community, such as local councillors and traditional council meetings.

3.2 Describe (in bullets) any lessons from FGLG about effective ways of influencing forest policy and enhancing forest governance

The informal process adopted by FGLG-SA was a useful unique approach to engage stakeholders in a participatory analysis within an environment that promoted real engagement and not merely the advancement of established organisational positions.

Based on minimum support extended to SMFEs, forestry development has been amplified and this can be scaled up if there is a dedicated support programme.

A wider understanding of possible and alternative models to do business with different stakeholders was gained through the process.

Every seemingly small influential input into a government policy development process is significant.

There remains a long way to go for South Africa to finalise and adopt 'perfect' land reform policies, but a lot can be shared on the process and framework of policy formulation with other countries that were also previously negatively affected by improper land matters.

Other comments about FGLG

4.1 Do you have any other comments about the performance and lessons from FGLG? Please describe them here.

In the future, FGLG would benefit our country more with an emphasis on a landscape approach that would include 'Forestry + Wildlife, Forestry + Grasslands, or Forestry + Agriculture' rather than isolating forestry, because the rural communal setup of South Africa (where a greater population of the poor reside) has a range of mixed activities as opposed to any form of monoculture.

The Forest Governance Learning Group is an informal alliance of in-country groups and international partners currently active in seven African and three Asian countries. We aim to connect those marginalised from forest governance to those controlling it, and to help both do things better.

This report gives an overview of the activities and achievements of the South Africa FGLG team between 2009 and 2013.



Project materials

Forests

Keywords:

Forestry, Forest Governance Learning Group, Natural resource management



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