

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

Vasja LEBAN

*preliminary results*

Biotechnical faculty, Department of forestry and renewable forest resources, Večna pot 83, SI-1000 Ljubljana



## 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 resources<sup>1</sup>
- PFOs management decisions are guided by tradition, economic incentives or responsibility towards property<sup>2</sup>
- Growing trend towards modernization of public forest service and (new) market-driven governance structures<sup>3</sup>
- 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 owners<sup>4</sup>
- The role of the private forest owners (PFOs) will increase in the future, indicating a need to redefine SFS-PFOs relations

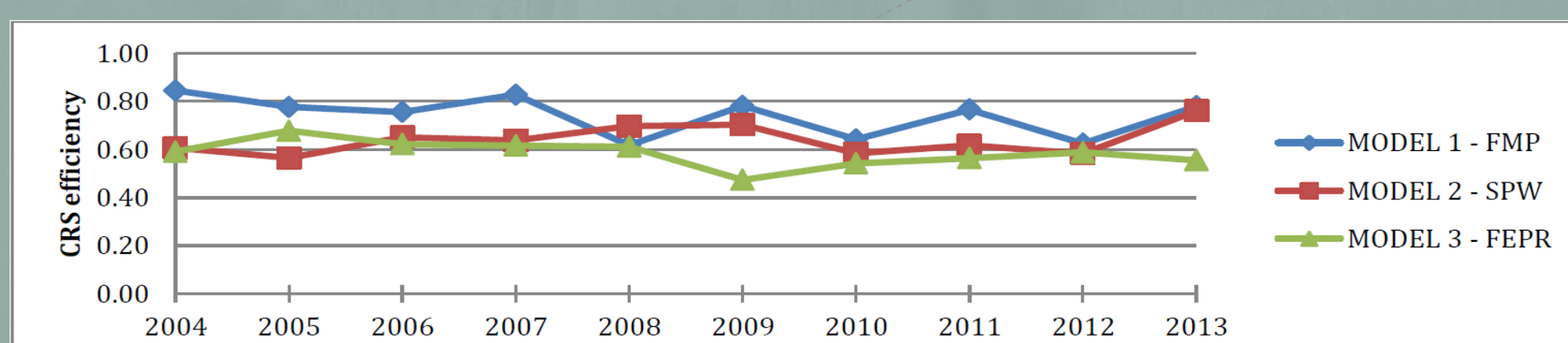
## 2 Aims

- 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 design<sup>5</sup>
  1. Quantitative analysis
    - Efficiency analysis ( Efficiency = Outputs / Inputs )
    - DEA and Malmquist indexes<sup>6</sup>
    - 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 themes<sup>5</sup>
- 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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- <sup>4</sup> Report about the work of SFS in 2012. Slovenia Forest Service, Ljubljana.
- <sup>5</sup> Creswell J. W. 2014. Research design. fourth ed. SAGE publication. 273 p.
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Contact: Vasja Leban, M.Sc. Department of forestry and renewable forest resources, Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia E-mail: [vasja.leban@bf.uni-lj.si](mailto:vasja.leban@bf.uni-lj.si) Tel: +386 1 3203 520 Fax: +386 1 4231 161