

Actors and interests related to the restitution in the forestry sectors in transition

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Introduction

- since 1990s, the post-socialist countries in central-east and south-east Europe are facing challenging transition process to democracy and market economy
- important part of transformation was restoration of non state ownership (private, church, shared, community ...)

Aim

- analyze related institutional change and identify reasons of barriers that occurred during the restitution process
- conduct comparative analysis of the restitution process in selected post-communist countries from the CEE-SEE region: Czech Republic, Serbia, and Slovakia.

Our main hypothesis

1. The restitution process was/is time-consuming and is not finished because power relations and used (not used) policy instruments.
2. Barriers occurred in particular during the implementation phase of restitution process.

Research questions

1. Who are the main interest organizations and actors involved in the restitution in forestry sector?
2. Which interests do they hold regarding restitution issue?
3. How do these organizations differ in their power for securing their interests?

Theory

- Actor Centered Power (Krott et al. 2014)
- Uses combination of actor, interests, power and policy instruments
- Core elements:
 - Coercion
 - Dis/incentives
 - Information

Theory

- **Coercion** is defined as altering actors' behaviour by force. The proposed model looks mainly at whose force prevails, and describes the amount of dominance as power. No restriction on one actor is given, it can also comprise network of actors.
- Command and control instruments.

Theory

- **Dis/incentives** are altering the behavior of the actor by means of disadvantages or advantages without recognizing his will. The actor-centred power theory assumes that, within a power-free environment, all actors would have free access to all sources. Limiting the sources of specific actors is a power process and without such limitation the value decision of the actor would be different. Therefore decisions are not only value-driven but power-driven as well.
- Economic incentives and disincentives.

Theory

- Dominant **information** when becoming a power process aims at “altering the behavior of the subordinate by means of unverified information”. If the subordinate does not verify the information received from the potentate and makes a decision based on this information the potentate will have altered the subordinate's behavior without recognizing his will.
- Informational instruments.

Material and Methods

Three countries were selected for the comparison: Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Serbia

- Document analysis (restitution process)
- Semi-structured interviews (actors and their interests)
- Expert assessment of the power of actors
 - formulation phase
 - implementation phase

Matrix for the power assessment

Actors		“New” forest owners and their interest groups	Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest administration	Politicians
“New” forest owners and their interest groups	C				
	M	X	0,00	0,00	0,00
	I				
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	C				
	M	0,00	X	0,00	0,00
	I				
State forest administration	C				
	M	0,00	0,00	X	0,00
	I				
Politicians	C				
	M	0,00	0,00	0,00	X
	I				

Power assessment

- The power is assessed according to ACP factors – coercion, incentives and information.
- A scale of four values was used, ranging from three to zero, meaning: 3 for high-powerful, 2 for mid-powerful, 1 for low-powerful and 0 for non-powerful.
- The power of one actor corresponds with the power of the other actor, therefore the power relations between two actors are marked with the same color.
- If one actor has power 3 the other has automatically 0. The values were then averaged and added up for each actor.

Results in Slovak case

- Implementation of restitution acts represented a complicated process because of the ownership structure in Slovakia and due to existing legislative, technical and economic barriers (Ilavský 2001, Schmithüßen and Hirsch 2010).
- The process of restitution of forest lands in Slovakia has not been finished yet.
- 200 000 ha of private property – 10% of forest area is not restituted.

Results in Slovak case

Actors/Elements of power	Coercion
“New” forest owners and their interest groups	Restitution legislation created a legal right to gain their original forest property back. The process was costly and administratively demanding. The lower the forest area, the administrative demands were higher. Interest Groups were created and established themselves providing services for its members in the restitution process.
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest enterprises formally administered the restitution process. Based on the transfer of forest property, however they often had to restructure and lay off workers who did not always find a job in private forests. They had a dominant impact on restitution implementation.
State forest administration	State forestry administration was under pressure from the politicians and the public. Efforts on the smooth restitution implementation with stressing the sustainability principle. SFA was formally superior to state forest enterprise but had very little impact on implementation.
Politicians	Politicians adopted systematic restitution laws. Political parties often used restitution agenda in their programs at that time. Restitution laws were adopted with insufficient implementation mechanisms. They exerted pressure on state forest enterprises via annual report on the restitution process. But however they were losing influence in implementation.
Citizens	They supported forest owners in their rights and system changes in forestry. Many citizens own forests (private, community or shared ownership) very often with small area (less than 1 ha). The pressure on politicians was enormous but diluted in implementation especially by small scale owners.

Results in Slovak case

Actors/Elements of power	Dis/Incentives
“New” forest owners and their interest groups	“New” forest owners financed the administrative procedure (identification of parcels, geometric plan), associated with obtaining their property from their own resources. Financial burden was higher the property was smaller.
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest enterprises financed the administration process from its own resources, therefore they often pointed out the objective reasons for the slow pace of restitution. Nevertheless they were the dominant beneficiaries from the Forest Development Program to ensure sustainable forest management in the 1990s.
State forest administration	They participated in the creation and supported the adoption of a program to financially support the privatization process. They continually stressed the need for financial coverage of such programs with additional funds. But they have not been willing in the 1990s to change the allocation from the Forest Development Program in favor of the restitution.
Politicians	A financial aid program was adopted but no fund allocation was secured from the Program of Forest Development
Citizens	The pressure on politicians regarding financial support for restitution in the 1990-ties was weakened by other themes related to the transformation process (eg. Privatization of industrial companies)

Results in Slovak case

Actors/Elements of power	Information
“New” forest owners and their interest groups	“New” forest owners suffered from the lack of information on the administratively demanding process. Regional interest groups were created and established themselves providing advisory services for its members in the restitution process. It is their main agenda until present.
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest enterprises tried formally to ensure the correctness of the restitution process. They tried to avoid court cases but not always with success. They used the absence of special information program in the implementation process.
State forest administration	SFA did not see any need to adopt a special information program regarding restitution. Advisory services in sustainable forest management had higher priority. The provided ad hoc advisory services together with regional FOAs.
Politicians	Politicians did not see any need for special advisory programs.
Citizens	The pressure on politicians regarding information on the restitution process in the 1990-ties was suppressed by other themes related to privatization

Results in Slovak case – power assessment in formulation phase

Actors	Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest administration	Politicians
<p data-bbox="9 454 434 614">“New” forest owners and their interest groups</p> <div data-bbox="112 682 370 1061" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content;"> <p data-bbox="131 711 324 775">2,00 +</p> <p data-bbox="131 803 324 868">1,33 +</p> <p data-bbox="131 896 324 961">0,66 =</p> <p data-bbox="131 989 266 1053">4,00</p> </div>	<p data-bbox="488 454 952 668">C – 3 (strong public opinion in favour of the restitution program) 2,00</p>	<p data-bbox="971 454 1435 668">C – 3 (strong public opinion in favour of the restitution program) 1,33</p>	<p data-bbox="1454 454 1918 668">C – 2 (public opinion for restitution program) 0,66</p>
	<p data-bbox="488 682 952 918">M -2 (less influence on the restitution support program with real budget allocation)</p>	<p data-bbox="971 682 1435 918">M – 0 (no influence on the restitution support program with real budget allocation)</p>	<p data-bbox="1454 682 1918 918">M – 0 (no influence on additional budget allocation for restitution program)</p>
	<p data-bbox="488 939 952 1160">I – 1 (no influence on the informational program supporting restitution process)</p>	<p data-bbox="971 939 1435 1160">I – 1 (no influence on the informational program supporting restitution)</p>	<p data-bbox="1454 939 1918 1160">I – 0 (no influence on the informational program supporting restitution)</p>

3 for high-powerful, 2 for mid-powerful, 1 for low-powerful and 0 for non-powerful

Results in Slovak case – power assessment in formulation phase

Actors	“New” forest owners and their interest groups	Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest administration	Politicians
“New” forest owners and their interest groups 4,00	X	2,00	1,33	0,66
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises) 3,33	1,00	X	1,00	1,33
State forest administration 4,33	1,66	2,00	X	0,66
Politicians 6,33	2,33	1,66	2,33	X

Results in Slovak case – power assessment in implementation phase

Actors	“New” forest owners and their interest groups	Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises)	State forest administration	Politicians
“New” forest owners and their interest groups 4,00	X	1,00	0,66	2,33
Institution responsible for restitution process (state forest enterprises) 6,66	2,00	X	2,33	2,33
State forest administration 5,00	2,33	0,66	X	2,00
Politicians 2,33	0,66	0,66	1,00	X

Assessment of the power of different actors – comparison of implementation phase

Stakeholders	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Serbia
“New” forest owners and their interest groups	4.32	4,33	6,32
Institution responsible for restitution process	6.65	7,33	3,33
State forest administration	8.32	5,33	3,00
Politicians	7.31	2,33	2,66*
			1,33
State forest enterprise (Serbia)			7,00

Conclusion

- Many „new“ forest owners with restituted ownership, but a lot of barriers occurred, because power of state forest enterprise and state forest administration in particular in the phase of implementation.
- Comparison in process – found some similarities and some differences.

Thank you for your attention!

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