

Public forest service in Slovenia between the rock and a hard place

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preliminary results

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1 Introduction/context

- Ownership and FMP changes in the last two decades are urging modern public services to innovate and improve efficient use of public financial means and resources¹
- PFOs management decisions are guided by tradition, economic incentives or responsibility towards property²
- Growing trend towards modernization of public forest service and (new) market-driven governance structures³
- Slovenia Forest Service (SFS) is the main employer in forestry, consumer of public money and the main provider of services (also legally defined) for all forest owners⁴
- The role of the private forest owners (PFOs) will increase in the future, indicating a need to redefine SFS-PFOs relations

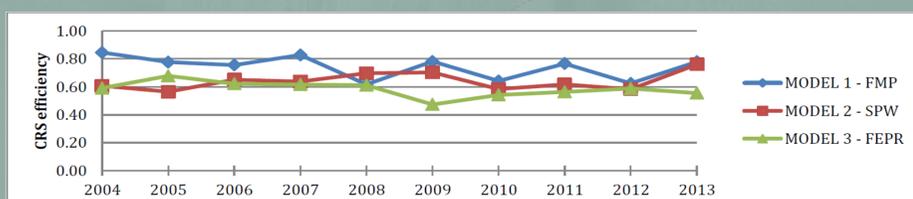
2 Aims

- To explore technical efficiency of SFS activities in period 2004-2013 including efficiency change among regional units
- To analyse the perceptions of SFS employees regarding ownership and forest management changes and effects of these changes on the activities (efficiency) of the SFS
- To present recommendation for efficiency improvement of SFS operation based on deeper understanding of changes and problems perceived by SFS employees

Results

Quantitative analysis

- Slight efficiency decline in planning, education and PR
- No major differences in efficiency between RUs
- Space for efficiency improvement of inefficient RUs exists



Conclusion

- Changes in forest ownership and management are small but constant in time
- Some forest owners has become more active and advanced in entrepreneurship activities
- Ownership and management changes barely affects the SFS activities (mainly organizational)
- Emphasis should be given to organizational, financial and bureaucratic issues of the SFS
- SFS is bounded by (1) political decisions and (2) society demands → question of legitimacy
- There is a need to redefine the role of the SFS in the future → question of autonomy
- Additional (systemic) flaws should be abolished to increase efficiency and quality of the SFS

0 Acknowledgements

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3 Methodological approach

- Explanatory sequential mixed methods design⁵
 1. Quantitative analysis
 - Efficiency analysis (Efficiency = Outputs / Inputs)
 - DEA and Malmquist indexes⁶
 - Secondary statistical data (official SFS reports)
 2. Qualitative analysis
 - Semi-structured interviews
 - Audio recorded and fully transcribed
 - Ex ante and in vivo coding in MaxQDA v.10
 - Qualitative analysis of topics and themes⁵
- Participants
 - 4 employees from the SFS (purposive sampling)
 - More than 10 years of experiences
 - Different hierarchical level and departments
- Themes from the first part were considered in the interviews

4 Qualitative analysis - main topics

- No important changes in forest ownership/FMP perceived
- Various forest owners and users → various demands
- Control of FM seems to be crucial for interviewees
- Market release affects forest owner attitudes
- SFS is underfinanced → effect on quality & productivity
- SFS is technologically behind → effect on efficiency
- Role of the SFS: from *managing* to *directing*

6 References

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- ⁴ Report about the work of SFS in 2012. Slovenia Forest Service, Ljubljana.
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- ⁶ Huguenin, J.-M., 2013. Data Envelopment Analysis, in: *Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*. Wiley & Sons. 235-274 pp.

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