

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS // SPECIAL ISSUE IN RURAL LANDSCAPES

Beyond Forestry: Knowledge Practices for Sustainable Landscapes with Trees

Despite participatory efforts and visions of more democratic and sustainable forestry, local communities and knowledge holders continue to be over-looked in forest-related decision-making. In this special issue, we focus on knowledge practices as key in individuals and societies' interactions with forests, and in the reproduction and naturalization of authority within forestry. We examine historical and current forestry knowledge practices and discuss how these can be garnered for a transformation towards more sustainable relations between people and trees in the landscape.

GUEST EDITORS

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AIM & OBJECTIVES

The special issue adopts a critical perspective on knowledge practices related to trees in the landscape. It aims to explore different historical, contemporary, and possible future knowledge practices within forestry specifically, and in relation to other fields of theory and practice. We invite papers that investigate historical and current practices, as well as papers describing pathways towards, open and pluralistic knowledge practices in forestry. We encourage the authors to go beyond descriptions, to ask the question “so what?” and to analyse the consequences of observed knowledge practices and discuss the potential outcomes of suggested pathways. By applying the concept of knowledge practices, we wish to broaden the subject and attract scholars from different fields of research to contribute to the special issue. We invite theoretical descriptions as well as empirical accounts from all geographical areas. Papers could for example address any of the following questions:

- » What knowledge practices exist in forestry today? What differences and similarities can be observed across localities, nations and regions?
- » Which practices of knowledge are seen as relevant and valid by which actors?
- » What types of evidence are used to support knowledge claims and practices?
- » How are contemporary forestry knowledge practices reproduced? How can they be transformed?
- » How can knowledge practices promote participatory ideals?
- » How do new ways of knowing and learning (e.g. e-learning modules, digital work tools) change knowledge practices?
- » What are (un-)desirable outcomes of current or proposed knowledge practices?

All manuscripts will have to pass a rigorous peer-review process before they are accepted for publication. For instructions about submission see the journal website www.rurallandscapesjournal.com/about/submissions/

Please contact the editors if you have any questions.

TIMELINE

- February 15, 2020. Deadline for sending abstracts to the guest editors.
- February 28, 2020, up to 12 abstracts selected
- April 30, 2020: internal deadline full drafts to be sent to guest editors
- May 30, 2020: internal comments from editors
- June 1 to Aug 15: papers submitted to Rural Landscapes
- Aug 15 to Oct 15, 2020: revised papers resubmitted to Rural Landscapes
- Oct 15 to Dec 15, 2020: final submission and publication of papers online

BACKGROUND

Knowledge about landscapes with trees existed long before forestry. Patches of trees have had different names over time, often reflecting its different uses. *Forest* was introduced to the English language during early medieval times to depict royal hunting grounds, and had little to do with trees (Cresswell, 2009). Forests as we know them from policies and science today, as tree-dominated areas with well-defined boundaries towards other land-uses, only emerged with the attention to trees as an economic resource for rulers in Central Europe in the early 18th century (Scott, 1998). With the arrival of forestry, the theory and practice of cultivating trees, forests were carved out of landscapes as demarcated areas designated for the production of timber according to the wishes of the rulers (Peluso, 2017). As a result, access to forests by people and livestock was severely curtailed, generating resentment and resistance (ibid.). Since then, rulers and professionals trained in forestry sciences at academic institutions have been the prevailing decision-makers and knowledge-holders in decisions concerning forests (Hölzl, 2010). Until this day, foresters have in many contexts retained close ties with hierarchical state governments, including policing and other state supporting functions (Lowood, 1990). Nonetheless, in forestry as well as in general society, this hierarchical system of government has met with ideas of more inclusive and participatory forms of governance in recent decades – the so called new modes of governance (Rhodes, 1996; Kooiman, 1999; Pierre and Peters, 2000). This has for example resulted in the term *landscape* now being found in contemporary policies such as the European Landscape Convention (ELC), which effectively pushes for a different perspective on boundaries in the landscape - as defined and perceived by the people inhabiting them (Jones and Stenseke, 2011).

New modes of governance has resulted in calls for inclusion and participation of new actors in forest-related decision-making, including citizens, non-governmental organisations as well as experts from other sectors and knowledge traditions (Kleinschmit *et al.*, 2018). The very wickedness of forest-related decision-making situations - high complexity and risk - are said to call for collaborative approaches (Cameron and Grant-Smith, 2014). Advocates for enhanced participation in forest-related decision-making imply that the outputs and outcomes of participation (e.g. social learning) improve social equality and sustainability by diversifying and securing the benefits that local people acquire from forests (OECD, 1999; Buchy and Hoverman, 2000; Appelstrand, 2002; Reed, 2008). However, such promises have rarely been fulfilled. Although couched in new rhetoric, existing top-down power structures have been reproduced (Lund, 2015; Staddon, Nightingale and Shrestha, 2015; Hansen and Lund, 2017). The people and communities residing around, directly benefiting and gaining their livelihood from forests remain overlooked in forest-related decision-making.

In this special issue, we wish to home in on the challenging question of how to promote more inclusive forms of participation. We are specifically interested in the question of how knowledge can be seen as a key to unlock the potential of participatory processes (Reed *et al.*, 2017; Balest *et al.*, 2018). In effect, new modes of governance and participation open up for a negotiation of what should be considered valid knowledge concerning forests and their management (Lawrence, 2009). This opening-up frequently leads to

conflictual situations due to perceived disadvantages and power imbalances (Balest *et al.*, 2018; Bethmann *et al.*, 2018). It is here important to point out that we do not envision conflict-free processes. Firstly, it is not possible. Secondly, conflictual situations are an integral part of political struggles in human societies and do not constitute a problem in themselves. However, if a conflictual situation is not resolved in a fair and legitimate way, there is a problem. Social rejection of decisions and injustice often follow. What we argue for here is that inadequate or non-integration of different types of knowledge represents a fundamental barrier to truly democratic forestry practices and thus ultimately to social, ecological, and economic sustainability of landscapes (Reed *et al.*, 2017; Sterling *et al.*, 2017). Jasanoff (2003) points out the necessity “to make explicit the normative that lurks within the technical” (p. 240). Without scrutinizing the ethical and political aspects of knowledge claims by technical branches in society, participatory efforts are going to repeat previous mistakes and fail to accomplish meaningful interaction between actors.

SCOPE

In order to find out *how* to have meaningful participation and interaction between actors we thus first need to critically evaluate the current forestry knowledge practices (Nightingale and Ojha, 2013). We here use the term knowledge practices to refer to “personal and social practices related to working with knowledge” (Hakkarainen, 2009, p. 215). With knowledge, we mean the explicit and implicit understandings and meanings we hold about the reality we live in and that we collectively create. Looking into historical and contemporary accounts of knowledge practices in forestry, we find the paradigm of ‘scientific forestry’ still dominating in many instances. ‘Scientific forestry’ as a concept represents a type of forestry that builds on scientific quantification and systematisation of foremost timber resources that was invented in the mid-18th century (Lowood, 1990; Peluso, 1992; Hölzl, 2010; Lund, 2015). It has strong links to professionalization, bureaucratisation, policing, timber production, as well as monitoring, control, and efficiency measures mainly through technological developments. In this framing of forestry, there is little room for other rationalities and ways-of-knowing. For example, contemporary organisational strategies and choices were found to undermine the development of expert capacities related to biodiversity assessments in Finland (Peltola and Tuomisaari, 2015). A study of forestry education in Africa make it evident that in order to find pathways towards sustainability one needs to scrutinize the colonial heritage in educational practices (Temu, Okali and Bishaw, 2006). Building on the heritage of ‘scientific forestry’, local context and traditional knowledge are ignored by the education. At the same time, forestry and other natural resources based sectors are going through large-scale changes and expansion when renewable resources are to replace fossil-based resources to combat climate change and environmental degradation. Recently the FAO started promoting green jobs for rural development and aims to foster new sustainable practices in sectors dealing with the environment (FAO, 2019). Resulting in pressure on the forestry sector and education to adapt to these new developments (Rekola *et al.*, 2017). This prompts further investigation into historical and contemporary knowledge practices in forestry; how knowledge is used, what type of knowledge is applied and for what purposes (Pynnönen *et al.*, 2019).

In summary, more in-depth understanding of knowledge practices and integration of different epistemologies are critical for the success of stakeholder and public engagement in forest-related decision-making (Reed *et al.*, 2017) and thus to sustainable landscapes.

RURAL LANDSCAPES JOURNAL & OPEN ACCESS POLICY

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LENGTH & NUMBER OF ARTICLES

Abstracts should be **maximum 300 words** long and be submitted to guest-editors via email (ida.wallin@ifp.uni-freiburg.de & jens@ifro.ku.dk) latest on the **15th of February 2020**.

We aim to select max 12 abstracts. Papers accepted for publication by the journal editor and the guest editors will be published online directly after completion of copyediting and typesetting. We aim to have all papers published by the end of 2020 under a Special Collections page on the journal website.

REVIEW PROCESS

After internal submission of full drafts to the guest editors there will be a four-stage reviewing process:

- I. The guest editors will review all draft papers and ask authors to revise manuscripts if deemed necessary, before the papers are submitted to Rural Landscapes.
- II. After author(s) revisions, the papers will be submitted to Rural Landscapes, following normal submission procedures and will be handled in line with the journal's editorial and peer-review policy of the journal. Each paper will be reviewed by at least two independent external reviewers and the guest editors will communicate with the corresponding editor about the suitability of particular referees.
- III. The guest editors will work closely with the authors to ensure that all recommendations made by referees are fully considered and necessary changes are made.
- IV. The guest editors will communicate with the journal editor on the acceptance or otherwise of the papers and on the structure of the special issue.

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