

## Book reviews

### Forest Policy for Private Forestry: Global and Regional Challenges

Lawrence Teeter, Benjamin Cashore and Daowei Zhang (editors)  
 CABI Publishing, Wallingford UK, 2003  
 Hardback, 307 pp. Price £65. ISBN 0 85199 599 3

Private forests and forestry are receiving belated focus globally, for a variety of good reasons. Elsewhere, as in Australia, private forests are supplying an increasing proportion of forest products and services — for biodiversity and non-wood forest products, as well as for industrial and non-industrial wood. As in Australia, this provision is often suboptimal, for both the private forest owner and for society more generally. As in Australia, poor or inappropriate policies often underlie or exacerbate this situation.

Twenty-three of the chapters in this book were selected from amongst the 100 or so papers presented at a March 2001 conference entitled ‘Global initiatives and public policies: First international conference on private forestry in the 21st century’. It was the first conference organised and hosted by the recently established (1999) Forest Policy Centre of Alabama’s Auburn University. The other four chapters are conference keynote addresses (Clark Binkley, Hancock Timber Resources Group; Jag Maini, UN Forum on Forests; George Weyerhaeuser, Weyerhaeuser Company; Birger Solberg, Agricultural University of Norway).

Chapters are arranged in approximately equal numbers under four themes, the titles of which characterise their respective emphases well:

- ‘Changing philosophies of forest management’;
- ‘Designing and implementing policies for private forestry’;
- ‘Sustainable forestry economics’; and
- ‘Perspectives on forest certification’.

Overall, the book mirrors its origins as a set of conference papers, with chapters varying in the extent to which they add information on the topic and in their general interest. Perhaps unsurprisingly in the light of the conference origins, there is a predominance of authors (some 80%) from, and papers about (some 60%) the USA, with Australia (‘Planning private native forest use in Australia’ by Ray Spencer and BRS colleagues), Bolivia, Costa Rica, India

and the Ukraine each the focus of a chapter, and Canada and parts of Europe addressed in a number of chapters. From this base, a global-scale synthesis — to the extent that it is desirable or relevant — is not easily possible beyond a very broad level of generalisation, and the editors’ synopsis, written as a preface, doesn’t seek to overextend the reach of the conference.

Perhaps a third of the chapters have wide interest, including Gan and Ganguli’s assessment of the impacts of trade liberalisation on the forest products trade, and Sasser’s and Lawson and Cashore’s analyses of forest certification. Other papers focusing on particular policy contexts are largely only of case-study relevance. Arnold Grayson’s *Private Forestry Policy in Western Europe* (1993, also published by CABI) is an example of a book with a similar theme, but for which a more conclusive synthesis was made possible by its particular regional focus and political context.

Consequently, this book is unlikely to be of general interest to Australian audiences, although those working actively on forest policy issues will find relevance in various chapters. These include those noted above, and others dealing with compliance monitoring systems in states of the USA, short-rotation woody crops in the USA, and conservation planning and incentives on private lands in the USA. In these terms, *Forest Policy for Private Forestry* is a useful reference text. It is a helpful complement to another set of conference papers, also from 2001, which addresses related topics more from the perspective of a forest owner. Many Australian readers would probably find more direct relevance in those papers, in the *Proceedings of the 2001 IUFRO Symposium on Forestry Extension* (co-edited by Digby Race and Rowan Reid, and available at <http://sres.anu.edu.au/associated/IUFROFE2001>). Those proceedings also take an alternative route to the dissemination of conference proceedings compared to the traditional and necessarily expensive form represented by *Forest Policy for Private Forestry*.

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## Australia's Ever-Changing Forests

### Proceedings of the Fifth National Conference on Australian Forest History, Tasmania, February 2002

John Dargavel, Denise Gaughwin and Brenda Libbis (editors)  
The Australian National University,  
in association with the Australian Forest History Society Inc., 2002  
442 pp., b. and w. illustrations. Price A\$30 incl. GST. ISBN 0 86740 530 9

This production reflects again the dedication of the Australian Forest History Society in stimulating a wider interest in Australian forest history. The society encourages a record of this interest through contributions to conferences, which it places on permanent record in substantial and very presentable 'proceedings'. Much of the drive towards this end is due to the foremost of the early convenors of the society, Dr John Dargavel. His continuous involvement with the society, organising conferences and stimulating contributions to them, has been extended on this occasion to the production of a play, *Hard Work to Starve*, depicting a bitter timber-labour dispute of the 1920s at Geeveston, Tasmania, where this conference took place.

These proceedings comprise 28 papers presented in five sections. Most refer to Australia directly, and they have been contributed roughly equally from Tasmania and the other States and Territories combined. Three papers are centred beyond Australia but are of particular relevance to it. Of the several 'themes' of forest history, 'Chinese poems on forests and trees' makes particularly entertaining and interesting reading.

The society and contributors to this conference are to be congratulated on another excellent addition to a steadily growing Australian forest history corpus.

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