# Governance and management practices in public forests of local communities in Romania, a systemic approach

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# Brief, recent historical context

Total forest area and percentage of private forests

| year | 1948 | 1989 (1990) | 2010 | 2016 (2012) |
|------|------|-------------|------|-------------|
| Total forest area | 6 486 471 ha | 6 367 660 ha | 6 515 173 ha | 6 900 962 ha |
| Private | 42% | 0% | 33% | ? >33% |

- 1948 – communism enforced
- 1989 – communism collapse
- 2012 – end of the first National forest Inventory Cycle, data published in 2016
- The differences between forest area - too large

# Ownership change affected more than 3 295 000 ha in the last 26 years

Forests owned, requested and restituted to private individuals, associations or local public institutions
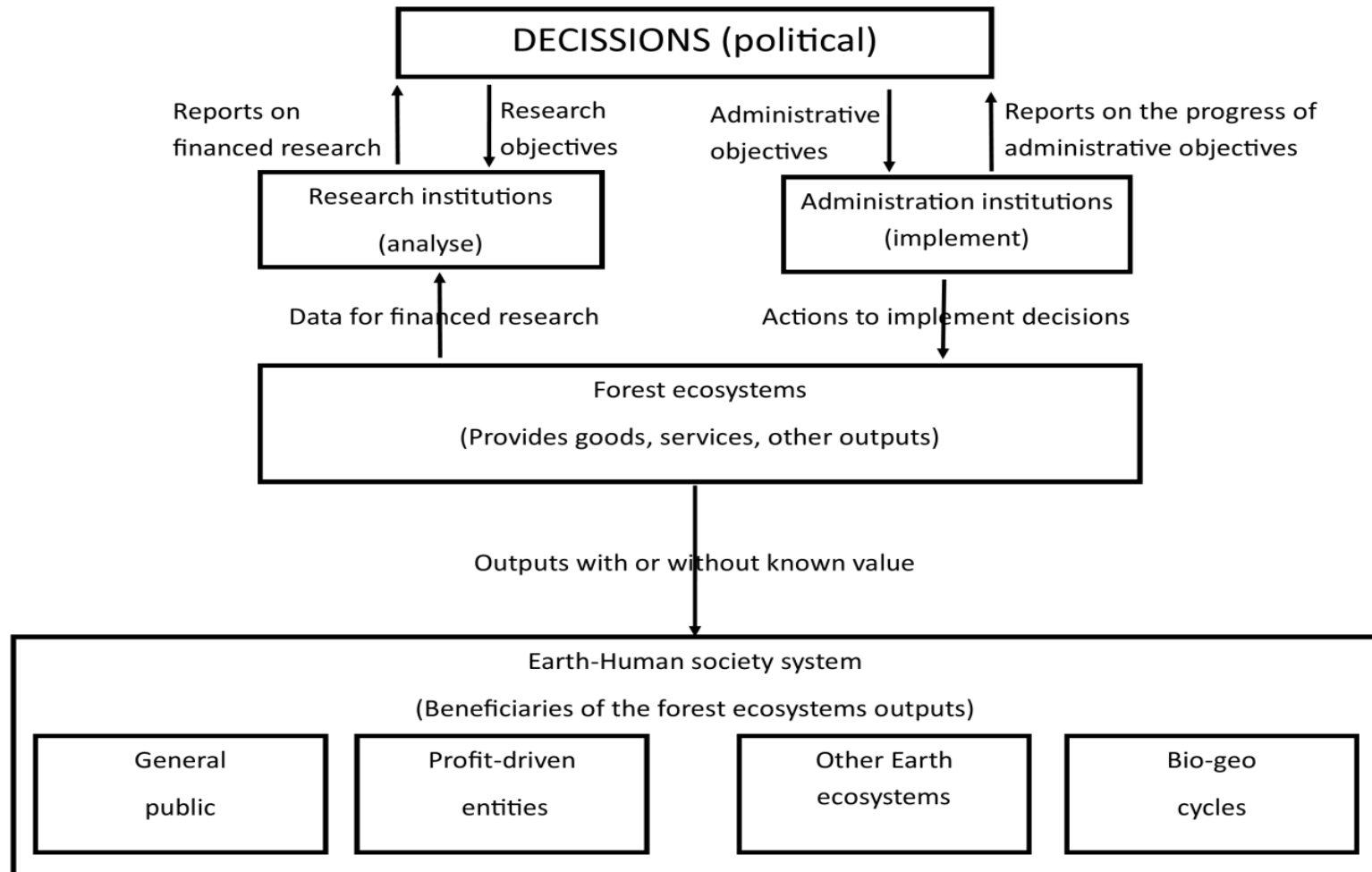
| owner | 1948 | Requests 1990 -2010 | Restituted (2010) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Private individuals | 1 516 000 ha | 1 906 000 ha | 1 352 000 ha |
| Private associations | 1 330 000 ha | 1 515 000 ha | 801 000 ha |
| Local public institutions | 1 761 000 ha | 1 503 000 ha | 1 142 000 ha |

# Case study

- On-field documentation period: 13 months 2013-2014

- Location Săliște, Sibiu, Romania

- Area 6148 ha

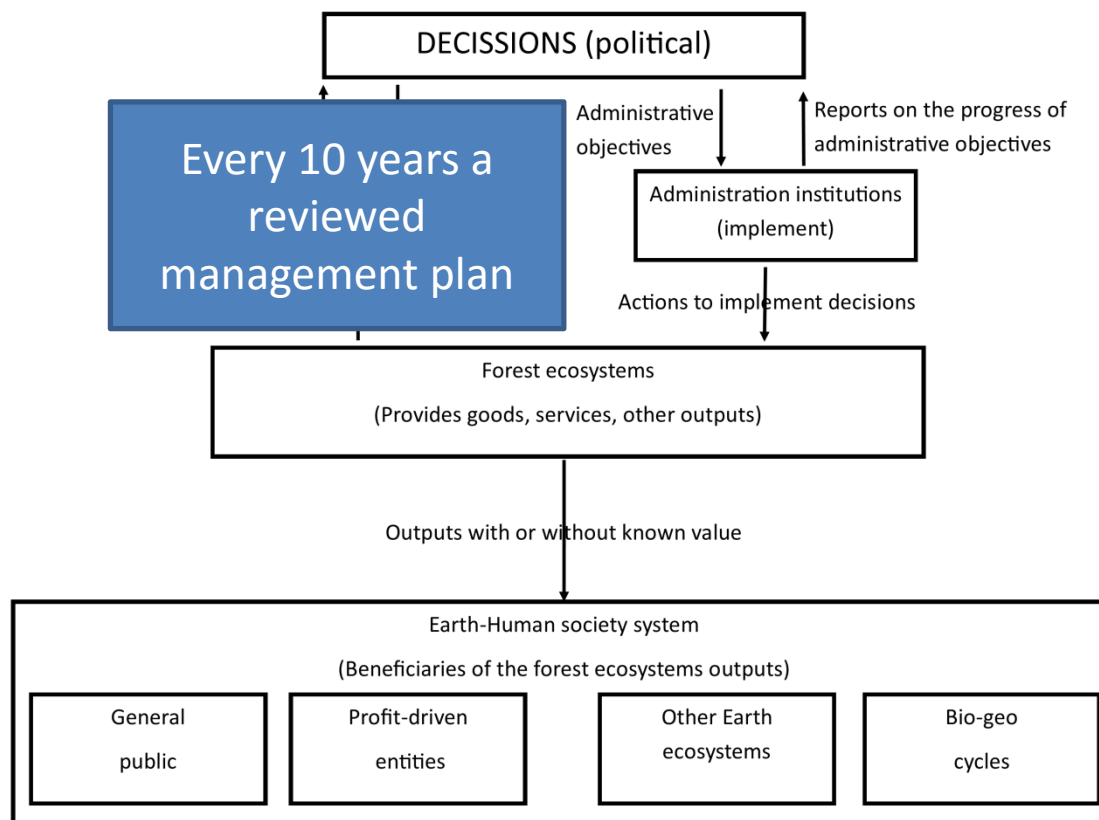- Approaches :   a) bottom up; b) top down

- Experimental system

mapping

# used: Top-bottom forest governance model

# Top-bottom forest governance model

- Implications:   - general public is far away from decissions and decissioners regarding the forests

        - the system can be corrupted, it has  no safety-mechanisms

            - provides control over the forests

            - does not allow optimal social output of the forests because it is designed to ensure control, not efficiency

            - social feedback loop does not exist

# Local level adaptation of the top-bottom governance model

DECISSIONS (political)

Every 10 years a reviewed management plan

Administrative objectives

Reports on the progress of administrative objectives

Administration institutions (implement)

Actions to implement decisions

Forest ecosystems

(Provides goods, services, other outputs)

Outputs with or without known value

Earth-Human society system

(Beneficiaries of the forest ecosystems outputs)

| General public | Profit-driven entities | Other Earth ecosystems | Bio-geo cycles |

# On-field documentation

# On-field documentation

# What is the dimension?

- Detailed study, done on 33 compartments:

- „Missing" timber volume, in the 33 forest compartments, of 13570 m3 after 10 years;

- Local community lost more than 6 million €

- Approximately 400 000 m3 on all 6000+ ha were illegaly cut in a 10 years period

# Experimental bottom-up approach

- Local authorities were informed:

- mayor, local council, local forest guard, police, prosecutors, local priests

- the complains were followed-up until a clear expression of dissinterest or protection of the current situation was obtained i.e. the mayor said: „the chart where you documented the stolen wood I already threw away" or forest guard: if you continue with this "I will harm you, engineer"

- none of the actions had any positive effect concerning the reduction of illegal logging

- a system´s map was draw for the illegal logging system at local level

# Experimental top-down approach

- Complaints were sent to legislative, executive and high-level judiciary court concerning the state of the studied forest
- Enquiries were started but, so far, with no real effect on the reduction of illegal logging in the area
- The enquiries were more effective at the beginning, when the investigators did not know each other
- Interim results of the enquiries are not public, even on request, but they are known by the benefiters of the cuttings, including local authorities
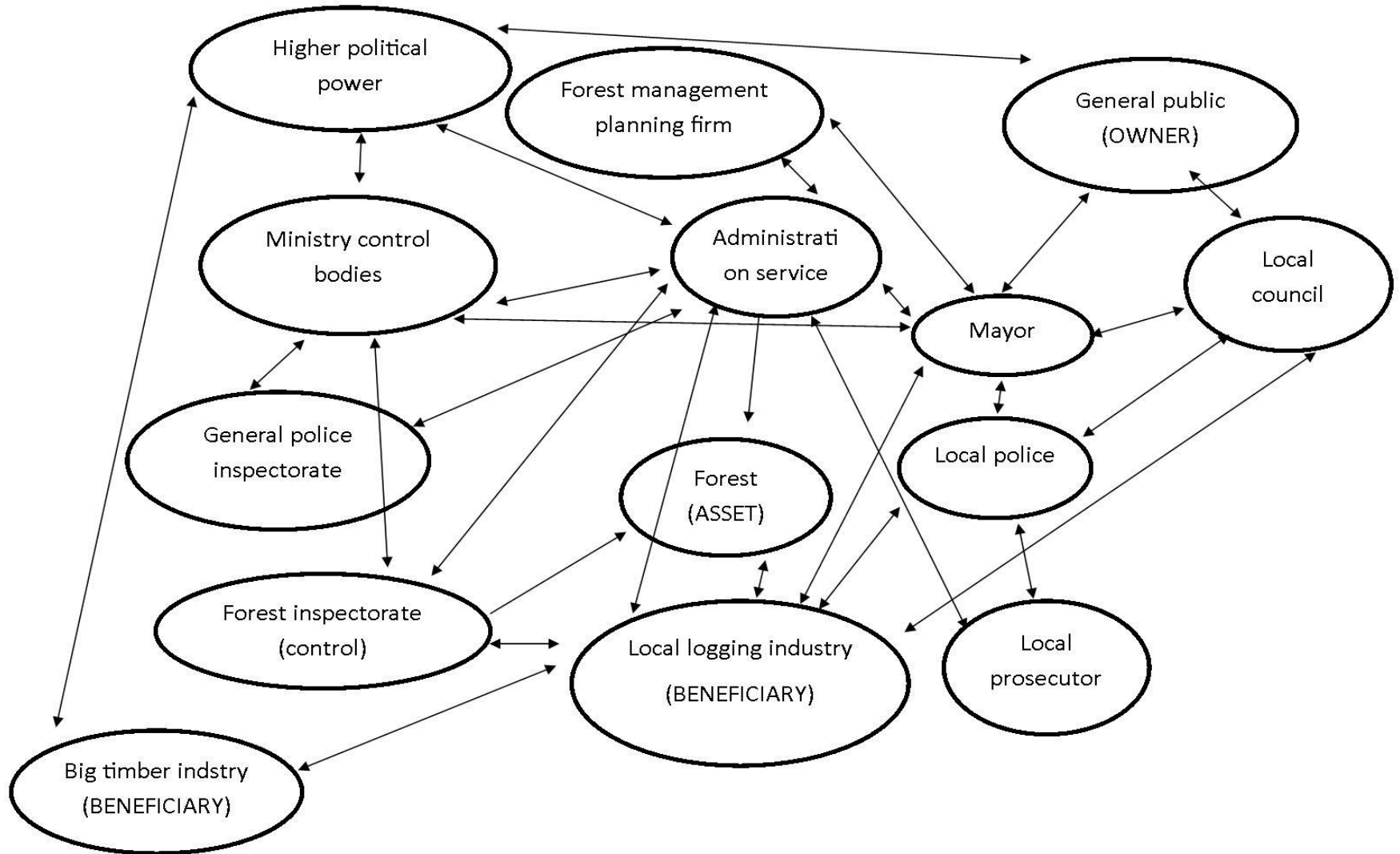
# How was it possible?

- Four main drivers
a) The way how restitution was made (without the capacity to effectively enforce forest legislation)
b) Archaic governance model, designed to control not to maximize forest outputs in the society (little dictators)
c) The extension off "illegal cuttings benefiters"
d) General public had no "forest literacy", as result of 50 years of Command & Control governance
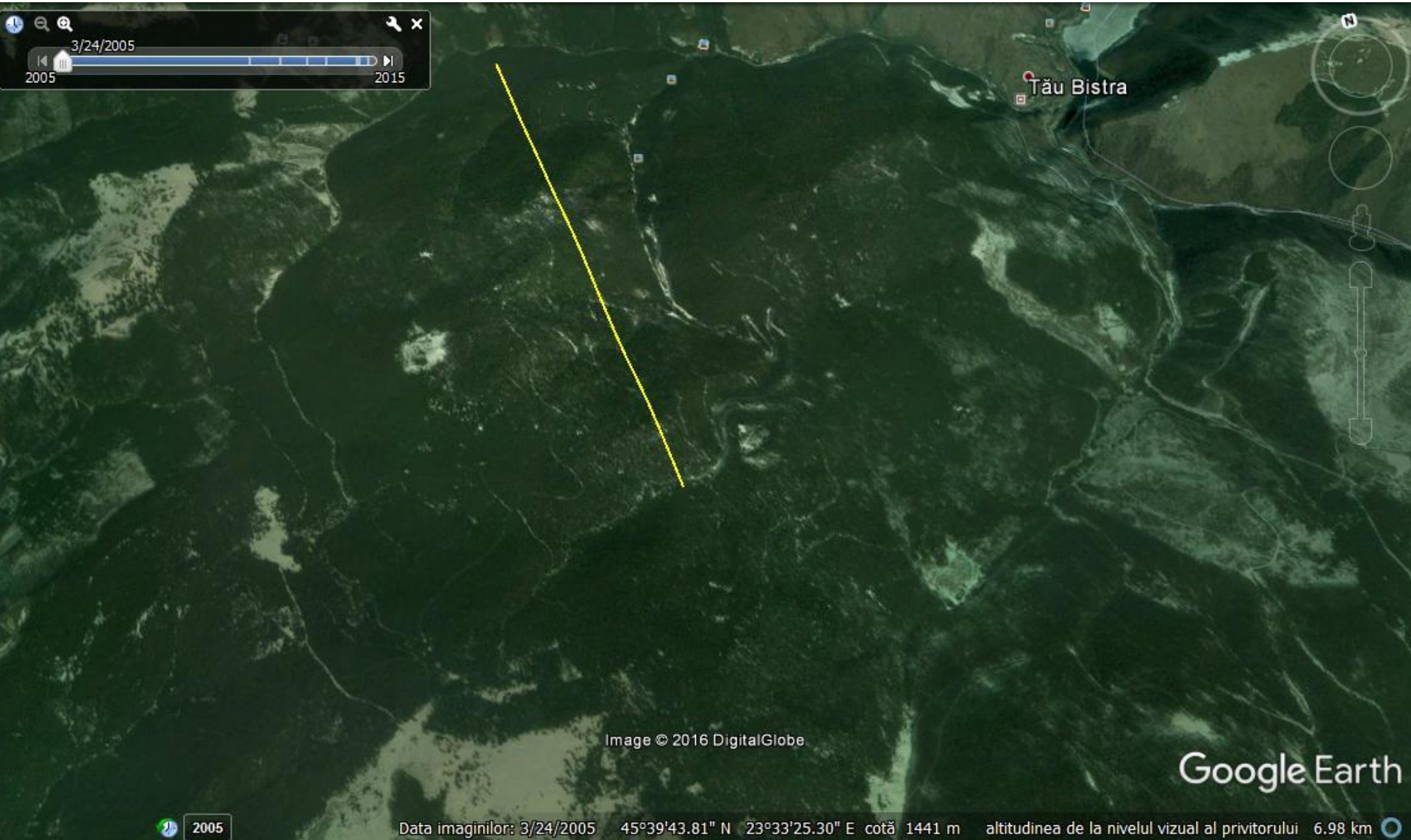
# How is it possible?

- Market for illegal timber (officially 8.8 mil m3). Big industrial complex seems to be part of the "business" (Western Europe for the "legal" timber ("covered" by papers), Asian countries for the rest)

- Until 2014 no FLEGT regulation was implemented in Romania

- Almost generalized and obvious offence concerning forest legislation (i.e. SUMAL/Tomosoft)

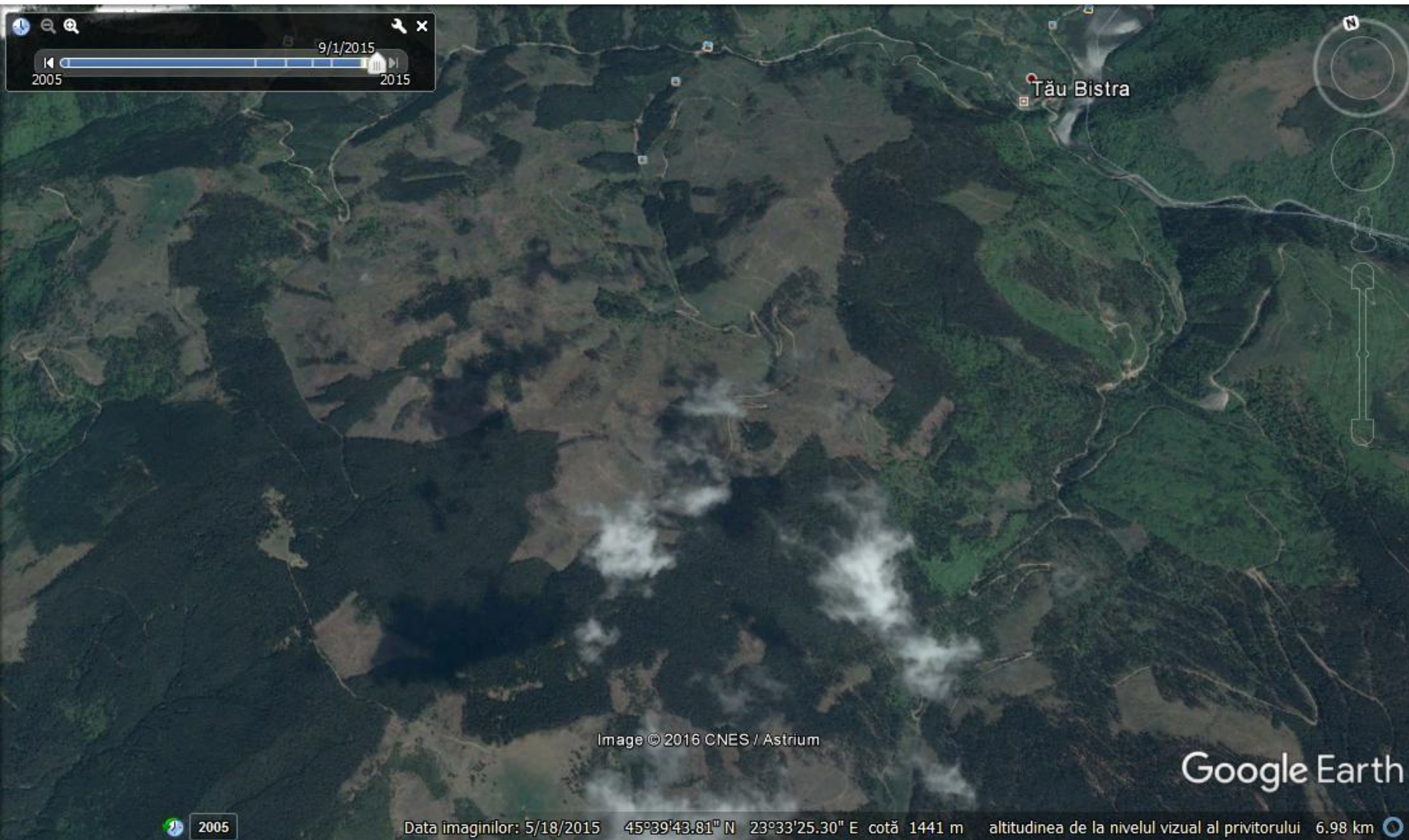- Sometimes weird and archaic legislation (conservation cuttings, virgin forests law)

# How is it possible?

# Conservation cuttings in restituted forests

# Conservation cuttings in restituted forests

Conservation cuttings

Conservation cuttings

Sometimes virgin forests are butchered in the "restitution" process

# Thank you. Questions?