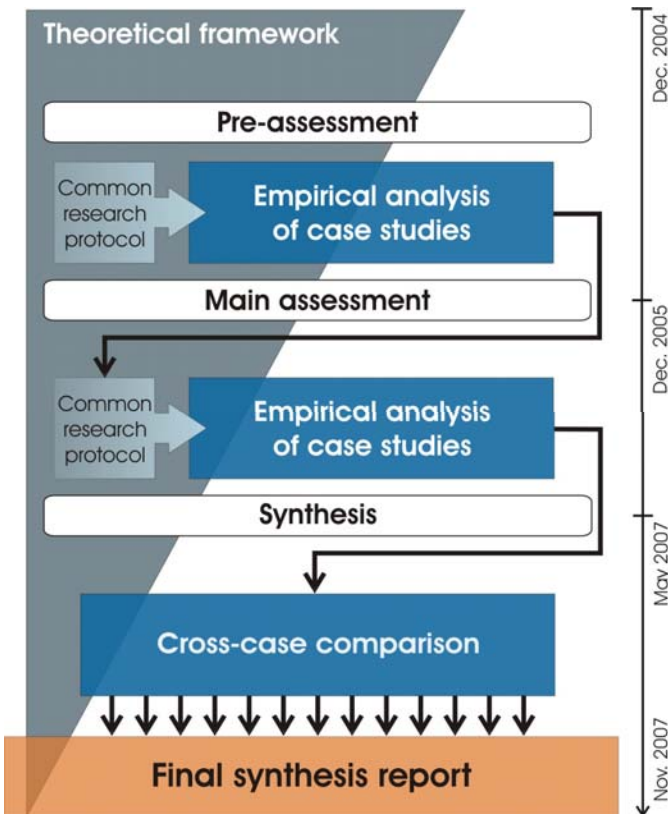


Work Plan & Timeframe

The GoFOR project runs for 36 months and is structured into three distinct phases:

- (i) a *pre-assessment* phase in which the research team develops a set of criteria that operationalise the concept of governance and translates these criteria into a common research protocol which is then empirically tested with an enlarged set of pilot case studies,
- (ii) an empirical *main assessment* phase in which a reduced set of governance case studies is analysed drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, and
- (iii) a *synthesis* phase with cross-case comparisons intended to identify successful (and less successful) implementation practices.



Project Partners

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Visit the GoFOR website which offers more detailed information on the project and its researchers, links to other information sources, regularly updated news on the state of the project and on events related to GoFOR.



New Modes of Governance

The context of forest politics is changing. More than ever, governmental actors lack the power to deliver the required or requested policy results on their own. If decisions cannot or shall not be imposed by hierarchy, and coordination cannot be left to market mechanisms, other means of coordination are needed.

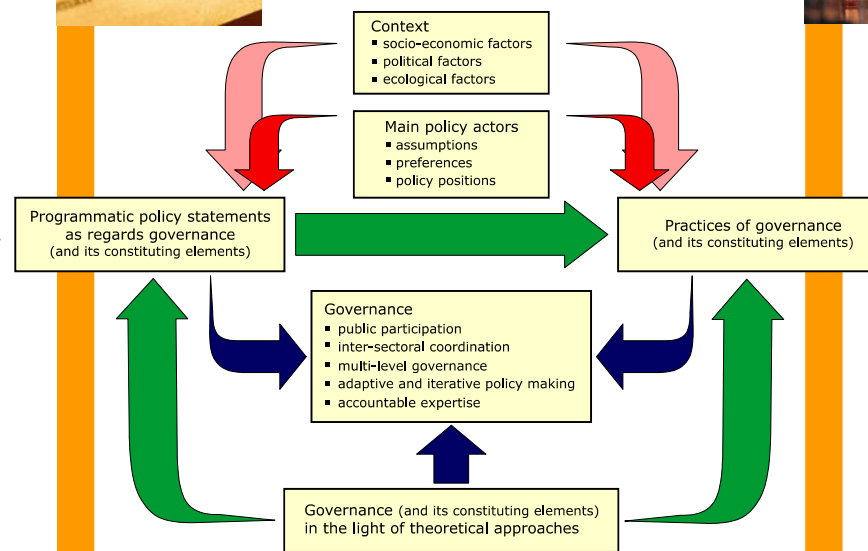
Under the term 'new modes of governance', policy makers have been striving for *less intrusive means of achieving policy goals*. Governance is a multi-faceted concept. At times it has been used as a normatively-laden catchword of political language. In other cases it is used as an analytical term in the fields of political science and economics where it describes those types of political processes in which non-hierarchical modes of guidance, such as persuasion and negotiation, are employed, and public and private actors are engaged in policy formulation and implementation.

What is GoFOR?

The idea of governance is not new in the forest sector. But so far, neither comparative analyses nor systematic evaluations of the effectiveness of these practices have been carried out. The research project 'New Modes of Governance for Sustainable Forestry in Europe – GoFOR' strives to critically evaluate practices of new modes of governance as a basis for policy relevant conclusions and recommendations in order to safeguard sustainable forest management in Europe.

GoFOR is funded by the European Commission under the Sixth EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The project currently involves 29 researchers in ten European countries.

Conceptual Framework



Research Objectives

GoFOR aims to evaluate new practices of governance by:

- analyzing *programmatic policy statements* to learn about the role that governance and its elements play in the repertoire of different policy actors
- investigating current and evolving *practices* of governance to find out whether they are applied in a substantive way or whether they are merely symbolic rhetoric
- exploring the broader political *context* to see how far effective governance is contingent on environmental, social, political, and economic factors
- carrying out cross-sectoral *comparisons* of governance processes in ten countries to explain the success or failure of specific models
- critically evaluating the *transferability* of 'successful' governance models to other national and/or sectoral contexts in order to foster mutual learning.

Elements of Analysis

As the term 'governance' is still too vague to productively guide empirical analysis, it is operationalised by various procedural elements.

These elements can be found both in political documents, such as the White Paper on European Governance, and in theoretical discussions on new forms of policy making. The analyses in GoFOR focus on the following five procedural elements:

- participation
- inter-sectoral coordination
- multi-level governance
- adaptive and iterative planning
- the use of accountable expertise

Case Studies

The research design used in the GoFOR project is a multiple case study approach with cases primarily coming from forestry but also from other sectors (like nature conservation, regional development, environmental policy). The cases to be analyzed deal with:

- National Forest Programmes in Austria, Hungary, Norway and Spain,
- the reformulation and implementation of Forest Laws in Denmark and France,
- the designation of nature conservation in Greece and the Netherlands,
- regional development policies under the LEADER+ programme in Germany,
- policies against corruption in Romania.