

Environment, Development, Governance

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- Manchester's research:
 - the Society Environment Research Group
- Current Consensus on environmental governance
- Emerging questions and debates

The society and environment research group (SERG)

- 2004 University merger: new School of Environment and Development
- 2006 SERG formed by the Schools of Environment and Social Sciences:
 - Processes of environmental change
 - Political and economic driving forces
 - Social and spatial consequences
 - Political responses

SERG research areas

- Conservation, ecotourism, landscape
- Mining and petroleum extraction
- Agriculture
- Water resources, water services

- Ownership, property rights, markets.
- Governance, state and democracy.
- Globalisation, international investment
- 'sustainability'

A consensus on environmental governance?

- 'Central state control' perceived as detrimental:
 - Socially: 'local resource users' marginalised in favour of big business, political patronage.
 - Environmentally: lack of local knowledge leads to inefficient and ineffective resource management – degradation.

A consensus on environmental governance?

- Better environmental management through:
 - Pricing of resource use to promote efficient use.
 - Decentralisation to local levels – governance subsidiarity
 - Participation by resource users in decision-making – deliberative democracy.

Emerging questions and controversies -1

- Pricing of resource use to promote efficient use.
 - Privileges purchasing power – exclusion of the poor.
 - The problem of allocation of property rights: private property vs commons vs nationalisation
 - The need for market regulation?

Emerging questions and controversies -2

- Decentralisation to local levels – governance subsidiarity:
 - Power inequalities at local level: 'local elites', local discrimination (ethnicity, immigration, gender).
 - Scientific management must have priority over local vested interests if it is to be effective.
 - the need for 'integrated' management demands management at a larger scale: is large-scale infrastructure always wrong?

Emerging questions and controversies - 3

- Participation by resource users in decision-making – deliberative democracy.
 - asymmetries of knowledge favour existing resource use(r)s – resistance to reform.
 - Socially progressive political agendas may be stronger in national than local politics.
 - ‘Sustainability’ involves political choices (winners and losers).

Conclusion

- The consensus of the past 2 decades is only now being tested in practice
- The role of national political authority is critical to environmental governance:
 - setting the terms for local political engagement
 - Allocating and enforcing property rights
 - Regulating the operation of markets for environmental goods and services