

**FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN GHANA: AN ANALYSIS OF
POLICY AND INSTITUTIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Despite claims by many developing countries that they have adopted sustainable forest policies in return for bilateral and multilateral donor grants, deforestation rates are still quite high. In order to understand this problem, it has been suggested that forest policies of individual countries should be critically examined. Yet there is no comprehensive theoretical framework for analysing, in an integrated way, forest policy formulation and implementation in the developing world. To help fill this gap, an integrated policy network model is devised. This addresses the main weaknesses of the existing policy network approach, especially its negligence of power differentials and failure to analyse micro-interactions. The new model also provides a framework for analysing the influence of complex power relations and informal networks on actual forest policy outcomes.

In order to test the robustness of the new model, it is applied to analyse forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana. The analysis reveals that actual forest policy in Ghana has historically been exploitative. In response to international pressures, a new Forest Policy, with sustainable and participatory goals, was formulated in 1994. However, this has been poorly implemented, due to complex interdependencies and informal networks between state officials and forest exploitative groups. While local communities are marginalised, patronage networks among the political elite, top forestry officials and “big timber men” negatively affect revenue collection and checking illegal logging. Similarly, complex interdependencies and networks among guards, small-scale chainsaw operators and some farmers contribute to poor implementation of forest protection policies in the countryside.

Based on these findings, it has been suggested that strengthening of the Forestry Department must be accompanied by social change and greater transparency on the part of state officials, if forest policy could ever be well implemented in Ghana. Donor pressures alone cannot ensure sustainable resource management, due to the ability of the executive to contest such pressures through the use of policy ambiguities. A change driven by civil society, and a strong local media should help improve governance and forest management in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development-Ghana
CDR	Committee for the Defence of the Revolution
CFC	Community Forestry Committee
CFMU	Collaborative Forest Management Unit
DA	District Assembly
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FC	Forestry Commission
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FSDMP	Forest Sector Development Master Plan
FSDP	Forest Sector Development Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoG	Government of Ghana
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISSER	Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organisation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MLF	Ministry of Lands and Forestry
NA	Native Authority
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPP	New Patriotic Party

NRC	National Redemption Council
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
ODA	Department of Overseas Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PNP	People's National Party
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMC	Supreme Military Council
SRA	Social Responsibility Agreement
TI	Transparency International
TO	Technical Officer
TUC	Timber Utilisation Contract
TUP	Timber Utilisation Permit
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
US	United States
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Study

The rapid rate of forest resource depletion, especially across the humid tropics, has been the focus of much environmental concern in recent years. Although the proximate causes of this high rate of global forest loss are complex and quite poorly understood (Sizer, 1994; Gibson *et al.*, 2000), it is generally acknowledged that formulating a good forest policy and implementing it effectively are essential for sustainable forest management (Grainger, 1993; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). A good forest policy also has the potential for increasing government revenue (Repetto and Gillis, 1988), and for improving the livelihoods of poor people in forest communities (Carney and Farrington, 1998; World Bank, 2000; Ribot, 2008).

This line of argument has prompted intense international pressures on the governments of the tropical world to adopt sustainable forest policies (FAO, 1985; Sizer, 1994; Gupta and Asher, 1998; World Bank, 2000; Gray, 2002; Poore, 2003). Such pressures, in recent years, have taken the form of “financial aid conditionalities”, in which developing countries are required to adopt sustainable and participatory forest policies in return for bilateral and multilateral donor grants (Kaimowitz *et al.*, 1998; World Bank, 2000; Agrawal, 2007). Unsurprisingly, many developing countries claim that they have adopted such sustainable forest policies (Carney and Farrington, 1998; Latif, 2002; Amanor and Brown, 2003). Donor spending dedicated to the management of forest in developing countries has also increased accordingly (Sizer, 1994; World Bank, 1997), yet deforestation rates are still quite high (FAO, 2003a, 2005; Agrawal, 2007). Against this background, it has been suggested that forest policies of individual countries should be critically examined, so as to understand the extent to which stated policies have actually been implemented (Ribot, 1999, 2001).

Despite this suggestion, there are very few studies on forest policy, especially in Africa (Woodcook, 2002). Little is still known about how governments in Africa respond to pressures from international donors. Even though many governments claim that they have adopted forest resource management decentralisation, few researchers have

examined how these stated policies are actually implemented in individual countries (Bazaara, 2003; Ribot, 2008). Furthermore, while it has been acknowledged that forests and forestry are often perceived differently by various competing groups (Cline-Cole and Madge, 2000), the contests and negotiations over forest policy have not been fully understood nor explored.

Although the stated policies of most countries usually differ from actual policies (Aucoin, 1971; Poore, 2003; Grainger and Konteh, 2007), the few studies on forest policy tend to focus only on stated policy. This has led to a misunderstanding of the fluidity of power that characterises the processes. For instance, simply because they often accept financial aid “conditionalities”, policy makers in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world have often been portrayed as “powerless” in their relationships with international donors. This has prompted suggestions that the autonomy of governments of developing countries is being usurped by international actors (Biersteker and Weber, 1996; Hyden *et al.*, 2000; Leonard, 2001). Similarly, by virtue of the fact that *formal* policy processes in the developing world are not plural, local people in such countries have often been constructed as “powerless”, in their relationships with the executive. The strategies that these marginalised people employ to influence actual policy outcomes to their advantage have not been well explored. This research therefore seeks to help fill these gaps through an examination of forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana.

Given that a comprehensive policy model is needed for any rigorous analysis of the policy process (Allison, 1971; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Mitchell, 1989; Dowding, 1996), the research also aims to make a significant contribution to the literature on policy science. It specifically aims to advance policy network theory, which emerged as a result of dissatisfaction with the hierarchical policy models, which often fail to acknowledge the fluidity of power in society (see, Derthick, 1972; Anderson, 1975; Parsons, 1995). Based on a relational conceptualisation of power (see Foucault, 1980; Cresswell, 2000; Sharp *et al.*, 2000; Lukes, 2005), policy network theory posits that the policy process is shaped by complex interactions between both state and societal actors (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith 1993; Kickert, 1997; Pierre and Peters, 2000; John, 2001). Policy, it is argued, can also emerge through everyday struggles and networks among several actors. Hence, there is no clear distinction between policy formulation and implementation (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008).

Despite these useful contributions, existing policy network models have a number of weaknesses (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997; John, 2001; Raab, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). For instance, they tend to ignore power differentials (see Smith, 1993; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). This is odd, given that although power is fluid (Foucault, 1980; Sharp *et al.*, 2000), it is still not equally distributed within society (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997). Hierarchical forms of governance are still employed in both developed and developing countries (Pierre and Peters, 2000).

Besides, many policy network theorists have only focused on inter-organisational networks at the meso- and macro-levels (see for instance, Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). There have been calls for network models that capture how micro-level or face-to-face interactions influence actual policy outcomes (John, 2001; Raab, 2001; Sibeon, 2004; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Few researchers have applied network theory to examine policy implementation (Provan and Milward, 2001; Adam and Kriesi, 2007; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Given that “forests yield multiple products over which stakeholders assert competing claims” (Agrawal, 2007:112), an analysis of forest policy in Ghana will provide a good opportunity to help fill some of these intellectual gaps. Such a theoretical contribution will also respond to Mitchell’s (1989) request that in order to move resource policy analysis forward, geographers must aim at designing comprehensive policy models.

1.2 Justifying the Choice of Ghana for this Research

There are a number of reasons why the choice of Ghana for this research is very significant. First, even though the actual extent of forest loss is contested, it is generally acknowledged that the country lost at least 50% of its forest cover between 1900 and the 1990s (Fair, 1992; Fairhead and Leach, 1998; FAO, 2003a). So it is important to critically analyse the contribution of policy weaknesses to this. There are a few studies on Ghana’s forest policy, and literature is dominated by reports produced by top officials of the state forest agencies (see, for instance, Smith 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998; Oppon, 2004). As these writers are part of the government, they do not provide critical analysis of the real situation. For instance, the inability to implement forest policy is often attributed to resource constraints. The influence of patronage networks on policy outcomes has hardly been analysed. This study aims at presenting a more critical

analysis of the entire policy process, and to show how actual policy outcomes are also shaped by informal network relationships between state and societal actors.

Another reason is that Ghana is often cited as a model democracy in West Africa (Amanor and Brown, 2003). The World Bank and the ITTO have commended it for being an outstanding country in Africa as far as the adoption of sustainable and participatory forest policies is concerned (World Bank, 2003; Donkor and Vlosky, 2003). This has helped Ghana to receive huge amounts of aid for its forestry programmes (Amanor and Brown, 2003; Forestry Commission, 2005b; GoG, 2007). The country will, therefore, be a good place to analyse how international pressures impinge on the autonomy of policy making in developing countries.

The complex nature of forest ownership and tenure rights in Ghana also makes it an excellent country to analyse how complex power relations and networks affect forest management. All forests in Ghana are owned by landholding communities, who are often represented by traditional rulers. However, by statute, forest reserves are managed by the Forestry Department on behalf of the government (Smith, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Outside reserves, forests are under the control of individual and communal owners, although all off-reserve timber resources are also legally vested in the state “in trust” for the owners. Thus, while local farmers are the custodians of trees outside the reserves, management and utilisation rights are vested in the state (Oppon, 2004). Hence, the Ghanaian forestry sector offers a good setting for analysing how complex relations of power and informal networks between and among state and societal actors influence actual forest policy outcomes.

1.3 Contested Views on the Magnitude of Ghana’s Forest Loss

Actual forest cover trends in Ghana are contested (Fair, 1992; Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995). It is often assumed that up till the late 1890s almost every part of southern Ghana was occupied by closed forest. Based on such assumptions, some researchers estimated that forest cover fell from about 8 million ha in the late 1890s to about 2 million ha contemporary (Frimpong-Mensah, 1989; Fair, 1992; Ebregt, 1995). To these researchers, deforestation in Ghana is a recent phenomenon, brought about by the expansion of farming activities (Frimpong-Mensah 1989; Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995). Fairhead and Leach (1998) argued that most early estimates of forest trends were

inaccurate because they were based on a wrong assumption that the entire southern Ghana was forested in the 1890s. Relying on anthropological and historical data, such as those presented by Zon and Sparhawk (1923) and Chipp (1923), they asserted that the forests before the 1890s may have just covered 5.5 million ha, of which 2 million ha still remain. Thus forest loss in the twentieth century was only about half of that suggested in the conventional literature (Fairhead and Leach, 1998).

If Fairhead and Leach are correct then the annual rate of deforestation, as stated in conventional literature, may also be exaggerated. However, even these researchers agree that the rate of deforestation was quite high during the 20th Century, and according to FAO (2003a) it remained at 1.7% per annum between 1990 and 2000. As a result of human impacts, only 2% of the total area of forest reserves is in a “very excellent” condition (Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995). The picture is even more disturbing when it is remembered that, of the 214 forest reserves, 121 (representing about half of the entire reserves area) are seriously degraded or without forests at all (ibid). A study on forest policy in Ghana is therefore not out of place.

1.4 Aims of the Study

This study therefore aims at analysing forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana. Given that such a task requires a comprehensive theoretical framework, the study also aims at devising a new policy network model for analysing, in an integrated way, forest policy formulation and implementation, especially in an African setting where the informal dimension of political relationships and institutions is very important. In view of these broad aims, the study specifically seeks to:

1. Design an integrated policy network model for analysing forest policy formulation and implementation.
2. Use the designed policy model to analyse forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana, and test its applicability to this country.
3. Examine the influence of complex power relations and informal networks on actual forest policy outcomes in Ghana.

1.5 Definitions of Key Concepts

Given that most concepts in the social sciences are contested, this section provides the “operational definitions” of key concepts that are used in this study.

1.5.1 Forest

Forest is defined as “vegetation dominated by trees, without a grassy or weedy understorey, and which has not recently been farmed” (Hall, 1987:33). This definition is most appropriate because formal “forestry” in Ghana is largely concerned with only the closed forest zones (Kotey *et al.*, 1998: 21). Thus, as in many formal policy documents and previous studies (see for instance, Fairhead and Leach, 1998; Kotey *et al.*, 1998), the term “forest” is used to refer to closed forests and not the open forests or savannah woodlands.

1.5.2 Forest Resource Management

Following Mitchell (1989), forest resource management is taken to mean “the actual policy decisions or arrangements concerning the allocation and development of forest resources”.

1.5.3 Policy

Policy is defined as “a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern” (Anderson, 1975: 3). *Public policy* is a “compendium of statements, laws and other actions concerning government’s intentions for a particular human activity under its jurisdiction” (Miller, 1994: 2). For a policy to be regarded as a *public policy*, it must have been generated within the framework of governmental procedures and organisations (Hogwood and Gunn 1984). *Policy Statements* are the formal expressions of public policy. They include legislative statutes, decrees, and administrative rules and regulations (Anderson, 1975:5). The policy process comprises inputs, outputs and outcomes. *Inputs* include: perceptions, demand, and apathy. *Outputs* include such things as: application, interpretation, enforcement, evaluation etc (Easton, 1965; Parsons, 1995). *Policy outcomes* are the consequences for

society, intended or unintended, that flow from action or inaction by government. In other words, they are the impacts of policy (Anderson, 1975).

1.5.3.1 Forest Policy

A forest policy states goals and strategies for the management of forests, and outlines procedures for the distribution of costs and benefits (Cubbage *et al.*, 1993). According to Miller (1994) a forest policy adopts three types of mechanisms to protect the forests. These are: persuasion, financial inducement (i.e. grants, tax incentives) and coercion (legal requirements and restrictions).

1.5.4 Policy Networks

Policy networks are sustainable mutual interactions or associations between and among state and societal actors around policy issues. They are characterised by mutual dependencies and the exchange of resources between various state and societal actors or between parts of the government (Smith, 1993).

1.5.5 Institutions

Institutions are “regularised patterns of behaviour between individuals and groups in society” (Mearns, 1995: 103).

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research problem and justifies why the choice of Ghana for this study is very significant. The chapter also presents the aims of the research and defines the key concepts used in the study.

Chapter 2 provides background information on the study area - Ghana. This includes: the physical, demographic and socio-economic features; political history and administration; ethnic composition; land use patterns; forest ownership and tenure rights; forest resources and timber production.

Chapter 3 is the literature review. Its aim is to identify gaps in knowledge and to choose an appropriate methodology for the study. The chapter reviews literature on: public policy analysis; models of policy formulation; organisational theory; policy implementation; the concept of power and models of Ghana. It also examines theoretical perspectives and empirical findings on forest management decentralisation programmes.

Chapter 4 outlines a new approach to modelling power and presents an integrated policy network model for analysing policy formulation and implementation. The chapter also discusses the methods used for the collection and analysis of data and lists some of the limitations of the study.

Chapter 5 outlines the trends in stated and actual forest policies since the pre-colonial era. In doing so, it identifies disparities between stated and actual policies.

Chapter 6 provides a more rigorous analysis of forest policy trends within a framework of the new integrated policy network model. The chapter analyses how policy changes correspond with changes in forest interests and network relationships among main forest actors. It also assesses the strategies adopted by policy makers in Ghana to contest international pressures.

Chapter 7 analyses forest policy implementation in Ghana. It largely focuses on examining the influence of complex power relations and informal networks on forest policy implementation. By doing so, it also analyses the strategies adopted by marginalised local communities to influence actual policy outcomes.

Chapter 8 summarises the main research findings and the conclusions drawn from them. It also outlines recommendations for future research and for a more sustainable forest management in Ghana.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ECONOMY, POLITICAL CONDITIONS AND FOREST RESOURCES OF GHANA

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents relevant background information on the study area-Ghana. This includes: the physical, demographic and socio-economic features; political history and administration; ethnic composition; land use patterns; forest ownership and tenure rights; forest resources and state forestry organisations.

2.2 Location and Physical Characteristics

Ghana is located on the West Africa's Gulf of Guinea coast. It has a total area of 238,540 km², of which land constitutes 230,020 km². There are two distinct rainy seasons in the south (i.e. May-June and August-September), but only one in the north (i.e. June-July). Annual rainfall ranges from 1100 mm in the north to 2500 mm in the south-western part of the country. The natural vegetation cover is significantly influenced by the rainfall distribution. Though there are many transition zones, the vegetation can be put into three main categories. A coastal low savannah and mangrove occupy the narrow coastal belt at the south-eastern part. This gives way to the high forest zone, which occupies the south and constituting about a third of the entire land area. The northern portion is the savannah zone (MLF, 2001).

2.3 Demographic Characteristics

The population of Ghana increased from 12.2 million in 1984 (GSS, 1985) to 18.4 million in 2000 (GSS, 2000). It is currently estimated at 22.9 million (World Factbook, 2007), with a growth rate of 2%. A slow decline in fertility rates, as against a relatively sharp fall in infant mortality, is the main cause of this high growth rate. For instance, infant mortality rate fell from 133 per 1000 in 1957 to 59 per 1000 in 2004 (PRB, 2004). However, total fertility rate only declined slowly from 6.4 in 1988 to 4.4 in 1998 (GSS, 1998). A study, in 2003, revealed that total fertility is still around 4.4 (GSS, 2003). Some rural areas even have fertility rates far higher than this figure. The

Northern Region, for instance, has a total fertility rate of 7.0 per woman (ibid). About 63% of the population live in rural areas (Siaw, 2001). Rural-urban migration is very common, due to widespread poverty in rural areas. Rural-rural migrations are also not uncommon. Many farmers have migrated from the savannah forest zone to the forest zone to work on cocoa plantations as labourers or as settler migrant farmers.

2.4 Ethnic Composition

Like many other African countries, Ghana is made up of many ethnic groups. The predominant group is the Akan, which constitutes 49.1% of the country's population. It is followed by Mole-Dagbani (16.5%), Ewe (12.7%), Ga-Adangbe (8.0%), Guan (4.4%), Gurma (3.9%), Grusi (2.8%), Mande-Busanga (1.1%) and others (1.5%) (GSS, 2000). There are several subdivisions of each group and each subdivision share a common cultural heritage, history, language, and origin. The Akan, for instance, is made up of the Asante, Fante, Akwapim, Akyem, Akwamu, Ahanta, Bono, Nzema, Kwahu, and Safwi.

2.5 Political History and Administration

Before the arrival of the first Europeans (i.e. Portuguese) in 1471, Ghana was made up of several chiefdoms (traditional states), which were governed by traditional rulers (Aihin, 1979). Traditional rulers were still in charge of the various chiefdoms when other Europeans, notably the Dutch, English, Danish, and Swedish arrived. The Europeans named the country "Gold coast" because of the presence of large deposits of Gold, which became the main trading commodity (Reynolds, 1974; Ohene, 2002). With the establishment of plantations in the new world, slaves replaced gold as the most lucrative trading commodity. There were several conflicts among the Europeans but the British had become masters of most of the coast by the early nineteenth century (Reynolds, 1974).

During the nineteenth century, Asante, the most powerful traditional state, sought to rule the coastal states. The coastal people came to rely on the British for protection against Asante incursions. A number of wars were fought between the Asantes, on one hand, and the British and the coastal states (Ohene, 2002). In 1884, the first governor of the Gold Coast, Commander Worsley Hill, signed a special treaty with the chiefs of the

coastal states. This treaty, referred to as the Bond of 1844, brought coastal states under British control. In 1874, Asante was defeated by the British and this paved the way for a formal establishment of the Crown Colony of the Gold Coast. The Asante were still “disturbing” the British and the coastal states until 1902 when they were finally defeated and brought permanently under British control. Once Asante was totally subdued, the British managed to bring other northern states under their jurisdiction. The colonial administration ruled “indirectly” through local chiefs. Village councils of chiefs and elders were responsible for the immediate needs of individual localities. Such a “power-sharing” strategy was necessitated by the limited number of colonial staff (Lugard, 1922; Mamdani, 1996) and the strong control that traditional rulers wielded on their territories (Boone, 2003; Oppon, 2004; Guri, 2006). By the end of World War II, agitation for independence ran high. Many ex-service men supported a small group of educated minority to fight for independence.

Ghana obtained independence on 6th march 1957, with Dr Kwame Nkrumah as its first Prime Minister. It became a Republic in 1960 and Dr Kwame Nkrumah became the first president. In 1966, Nkrumah’s Convention People’s Party was overthrown by a coup led by some officers of the Ghana Police and the Armed Forces. The National Liberation Council (NLC), headed by Lt. General Ankrah, ruled Ghana during this time. In 1969, General Ankrah was removed and Lt. General Afrifa became the chairman of the ruling NLC. A general election in the same year brought to power the Progress Party, with Dr Abrefa as a prime minister and Mr. Akufo Addo as the president. The military took over again in 1972 when the National Redemption Council (NRC) came to power, with Acheampong as the Head of State. In 1975, the NRC was reorganised into the Supreme Military Council (SMC). In response to agitations to worsening economic conditions, other officers of the SMC forced Acheampong to resign in 1978. He was replaced with General Akuffo.

The SMC was overthrown in 1979 by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which was led by Jerry John Rawlings. He ruled for only 3 months and organised elections. This brought to power the People’s National Party (PNP), whose leader was Dr H. Limann. The PNP was overthrown again in 1981 by another coup led by the same J.J. Rawlings. The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), headed by J.J. Rawlings, ruled Ghana till 1992 when it transformed itself into a political party, namely the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The NDC was re-elected in 1996, with Rawlings still as the President. In the year 2000, the New Patriotic Party (NPP)

won general elections and came to power, under the leadership of John Agyekum Kufour, who was re-elected in the year 2004.

Under the current democratic dispensation, the legislature is made up of parliamentarians. There are ten regions, namely: Greater Accra, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Central, Western, Eastern, Volta, Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions. These regions are administered by regional ministers but the autonomy of regional ministers is very limited. They are appointed by the president and as such they just represent the central government and carry out its policies.

2.5.1 Decentralisation in Ghana

Decentralised government (local government) in Ghana began in 1878 when the British colonial authorities introduced indirect rule. The objective of this decentralisation was to provide a legal basis for traditional authorities to carry out some limited functions, including judicial, legislative and resource management (Ayee and Tay, 1998; Oppon, 2004). Native Authorities (NAs) were given the powers to pass by-laws relating to local matters and also to raise funds for development. This “decentralised despotism” did not empower local people, since the Native Authorities were only made up of paramount chiefs, sub-chiefs and elders, who behaved like a benevolent oligarchy (Ayee, 1994; Ayee and Tay, 1998). The Local Government Ordinance was passed in 1951 to end indirect rule. Local government councils, which were largely made up of elected membership, replaced Native Authorities. Arguing that it would bring about divisiveness, the first post-colonial president, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, weakened the local government system (Ayee, 1994). The Ghanaian scenario, therefore, resonates with Olowu’s (2001) assertion that instead of strengthening the local government structures put in place by the colonial masters, the new crop of indigenous African leaders rather destroyed this legacy, mainly due to their desire to consolidate the nation-state.

In response to donor pressures, the PNDC government introduced a new local government system in 1988. As in many developing countries, this was financially supported by multinational organisations, such as the World Bank, the DFID and the IMF (Ayee, 1994). Eighty six functions were also devolved to the District Assemblies (DAs), which are made up of 70% elected representatives and 30% government appointees (Ayee and Tay, 1998). In practice, power has still not been effectively devolved to local actors (Ayee and Tay, 1998; Crook and Mannor, 1998). Olowu (2001)

argued that poor result of decentralisation programmes in Africa is mainly due to the fact that most governments are not really committed to democratic decentralisation. Crook and Manor (1998) similarly asserted that the executives usually consciously use the decentralisation programmes to obtain funds from donors and to seek compromise with local elites.

2.6 Economic Features

Ghana has a substantial amount of valuable minerals, notably gold, bauxite, diamond, and manganese. It also has timber and abundant supply of arable land. Yet its economy started performing very poorly just a few years after independence (Huq, 1989). Between 1971 and 1983, production of cocoa (i.e. the major export crop) declined by 60%. Industrial production also declined by 50% within the same period (Global Policy Network, 2004). In order to salvage the ailing economy, the government adopted Economic Recovery (ERP) and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the mid-1980s. These programmes were financed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Britwum *et al.*, 2001).

The Structural Adjustment Programmes aimed at dealing with inflation, declining output and balance of payment problems. Subsidies were removed from agricultural production and public utilities. At the macro level, these programmes made some modest gains. Gross domestic product grew by 0.7% in 1983. It reached 5.4% in 1985 (Oppon, 2004) and has since been growing at an average annual rate of about 4% (Global Policy Network, 2004). Inflation fell from 123% in 1983 (Britwum *et al.*, 2001) to about 15% by 2002 (ISSER, 2004). Despite these achievements, the adjustment programmes also had some negative impacts. The huge external borrowing, which is associated with the programmes, led to a sharp rise in external debt. In fact, external debt increased from US\$ 1.1 billion in 1981 to US\$ 6.5 billion by the year 2002 (ISSER, 2004). In order to save the economy from this crisis, the government opted for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) programme in 2002. Though HIPC has led to the cancellation of some of the debts, Ghana's total external debt was estimated at US\$ 7.396 billion in 2005 (World Factbook, 2005). Further debt cancellations by international donors reduced this to US\$ 3.546 billion by 2006 (World Factbook, 2007). The adjustment programmes also negatively affected the environment, since the huge investments in the mining and timber industries led to over-exploitation

of these resources (see Smith, 1996). The remarkable economic growth witnessed in the mid-1980s could not be sustained. Per capita income declined from US\$ 390 in 1990 to US\$ 350 in 2000 (World Factbook, 2005). About 30% of the population live below the official poverty line, which is estimated at approximately \$376 per annum (GSS, 2000). The incidence of poverty is even higher in the savannah ecological zone, where 80% of the population live below the poverty line. While mean per capita income in urban Ghana is \$289, it is just around \$196 in rural Ghana (GSS, 2000).

Agriculture is still the backbone of the economy, contributing about 36.1% to GDP and 60% to employment. The industrial and the service sectors contribute 24.9% and 29.8% respectively towards GDP (ISSER, 2004). As shown in Table 2.1, primary commodities (notably cocoa, timber, and minerals) constitute the bulk of Ghana's exports. Exploitation of these primary commodities posts a serious threat to the environment, and deforestation is just one of these problems. Apart from direct timber exploitation, the production of cocoa causes forest loss, since the crop is produced within the forest zone. Again, major mineral deposits are also mostly located within the forest zone. Hence, their exploitation has negative impacts the forests.

Table 2.1 Ghana's export earnings by sectors (US\$ millions)

Year	Cocoa*	Gold	Timber	Diamond	Non-trationals	Manganese	Bauxite
1990	367.57	203.05	124.69	14.28	62.34	14.77	9.97
1991	348.88	303.48	103.41	19.61	62.55	21.79	8.74
1992	297.86	332.32	121.70	16.76	68.42	16.55	9.48
1993	290.50	451.83	153.54	17.84	71.70	13.75	8.60
1994	321.77	527.15	214.79	20.80	119.31	9.64	9.20
1995	457.69	647.27	197.22	14.76	159.67	6.36	10.37
1996	482.49	681.58	147.78	14.32	276.24	8.56	8.40
1997	384.78	545.12	170.52	16.20	329.06	8.85	10.49
1998	541.60	679.44	171.00	11.17	401.70	10.97	7.17
1999	495.71	693.44	173.80	12.06	404.41	18.53	5.04
2000	378.93	648.31	175.24	11.59	400.66	20.58	12.75

Source: Ministry of Trade and Industry (2005)

* Value for cocoa is only for cocoa beans, as cocoa products are included in non-traditionals.

2.7 Land Ownership and Tenure Systems

Different land tenure systems exist in Ghana and this has been a source of conflicts (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). Prior to 1962, all lands belonged to local communities. In 1962, various legislative instruments were enacted through which the government could acquire land compulsorily, subject to the payment of compensation to land-owning communities (Bentsi-Enchill, 1964). The arguments for Government's compulsory acquisition of land ownership and management include: the satisfaction of "public" or "national interests; correction of anomalies in customary tenure systems and making land acquisition easier for government" (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001: 1). These powers have often been abused by the state. In most cases, the government does not pay any compensation to the appropriate local communities (ibid). Ofori (1973) documented several cases where the government established state farms on such lands without paying any compensation to the local people. Since Government can lease such lands to private individuals, people with close ties to government usually benefit at the expense of the poor communities. This often causes conflicts between traditional authorities and the state. These developments prompted Kasanga and Kotey (2001: iii) to write that: "the state land machinery is inequitable, unjust, inefficient and unsustainable".

Apart from compulsorily taking the entire ownership of lands from local communities, there is also a *split ownership*, in which land management rights are vested in the president, while the beneficiary rights are retained by the traditional authorities, which are referred to as "stools" (in Southern Ghana) or "skins" (in Northern Ghana). This arrangement is backed by *the Administration of Lands (Act 123), 1962*. The Government, acting through the Land Commission, manages such lands *in trust* for the stools/skins. A percentage of revenue/rent is paid to the traditional authorities. Split ownership "powers" have also been abused by the government, who relies on such "powers" to take the management of natural resources from local people (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Oppon, 2004).

There is also a "customary tenure system" whereby the title of the land is entirely held and controlled by a traditional authority (i.e. stool/skin) or a family. About 80-90% of all undeveloped lands in Ghana belong to this category (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). The Customary tenure system is further divided into two categories – centralised and decentralised customary systems. In the centralised system, lands are owned by the

community. The traditional authority holds such lands “in trust” for the subjects. These lands, which are termed “stool lands”, cannot be sold outright under the laws of Ghana. Consequently, most stool lands that are to be permanently developed are often leased for 99 years subject to renewal of the title. There are established traditional rules for allocating such lands to individual farmers. In the decentralised customary tenure system, the land is owned and controlled by families or individuals. Unlike stool lands, these lands can be sold by the head of the family or the individual owner. While rights of ownership of all customary lands reside in the landowners, management rights of natural resources (such as timber, precious minerals and salt) are held by the government (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Oppon, 2004).

2.7.1 Land Use

As shown in Table 2.2, agriculture (comprising forestry, crop and livestock production) is the dominant land use in Ghana. Small-scale peasant farmers, using rudimentary technology, produce 80% of total agricultural output. The use of fertilizers is about 6kg/ha and this is one of the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa (Forestry Commission, 2005a). This situation partly contributes to deforestation, since farmers have been practicing shifting cultivation and land rotation. Most farmers also use the “slash and burn” method of farming and this often causes bush fires. It is estimated that agricultural activities contribute about 70% of *complete* forest loss in Ghana (MLF, 2001).

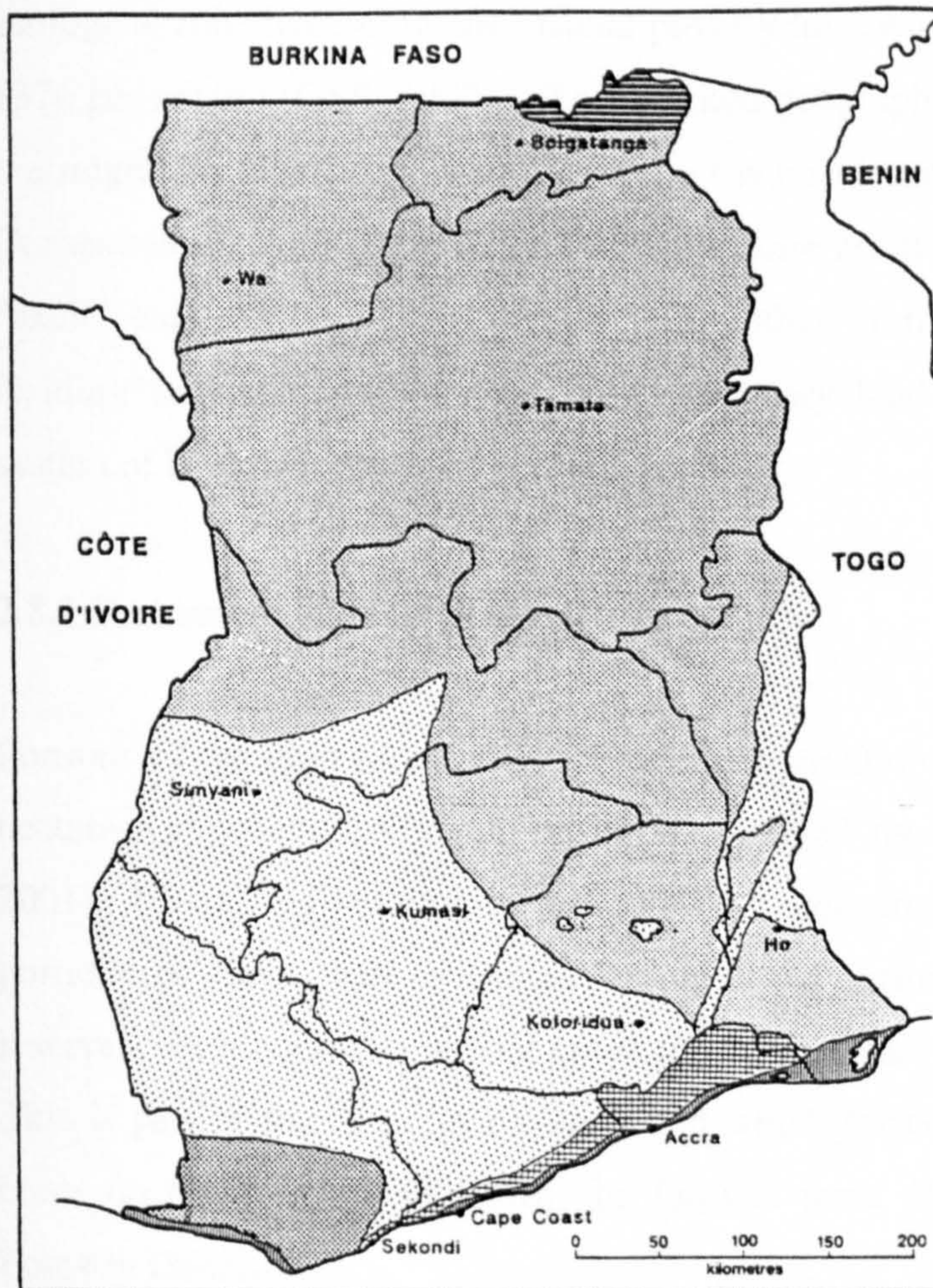
Table 2.2 Land use pattern in Ghana

Land use	Percent (%)
Arable land	12
Permanent crops	7
Permanent pastures	22
Forests and woodlands	35
Other	24
Total	100

Source: Forestry Commission of Ghana (2005a)

2.8 Spatial Distribution of Forest Resources and the Forest Zone Economy

Ghana's forests area is estimated at 9.17 million ha, of which Closed Forest Zone constitutes 8.1342 million ha. The Transitional Forest Zone constitutes 1.036 million ha (MLF, 2001). The Closed Forests (i.e. High Forests) made up of large commercial timber stock are located in the south-western part of Ghana. As shown in figure 2.1, this zone is further divided into two parts, namely the dense evergreen forest and the semi-deciduous forest. The former is floristically the richest (Mensah-Ntiamoah, 1989; Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995).



Key


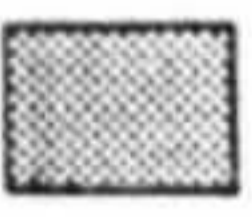
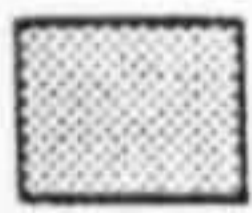
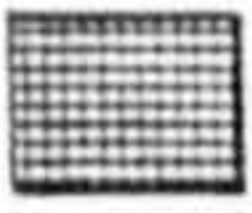
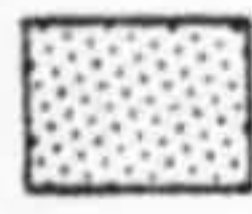
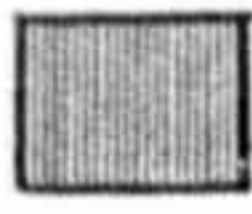
	Sudan Savanna--low grass with scattered acacia and baobab trees.		Tropical Rain Forest-- dense evergreen forest with a thick cover of undergrowth.
	Guinea Savanna Woodland-- acacia, baobab and shea trees with extensive high grass.		Coastal Scrub and Grassland-- dense scrub in the west and grassland in the east.
	Tropical Forest--moist mainly deciduous forest.		Strand and Mangrove Swamp-- patchy growth tolerant of salt water.

Figure 2.1 Land cover map of Ghana

Source: Prah (1994)

The Savannah Zone, which covers 14.66 million ha, is located at the northern part of the country. This zone does not support large commercial timber stock, but it is still a source of very useful livelihood resources (e.g herbs, fodder, fuel wood etc). As stated already, for all practical purposes, formal “forestry” in Ghana has only been concerned with the high forest zones (Kotey *et al.*, 1998: 21). This unequal spatial distribution of forests has impacts on regional development in Ghana. The northern savannah region, which lacks lucrative resources, is generally underdeveloped and poorer than the high forest zone where major export crops (e.g. cocoa and oil palm) are produced. Mean per capita income in the rural savannah zone is \$146, while that in the rural forest zone is \$218 (GSS, 2000). As stated already, about 80% of people living in the Savannah ecological zone live below the official poverty line, which is estimated at approximately \$376 per annum (GSS, 2000). This marked geographical disparity partly accounts for the migration of many farmers from the savannah ecological zone to the forest zone. Consequently, although lands in the forest zone are traditionally largely owned by the “akan” ethnic group, many people from other ethnic groups are also permanently residing within the forest zone. The customary land tenure system is the dominant system of landownership in the forest zone.

2.8.1 Permanent Forests Estates

Portions of the high forest zone are under reservation. This area is about 1.77 million hectares, of which 1.634 million ha is managed by the Forestry Department (MLF, 2001). Though agriculture is generally not permitted within these reserves, a few portions of them were alienated “as admitted farms” at the time of gazetting the reserves. Production of annual crops also takes place within some degraded reserves. This is part of the “Taungya system”, in which farmers are allowed to cultivate food crops on forest lands. In return, the farmers must plant trees on such farms for the Forestry Department.

2.8.1.1 Categories of Reserves

The forest reserves are classified into different categories (see Table 2.3). About 47% of the entire protected area is for *timber production*, while 22% is declared as *permanent protection* area (i.e. where logging is to be permanently excluded). This consists of: hill sanctuaries; swamp sanctuaries; special biological protection areas; intact forest

sanctuaries and fire protection areas. Only 15% of this area (which is protected on grounds of genetic diversity) is well stocked and accessible. The *convalescence* reserves are those with reduced stocking (as a result of over exploitation and bush fire) but which are considered capable of naturally returning to productive forests. *Conversion* reserves are forests with very few residual natural trees and as such they require tree planting (Kotey *et al.*, 1998).

Table 2.3 Categories of reserves in Ghana

Forest type	Area (ha)	Percent (%)
Timber production area	762, 400	47
Permanent protection	352, 500	22
Convalescence	122, 000	7
Conversion	127, 200	8
Not inventoried (conversion)	270, 000	16
Total Reserve Area	1634, 100	100

Source: Kotey *et al.* (1998)

Note: Data does not include 136,000 ha of reserves under the jurisdiction of the Wildlife Department.

2.8.1.2 Conditions of Forest Reserves

Table 2.4 Condition of forest reserves in Ghana

Condition score	Forest condition	Number of reserves	Area covered (ha)	Area covered as percentage of total reserve area (%)
1	Excellent	3	34, 600	2
2	Good	25	248, 500	14
3	Partly degraded	65	619, 000	35
4	Mostly degraded	41	361, 800	20
5	Very bad	40	262, 600	15
6	No forest	40	248, 000	14
Total		214	1,774,500	100

Source: Hawthorne and Abu Juam (1995)

Note: Total excludes reserves which are under management of the Wildlife Department.

The condition of each of the 214 reserves in the high forest zone was assessed by Hawthorne and Abu Juam (see Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995). A condition score of 1 (*excellent*) was assigned to forest reserves with minimal signs (i.e. less than 2%) of human disturbances (logging/farms) or fire damage. A score of 6 was used for reserves that were totally degraded (by combined effects of logging, farming and fires). Between these extremes were other scores denoting different conditions. As shown in Table 2.4, out of the 214 reserves in Ghana, only 3 (representing 2% of total reserve area) are in excellent condition. Twenty five reserves, constituting 14% of total protected area, are in good conditions. About 70% of the entire reserve area is degraded (Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995).

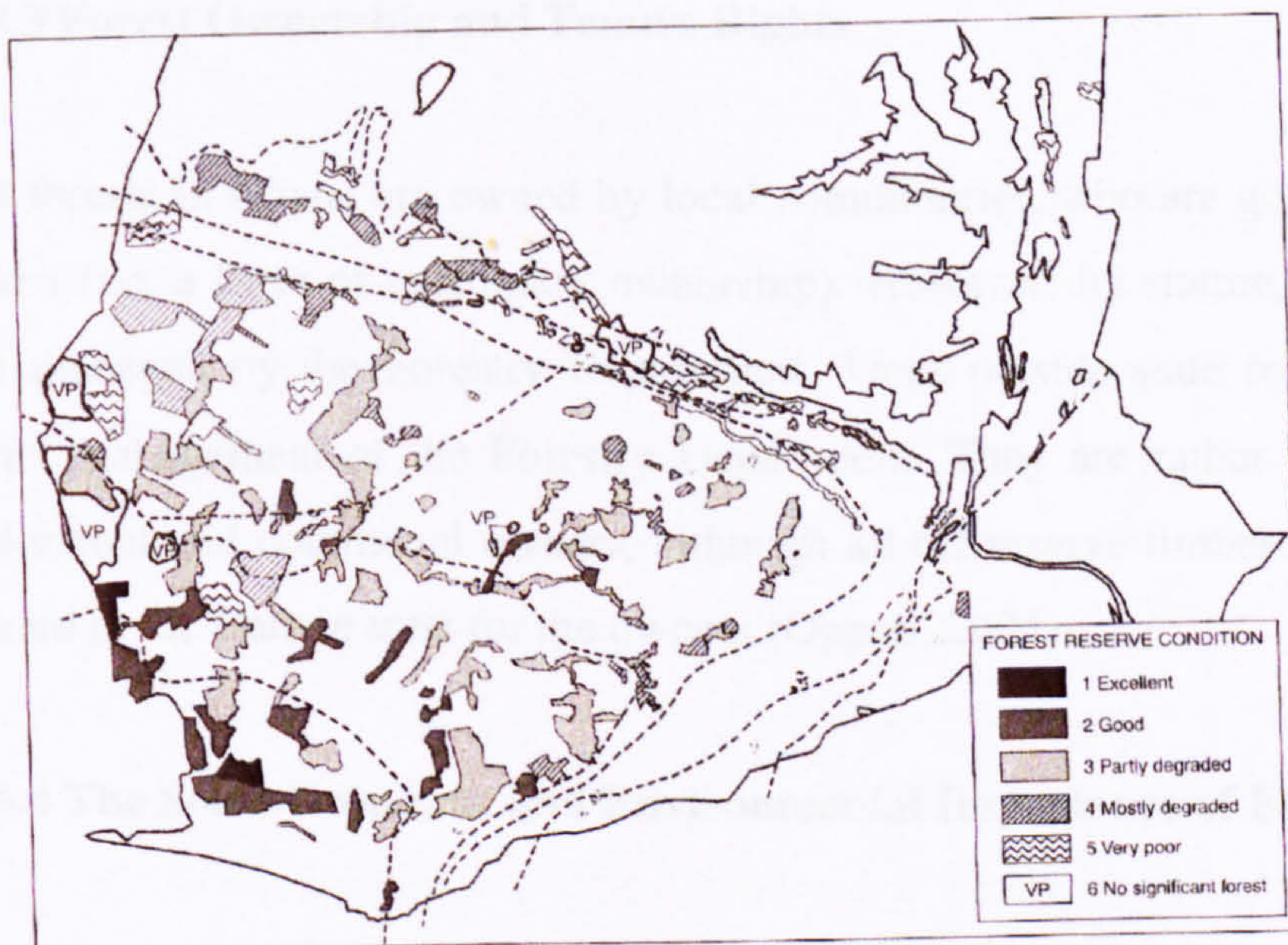


Figure 2.2 Conditions of forest reserves in Ghana

Source: Hawthorne and Abu Juam (1995:17)

2.8.2 Off-Reserve Forests and Timber Plantations

A significant proportion of Ghana's forests lie outside reserves and these have mostly been converted to farming lands (MLF, 2001). Forest area outside reserves is, therefore, a mosaic of agricultural fields, fallow lands, settlements and patches of secondary forests. Much of the very little intact forests outside reserves are confined to sacred groves, sources of streams, and hill tops (Kotey *et al.*, 1998: 27). Off-reserve forests are as important as the on-reserve forests. The area (i.e. off-reserve) was a source of 70% of

timber harvested between 1960 and 1972. This proportion declined to about 50% between 1974 and 1992 but rose again to nearly 80% in 1994.

Tree planting is not taken very seriously in Ghana. Total forest plantations area is 76 000 hectares, with an annual planting rate of 2000 ha. Of the 76 000 ha plantation area, about 40, 000 ha is made up of teak (*tectona*) species, while the other 36 000 ha is made up of other hard wood species (FAO, 2003b). Plantations in Ghana have been mainly supported by NGOs but the government also recently embarked on some plantation programmes. Some private individuals and families also plant commercial trees on their lands.

2.8.3 Forest Ownership and Tenure Rights

All forests in Ghana are owned by local communities, who are governed by traditional rulers (i.e. a form of customary ownership). However, by statute, state forest reserves are managed by the Forestry Department. Trees outside state reserves are not under *strict* management of the Forestry Department. They are rather under the control of individual and communal owners, although all off-reserve timber resources are legally vested in the state in trust for the owners (Oppon, 2004).

2.8.4 The Socio-Economic and Environmental Importance of Forest Resources

As in many tropical countries, the Ghanaian forest resources are classified as timber products or non-timber products. Non-timber products encompass all biological materials other than timber which are extracted for human use (Woodcock, 2002). In terms of direct economic value, timber is the most important forest resource in Ghana. The timber industry contributes about 6% to GDP and employs about 104,000 persons. It also provides 11% of Ghana's foreign exchange earnings (Oduro, 2002). As shown in Table 2.1, timber is ranked as the third most important commodity (after minerals and cocoa) in generating foreign exchange. It generated about \$175.24 million foreign exchange in 2000 (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2005).

Although the government has historically been mostly concerned with industrial wood production (see Kotey *et al.*, 1998), fuel wood is another important forest product in Ghana. Unlike timber production, which mainly takes place only within the high forest

zone, fuel wood production takes place in both the savannah forest and the high forest zones. It has been estimated that about 69% of all urban dwellers and almost all households in rural Ghana use either charcoal or fuel wood as the main source of energy (Kotey *et al.*, 1998; Broadhead *et al.*, 2001). As discussed later in this chapter, non-timber forest products also contribute significantly to the livelihoods of many Ghanaians. Apart from contributing directly to the subsistence of forest communities, trading in non-timber forest products (e.g. pestles, canes, fruits, bush meat, snails, fodder, chewing sticks, medicine, etc) is a very important economic activity in both rural and urban areas (Falconer, 1992).

Forests in Ghana also provide environmental and ecological benefits. For instance, they moderate temperature, enhance rainfall intensity and frequency, and provide the most suitable environment for the cultivation of cocoa, which is Ghana's leading export crop (Oduro, 2002). The forests also help to reduce soil erosion, and protect water bodies from drying up. They also provide habitat for numerous species of flora and fauna, and generally help to maintain the biological diversity. According to Hall and Swaine (1981), there are over 2,100 plant species (23 of which endemic) in the high forest zone of Ghana. The fauna of the forest zone includes more than 200 species of mammals, many of which are rare or endangered (Mensah-Ntiamoah, 1989). Additionally, the high forest zone contains about 37 species of rodents, 74 species of bats and more than 200 species of birds (IUCN, 1992). These provide a very good environment for recreation and wildlife based tourism. Although, wildlife based tourism in the whole of West Africa is not highly developed in comparison with what pertains in East Africa, there are a few game reserves in Ghana. Some of the very important ones include the Ankasa, Bia and Assin-Attandanso game reserves and the Kakum National Park. Tourism is also an important source of foreign exchange in Ghana.

The socio-cultural significance of the forests cannot be over-emphasised. They provide building materials and intangible benefits, such as sacred sites and cultural symbols. Sacred groves are sites for traditional prayers and rituals. Besides, forest products feature prominently in many cultural ceremonies and practices in Ghana. For instance, the symbol of Asante's chieftaincy (i.e. stools) is usually carved with specific sacred-tree woods. Similarly, drums are produced from particular woods and skins of animals (Falconer, 1992).

2.8.5 Timber Production

Timber production takes place within Timber Utilisation Contract areas, which cover both off- and on-reserve forests. Off-reserve timber trees are mostly found on farmlands and fallow areas (MLF, 2001). Data on wood production in Ghana are unreliable, since they significantly under-estimate the actual output. In some years, the officially declared output is even lower than what the country actually exported in those years. The official figures usually do not include illegally produced timber. As shown in Table 2.5, the volume of industrial wood increased from 0.56 million cubic meters in 1950 to 1.23 million cubic meters in 1970. It then declined to 0.98 million cubic meters in 1980 but rose again to 1.44 million cubic meters in 1990. Illegal logging is very high (see Chapter 7). Birikorang (2001) estimates that in 1999, for instance, total wood harvested was 3.9 million m³. About 24% of this figure was illegally harvested by Timber Utilisation Contract holders, while another 46% of the figure was by illegal small-scale chain saw operators.

Table 2.5 Trends in industrial wood production Ghana

<i>Years</i>					
1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
<i>Volume (million cubic meters)</i>					
0.56	1.83	1.23	0.98	1.44	1.09

Source: 1950-1970: Page (1974); 1980-2000: FAO (2002)

Note: These figures do not take account of illegal logging

2.8.5.1 Export of Timber Products

A greater percentage of wood produced in Ghana is exported. The majority of large-scale timber companies concentrate on producing for exports. The domestic market is, therefore, largely supplied by illegal chainsaw operators. European countries, notably: Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy and the Netherlands are the major export markets for Ghana's timber products. The European Union accounts for over 50% by volume and value of total timber export currently (GoG, 2007). Other recipients of Ghanaian wood are the United States and a few countries in Asia.

2.8.5.2 Fuel Wood

A significant portion of the wood produced in Ghana is used for fuel wood. About 69% of all urban dwellers in Ghana use charcoal for heating. Almost all households in rural Ghana use either charcoal or fuel wood as the main source of energy (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Fuel wood consumption (including charcoal use) has been on the rise in Ghana (see table 2.6). Between 1980 and 2000, Ghana's consumption increased more than 100%. This indicates that alternative sources are not being used in Ghana. It is also possible that, due to increasing economic hardships, some people are even switching from other sources to wood.

Table 2.6 Fuel wood consumption in Ghana

Fuel wood consumption in (000 m ³)		
1980	1990	2000
12 228	18 424	26 726

Source: Broadhead *et al.* 2001

2.8.6 Non-Timber Forest Products

As mentioned already, non-timber forest products (NTFPs) play a major role in providing livelihoods and food security, especially for the rural poor (Asibey, 1987; Falconer, 1991, 1992). According to FAO (2003b), non-timber forest products (NTFPs) can be grouped into the three categories. The first is made up of items that significantly contribute to the subsistence of local communities. A second category comprises items that are traded on the local market, providing supplementary income. In Ghana, items in these two categories are the same and include: foods (e.g. bush meat, snails, fruit, seeds, mushrooms); spices; chewing sticks and chewing sponges; cola nut; charcoal; medicines; cane used for making furniture and baskets; house hold goods (e.g. sponges, mortars, pestles, wooden trays and utensils). A third category comprises *items that are traded internationally*. This include: gum and rattan (Falconer, 1991, 1992; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Non-timber forest products represent the economic mainstays of many households in Ghana (Falconer, 1992). It is estimated that about 80% of the rural population regularly consume bushmeat (Asibey, 1987). Again, the collection and sale of NTFPs is the major and even sometimes the only source of income for some marginalised families in the rural areas (Falconer, 1991; Kotey *et al.*, 1998).

2.9 State Forestry Organisations

The Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines (formerly the Ministry of Lands and Forestry) is the sector ministry entrusted with the management of Ghana's land, forest, wildlife and mineral resources. The ministry has three commissions, namely the Lands Commission, the Minerals Commission and the Forestry Commission. Each of these commissions is made up of various semi-autonomous departments and agencies that are responsible for implementing programmes and projects in their respective sub-sectors. For instance, the Lands Commission, which is responsible for the management of public and vested lands, is made up of the Survey Department, the Land Title Registry and the Office of the Administrator of stool Lands. The Mineral Commission, which is responsible for the management of mineral resources, is made up of the Geological Survey Department, the Inspectorate Division of Minerals Commission and the Precious Minerals Marketing Company Limited.

The Forestry Commission is responsible for the day to day management of forest and wildlife resources. It has three semi-autonomous divisions, namely the Forest Services Division (also known as the Forestry Department), the Wildlife Division and the Timber Industry Development Division (FC, 2005a). It must be stated that the Forestry Commission was established only in 1993 (see Chapters 6 and 7). Before this time, the Forestry Department and the Department of Wildlife were individually implementing the functions of protection and management of forest and wildlife resources respectively. As the wildlife Department is responsible for managing only a few game reserves, this study concentrates on the Forest Services Division, which is the largest department of the Forestry Commission.

2.9.1 The Structure and Functioning of the Forest Services Division

Established in 1909 by the colonial administration, the forestry department is more or less a quasi military organisation, whose hierarchical structure resembles Weber's (1952) *bureaucratic model* (see Chapter 3). The organisation is headed by an executive director, who is a government appointee, and usually not a professional forester. Next in command are the directors of the various units (i.e. operations, personnel, financial) and the Chief Conservator of Forests. The next level in the hierarchy is occupied by forest managers (usually senior professional foresters) at the headquarters, regions and districts. Below these are the field staff made up of range supervisors/technical officers

(TOs) and then forest guards and field assistants. There is also auxiliary staff comprising accounts officers, typists, and telephonists among others.

The Forest Services Division is specifically responsible for: (a) collecting forest revenue; (b) controlling logging in on- and off-reserve forests through the award of logging permits; (c) protecting forest reserves through direct monitoring. Direct revenue collection activities (including the award of timber concessions) are centralised, although regional and district forest managers can impose fines on groups /individuals who are found to have broken forest laws. Forests reserves are directly monitored by forest guards, who live among local farmers in the forest communities. The guards are supposed to arrest or report to the district forest manager people found harvesting forest resources illegally. As a way of supervising guards, Technical Officers are supposed to periodically visit them at their locations. Individuals who need to extract any forest resource for non-commercial use are supposed to obtain permission from an officer of a rank not lower than assistant district forest managers (see Chapter 5).

2.10 Conclusions

The presentation in this chapter has shown that Ghana's forests contain valuable economic resources that support rural livelihoods. It is clear that there are several complex issues within the forestry sector. For instance, while the forests are owned by local communities, management rights are held by the state. Given this complex nature of tenure systems and multiple benefits of forests, it is expected that any good forest policy must ensure fair access to resources, equal distribution of forest revenue and participatory forest management. In the analysis chapters, an attempt is made to discuss how these background features influence the formulation and implementation of forest policy in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In order to identify gaps in knowledge and to choose an appropriate methodology for this study, this chapter reviews existing literature on public policy and forest management. Specifically, the chapter reviews the literature on: approaches to public policy analysis; policy models; organisational theory; the concept of power; theories of governance; community management of natural resources and decentralised forest programmes.

3.2 Approaches to Public Policy Analysis

Different approaches to policy analysis have been suggested by different scholars but John (1998) put all these approaches into five broad categories, namely: the institutional; group and network; socio - economic; rational choice and ideas based approaches.

3.2.1 Institutional Approach

This approach posits that political institutions, such as parliaments and legal systems, structure policy decisions and outcomes. Any analysis of public policy must, therefore, concentrate on these institutions (John, 1998: 38). The approach further assumes that state officials are neutral and so their own interests do not influence public policies. Societal groups have also been assumed to have no influence on policies, since policy makers only follow well organised procedures.

The assumption that the interests of state officials and societal groups do not affect public policy is unrealistic. Interest groups have the resources to ensure that the executive and bureaucrats respond to their needs (Rhodes, 1986; Smith, 1993). The approach also does not recognise the fact that political environments affect institutions. It also does not adequately explain policy changes. In response to criticisms levelled against the original institutional approach, a new institutional model emerged. This is

known as *new institutionalism*, which tried to modify some of the assumptions of the original version. This new approach accepts the fact that a variety of factors from the politico-economic environment of the economy influence public policy (March and Olsen, 1989). Although this new version can be credited for highlighting the influence of state institutions on public policy, it also failed to adequately explain policy changes.

3.2.2 Group and Network Approaches

The main tenet of these approaches, which reject the institutional perspectives, is that associations and informal relationships, both within and outside political institutions, shape public policy. Contrary to the institutionalism perspectives that policies are generated by politicians and bureaucrats, the group perspective argues that groups are the sources of policy ideas. It is argued that interest groups set the agenda, formulate policy and try to influence the executive to adopt such policies. Groups also take part in policy implementation, and this means that government policies cannot be fully understood without analysing the impact of interest groups (Wilson, 1980). Politics is about associational relationships, since state officials are as much part of interest-based politics as groups themselves. The patterns of alliances between outside interest groups and bureaucrats themselves structure policy rather than the institutions of the state (John, 1998: 67).

The network approach, which is relatively newer, goes a step forward to argue that it is not the mere presence of groups that shape policies, but rather it is the formal and informal relationships between policy makers and societal actors that matter. The application of this approach, therefore, involves the examination of how networks between state and societal actors influence policy (see Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). More discussions on this approach will be presented later in this chapter.

3.2.3 Socio - Economic Approach

This approach posits that the policy process is driven by powerful socio-economic forces that sets the agenda, structure decision-makers' choices and constraint implementation (John, 1998). Research assumes that changes in socio-economic conditions propel changes in policy (Easton, 1965; Domhoff, 1970; Bowles and Gintis,

1976; Aglietta, 1979). Some theorists emphasise global factors more than local factors. They argued that in order to understand changes in national policies, the policy analyst must focus on changes in the global economy, since local authorities usually just follow policies that are in line with global trends (Peterson, 1981). Other researchers, mainly from the “politics matters” school of thought, argued that there is a complex interdependency between public policy and the wider socio-economic world but then political parties have a major role in shaping policy output (Castles, 1982; Sharpe and Newton, 1984; Boyne, 1996).

The socio-economic approach could be criticised for neglecting the influence of interest groups on policy outcomes. On the other hand, the approach can be credited for drawing our attention to the influence of socio-economic factors on public policy choices. Some elements of the model can be relied upon to explain forest policy changes. For instance, it will be useful to examine how certain socio-economic factors, such as international timber trade, influence forest policy.

3.2.4 Rational Choice Approach

The rational choice approach assumes that policy makers often formulate policies based on a careful ranking of alternative choices. It emphasises the rationality of policy makers and their ability to make the best decisions on policy choices. Rational theorists also argue that long histories of cooperation between societal actors and policy makers can create trust in government, and this often creates effective public policies (Putnam, 1993). To understand changes in public policy, the policy analyst must examine the institutional framework and histories of cooperation between interest groups and policy makers. The nature of the policy problem must also be considered. John (1998) argues that because rational choice models are based on individual choices within the context of institutions, they provide a dynamic link between the micro and the macro-levels. The theory is criticised for assuming that policy makers are always rational (Quattrone and Tversky, 1988).

3.2.5 Ideas Based Approaches

These approaches argue that policies are significantly shaped by ideas, which can be world systems, ideologies and statements of value or worth. Ideas can also specify

causal relationships and provide solutions to public problems (John, 1998:144). The adoption of a particular policy is not about relative power of interests, but about the quality of arguments which the lobbyists present to policy makers (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993). Majone echoes this argument this way: "we miss a great deal if we understand policy making solely in terms of power, influence and bargaining, to the exclusion of debate and argument" (1989: 2).

When applying this model, the policy analyst examines the ideas of the various groups in the specific policy area over a long period of time. Lertzman *et al.* (1996) used the approach to analyse changes in Canadian forestry policy in the 1970s, but some scholars were sceptical about the adequacy of the idea based approach for explaining changes in Canadian forest policy. They argued that structural changes in the forestry industry, changes in government and international policy might have all stimulated policy changes rather than ideas per se (Hoberg, 1996; Howlett and Rayner, 1996)

Philpott (1996) argued that what constitutes an idea is not clear and as such idea based approaches are difficult to apply. Critics also maintained that idea based approaches often rely on associations rather than causation and hence they are not good for explanation (Yee, 1996). The assumption that policy makers usually take ideas from individuals is also not realistic. Policy makers sometimes only accept ideas that are in consonance with their own interests. Finally, the model is not applicable in societies where democracy is not very advanced. Despite these weaknesses, the approach has some utility values, especially in advanced democracies where debates are used to obtain views on potential policy choices.

3.3 Distribution of Decision Making Power

It is generally agreed that decision-making characterises every stage of the policy process (Anderson, 1975). Yet there have been different views on the distribution of decision-making power within society. Models that explain the distribution of decision-making power can be classified into six broad groups, namely: elitism, pluralism, marxism, corporatism, professionalism and technocracy (Parsons, 1995: 245).

3.3.1 Elitist and Neo-Elitist Models

Although there are several variants, elitists generally maintain that decision-making power is “in the hands” of a few elites. Majority of the people do not have any power to influence public decision-making. Public policy therefore reflects the values of a few elites. Policy outcomes also usually serve the interests of these actors at the expense of ordinary citizens (Downs, 1957; Dye, 1966). Similarly, neo-elites argue that in the modern world, it is occupational elites rather than governmental elites that influence policy outputs and outcomes (Parsons, 1995).

This simple top-down model of power and policy cannot be universally accepted, since even minor groups can influence policy outcomes through their networks with state actors. Policy can also emerge through everyday struggles and networks among various actors (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). However, as Anderson (1975) noted, elite theory is relevant for policy analysis in some developing countries where pure democracy is usually not practiced.

3.3.2 Pluralism and Neo-Pluralist Models

Pluralists argue that decision making power is more dispersed than elitists assume (Truman, 1951; Dahl, 1958, 1961). While some believe that there is an equal balance of power, other pluralists later realised that power is not equally distributed (Dahl, 1982). However, they still hold on to the notion that policy - making is open to freedom of speech and public debate. Hence, public policy is usually the outcome of a free competition between ideas and interests. Thus, this approach is related to the idea based approach that has already been discussed.

The pluralist approach has a lot of weaknesses. Even where decision making is open to all, there are dominant players, such as the governing elites, who set agenda and influence policy outcomes (Ham and Hill, 1984). Schattschneider argues that the game of policy- making is often structured by rules that suit the top players (Schattschneider 1960, as cited by Parsons, 1995). The approach also ignores the ability of policy makers to hide certain issues from the public. Power is not only about controlling observable behaviour and decisions (Sibeon, 2004), it also consists of non-observable realm of decision-making (Bachrach and Baratz 1970). Non-decision making suggests that

policy makers have the capacity to keep some issues off the agenda which they control (Parsons, 1995 135). This has been referred to as “hidden policy agenda” (Rees, 1990). Even in circumstances where several groups are included, only those with certain resources may have access to policy makers (Hall, 1986; Smith, 1993). Despite these weaknesses, the approach can be credited for acknowledging the ability of people outside the government apparatus to influence policy. The approach is more applicable in more democratic societies.

3.3.3 Marxism

Marxists argue that, in a capitalist society, decisions are taken by a few rich people (the bourgeoisie) while majority of the people (i.e. the proletariat) do not have any influence on policy. There are some slight differences in the explanations by different Marxists. Milliband (1969) argued that the elites come from the same social class and operate in the interest of the capitalist system. Others argued that the state is involved in the process of managing different interests, and so it serves as a kind of neutral force to promote long-run interests of capital and the capitalists’ class (Poulanzas, 1973, cited by Parsons, 1995). The approach explains policy changes in terms of changes in the interests of capitalists. The analyst must also concentrate on the power of the capitalists (Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

Marxists, like the elitists, have neglected the ability of marginalised groups to influence actual policy outcomes. However, they make very useful points by accounting for unequal power structures in society. Their emphasis on the influence of capitalists on policy is also very important in this study, since it is known that the interests of capitalists, such as timber firms, have significant influence on forest policies in many developing countries (Callister, 1999; Winbourne, 2005; World Bank, 2006; Soreide, 2007).

3.3.4 Corporatism

This approach sees public policy as a product of negotiations between the state’s agencies and interest organisations. It assumes that decision making is based on bargaining and negotiation between the state and organised interest groups (Grant, 1989). Some scholars argued that corporatism undermines the economic and political

foundations of liberal democracy (Olson, 1982; Brittan, 1987). A weakness of corporatism is the fact that it does not give enough explanation as to how interest groups are organised. Although the model is similar to the network approach, it tends to focus only relationships between policy makers and *organised* groups. It therefore neglects how relationships between individual societal actors and state actors affect policy. Despite this, the model offers a bridge between the elites/marxist and the pluralists, since it shows how the masses can form organised pressure groups to negotiate policy outcomes with elites/marxists.

3.3.5 Professionalism and Technocracy

Professionalism emphasises the extent to which professional elites influence decision-making and policy implementation. The model assumes that the output of public policies is determined by professional groups and bureaucrats, who are more interested in their own gains than the interest of the public (Downs, 1967; Galbraith, 1967). In order to pursue their interests, professionals usually assume that policy making in their fields is a technical issue. This gives them the opportunity to prevent plural participation (Dunleavy, 1980).

Technocratic models also argue that decision-making is significantly shaped by technocrats since they possess the technical knowledge needed to understand the modern world Bell (1960). These models have been criticised on the grounds that politicians do not always pay heed to what experts say (Stockman, 1987; Mills, 1993). Despite these criticisms, forest management trends in parts of Asia and Africa supports these models. Early reservation policy in some African countries was significantly shaped by pressures from colonial foresters (Smith, 1996; Grainger and Konteh, 2007). Forest management in parts of South East Asia and Africa were also regarded as scientific and technical issues. This enabled the colonial masters to exclude local people from forest management (Dubois, 1997; Poffenberger, 2000).

3.4 Typologies of Policy Models

It is generally acknowledged that model building is an integral part of public policy analysis (Allison, 1971; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984: 42). There are various types of policy models, and various researchers have classified them differently. Hogwood and

Gunn (1984) classified all policy models into three groups: *ideal type models*, *prescriptive models* and *descriptive models*. Ideal type models have been defined as mental constructs that deal with entities which do not exist in real life but can help researchers to formulate statements about what is desired. Prescriptive models provide explanations of desired standards that policy formulation should strive. Descriptive policy models explain how policy making take place in the real world (ibid).

Most other researchers (see, for instance, Dye, 1966; Anderson, 1975; Mitchell, 1989) classify policy models into two groups, namely prescriptive and descriptive, so that prescriptive models also take account of ideal situations. Such a two category classification seems logical, since distinguishing between the ideal and the prescriptive types is extremely difficult. It must be emphasised that these classifications do not necessarily reflect how the models were presented by the authors. In fact, most descriptive models also have some prescriptive elements (Anderson, 1975).

According to Mitchell (1989: 264), geographers usually use both descriptive and prescriptive models in analysing policies. In resource analysis, the two are usually combined when a researcher attempts to determine how an imperfect policy process can be improved. In this review, therefore, policy formulation models will be examined under the two broad categories (i.e. prescriptive and descriptive models).

3.4.1 Prescriptive Policy Models

Though there are several variants, prescriptive models generally suggest that policy formulation is a rational process that involves several well defined steps. They derive their arguments from ideal type models of rational economic man, *Homo economicus*, who in making a decision, acquires all necessary information, compares different options and then selects the option that gives him maximum gains (Parsons, 1995). The model assumes that policy-making starts with problem definition. This is followed by the setting and ranking of goals and objectives. The various alternatives for dealing with the problem are examined, and the consequences, in terms of costs and benefits that will follow each alternative, are then evaluated. Based on this evaluation the alternative that maximises the attainment of the goals, objectives and the values is chosen (Anderson, 1975).

Such neat hierarchical and rational conceptualisation of the policy process is not realistic (Hogwood and Gun, 1984; Rees, 1990), since there are a number of limitations to the rationality of policy makers (Simon, 1957; Lindblom, 1959; Hogwood and Gun, 1984). First, the policy maker lacks the knowledge, skills and value consistency needed for rationality. This has been termed “psychological limitations” to rationality (Hogwood and Gun, 1984). Again, even if the policy maker could overcome personal limitations, he/she will still face obstacles because of the fact that he/she has to work as part of an organisation where coordination is usually not perfect. This has also been termed “organisational limitations” (ibid). Critics also argue that policy makers are not usually faced with clearly defined problems (Anderson, 1975). Despite these weaknesses, these models provide the ideal against which actual policy process may be compared. They have been used in a few studies on natural resource management. Mitchell, for instance, used a prescriptive model in his study of policy and organisational arrangements for water management in England and Wales (see, Mitchell, 1989).

3.4.2 Descriptive Policy Models

Geographers have paid more attention to descriptive models than prescriptive models (Mitchell, 1989). Descriptive models attempt to explain how policy formulation takes place in the real world. Various descriptive models have been proposed by different scholars (notably, Simon, 1957; Lindblom, 1959; Etzioni, 1967 and Dror, 1989). These different models are presented in the discussions that follow.

3.4.2.1 Bounded Rationality Model

Simon (1957) argued that policy-makers seek to be rational but do not succeed because of bounds or limits to their individual or collective capacities. The policy maker is not perfectly rational in the economic sense but in good part intentionally so. He argued therefore that the policy maker could and should become more rational in decision-making (Simon, 1957). He suggested several mechanisms by which rationality in decision-making could be improved (Simon, 1960, 1983). These include: the reliance on specialist groups for decision making; improvement in public information base and improvement in technology.

Like the rational prescriptive models, Simon's bounded rationality model is unrealistic in its assumption about the rationality of policy makers. The model also failed to recognise the fact that the values and interests of policy makers can also affect their choices.

3.4.2.2 Incremental Models

These policy models were propounded by Lindblom (1959, 1965) to contest the anomalies in the rational models. Lindblom has much in common with Simon in rejecting the rational theories. However, he rejects Simon's position that policy makers could and ought to be more rational. In his paper *The Science of Muddling Through* (1959), Lindblom argued that since comprehensive rationality in policy-making is not possible, policy formulation proceeds through a succession of incremental changes and it also involves trial and errors. He later developed the ideas raised in *the muddling through* thesis into a more comprehensive model known as *disjointed incrementalism*. He sees this as a method of policy-making in which there is no clearly defined problem and there are no clear objectives or goals to be attained. It is *disjointed* because decisions or policies are not subject to any concrete plan, control or analysis. Policy makers consider only some of the alternatives for dealing with a problem. These alternatives will differ only marginally from existing policies. Lindblom also argued that although policy makers are self-interested, they are not "blindly partisan". Hence, they are capable of adjusting to one another through bargaining, negotiation and compromise. This he calls "partisan mutual adjustment" or "sensible politics" (Lindblom, 1965, Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993).

Incremental models offer a more realistic description of the policy process than most descriptive model. However, they do not account for abrupt changes in policy, since they are only concerned with marginal changes in existing policy (Etzioni, 1968; Dror, 1989).

3.4.2.3 Mixed Scanning Model

This model, which was propounded by Etzioni (1967), combines features of rationalism and incrementalism. He argued that although the idea of rationality in policy making is not realistic, incrementalism also appears too conservative. Etzioni argued that, since

the policy maker cannot get all information needed for a rational decision, he can only make a very detailed and rational examination or scanning of important areas of the problem. Incremental procedures are then applied to other less important areas that do not need rapid changes. In his subsequent works, he emphasise the importance of community institutions and rebuilding of society, in terms of knowledge and moral dimensions, as critical for improvements in policy making (Etzioni, 1993). The model ignores the fact that it is difficult to separate fundamental decisions from incremental decisions (Ham and Hill, 1984). However, he could be credited for reminding policy makers of the fact that deferent policy-making methods may be appropriate for different areas of the problem.

3.4.2.4 Normative-Optimum Model

This model was proposed by Dror (1989), who rejected both the rational and incremental models. The model assumes that policy making involves decision taking at two interacting levels, namely rational and extra-rational. At the rational stage, the policy maker follows the stages emphasised by rationality models. These include: gathering of information; comparing options and measuring of opportunity costs of various policy options. At the extra rational level, decision making will involve value judgements and bargaining (Dror, 1989: 312). Dror's model is similar to that of Etzioni since both theorists incorporated aspects of rationality and subjectivity in their policy formulations. However, Dror does not agree to Etzioni's proposition that society should have a more unlimited role in judging the merit of specific policies. This is because he (Dror) sees policy making and analysis as technocratic activities (Parsons, 1995).

A weakness of this model is that it ascribes to the fact that there are value judgements in the policy process, yet it does not examine how conflicts over such value judgements are resolved. Despite this weakness, it explains how policy makers can be more rational even when using their subjective evaluations.

3.4.3 Output Models

Apart from their individual weaknesses, both descriptive and prescriptive models tend to focus only on *inputs* to the policy process. Some theorists (see Lowi, 1964, Wilson, 1973; Hogwood, 1987; Tolbert, 2002), on the other hand, focus on policy outputs. They

argued that policy outputs determine the nature of the policy process and whether there will be conflicts or not. Lowi (1964) suggested three types of output models. These are *distributive, regulatory* and *redistributive models*. *Distributive models* focus on policies that are concerned with the allocation of resources or benefits to a particular segment of the population. Conflicts here are minimal since each group receives benefits specific to itself. Policy, in this case, emerges based on specific local demands and the way by which local people present their needs to policy makers.

Regulatory models focus on regulatory policies. These are policies in which various groups compete directly with each other in their demands. Given that resource constraints make it difficult to meet all demands, some groups win while others lose. Interests here are usually sectoral (for instance, economic and environmental). Since there are different interests, the government uses its coercive powers to make policies for the different groups (Mitchell, 1989). The emerging policy usually defines winners and losers. Winners may wish to control conflicts, while losers may try to campaign for those issues to be seen involving the public at large (Cobb and Elder, 1983; Gormley, 1983).

Redistributive models deal with redistributive policies, i.e. policies that are concerned with attempts to change the distribution of existing resources or benefits and costs (Lowi, 1964). Most redistributive policies involve efforts by the government to shift the allocation of wealth, income, property or rights among broad classes or groups of the population (Tolbert, 2002). Typical of such policies include social security, welfare and tax policies. Since some groups gain at the expense of others, these policies are characterised by high level of conflicts.

Lowi introduced a fourth type of policy, namely *constituent policy*, in his subsequent work (Lowi 1972) but failed to explain this adequately. It was Spitzer (1987) and Tolbert (2002) who did more extensive work on constituent policy. According to Spitzer (1987), a constituent policy is concerned with rules of the game of politics. Tolbert (2002) used *governance policy* instead of the traditional constituent policy. He sees governance policy as that which concerns the rules and procedures of institutions of representative democracy: election systems, state legislatures, judicial processes, and state executives (Tolbert, 2002: 78). Spitzer (1987) conceptualised constituent policy as a top-down process of policy making. The process, in his view, is consensual, since it

involves only a few top officials. Tolbert (2002) challenged such views, and argued that governance (constituent) policy is defined by both elite and grassroots actors. Hence, it is neither hierarchical nor consensual.

Lowi and his followers could be credited for their classification of policy issues and for showing how each issue could produce conflicts. Some critics, however, argue that the models do not provide a good framework for analysing policy changes (Cobb and Elder, 1972). Policy issues also overlap and this makes the application of this framework difficult (Parsons, 1995). Wilson (1973, 1980) suggested that policy outputs should rather be classified based on costs and benefits. He noted that the distribution of costs and benefits is what determines whether there will be conflicts or not. In cases where the whole society will benefit but the cost will be borne by only a small group, there are likely to be conflicts between those bearing the costs and those benefiting.

3.5 Comprehensive Resource Policy Models

Though they increase our understanding of the policy process, the models discussed so far are not very suitable for any rigorous analysis of natural resource policy. In the sections that follow, I present some more comprehensive models that can be used for analysing natural resource policy.

3.5.1 Miller's Forest Policy Framework

This framework is specifically designed for the analysis of forest policy formulation. Miller (1994) contends that, in many countries, forest policy is intimately related to many other aspects of government policy, notably policies in relation to agriculture and land use on one hand and trade and employment policies on the other hand (Miller, 1994: 5). Since most countries will already have policies of these other sectors, the policies and activities in those sectors serve as inputs to the policy process. Other factors that serve as inputs include: International timber trade; demands for forest resources by different users; the nature and pattern of land ownership and the history, traditions and politics of the country. He argues that changes in these inputs produce forest policy changes. When applying this model, the researcher must analyse how developments in other sectors of the economy influences forest policy. The researcher must also analyse how the wider macro economy influences policy choices.

The framework ignores resource conflicts between different user groups. It also does not consider how interests of policy makers affect policy. Notwithstanding these weaknesses, the framework will be very useful in an analysis of forest policy trends in a country like Ghana, where factors such as international timber trade and land ownership have influence on policy trends.

3.5.2 Advocacy Coalition Framework

This framework was propounded by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith to explain the policy process. It views policy-making as a product of interactions between three different factors. These are politico-economic factors, external events, and policy subsystems (Sabatier, 1988, 1993; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999). The politico economic factors are assumed to be stable within a period of decade or more but changes in them can bring about policy changes. Changes in external factors will induce changes in public policy through their impacts on the policy subsystem. A policy subsystem contains advocacy coalitions, policy brokers, policy making strategies, policy decisions, policy implementation efforts, policy outputs and policy impacts.

An advocacy coalition is a group of actors with shared beliefs and who undertake coordinated action to achieve common policy goals. These actors are united by their shared "policy core beliefs". Policy core beliefs include agreements over basic cause of the problem, its seriousness and how it should be solved (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999: 133). In most cases, a policy subsystem contains two or more competing advocacy coalitions, each of which tries to influence policy makers. The framework assumes that various competing coalitions use different strategies to influence policy brokers (policy makers). The emerging policy, therefore, usually reflects the goals of the coalition advocacy group that is able to use the best strategies to influence policy brokers.

Coalitions that lose in their attempt to influence policy may try to use better strategies to seek redress. However, the framework stated that major changes in policy are not likely to occur as long as the advocacy coalition that instituted the policy is in power, except when the change is imposed by a hierarchically superior organisation. Changes external

to the policy subsystem (e.g. changes in socio economic conditions, public opinions and policy outputs) are necessary but not sufficient to bring about policy changes.

The approach is too complex for analysing policies in developing countries like Ghana, where such advocacy coalition groups may not be highly developed due to poor communication networks. Despite the fact that the proponents of the framework sought to model the *entire policy* process, the framework tends to focus only on policy formulation at elite circles. Again, it does not look at the complex nature of power relations among policy participants. It also does not explain policy changes well. Again, while this framework is seen as a type of network model (John, 2001), it tends to treat coalitions as if they are homogenous. Despite these weaknesses, the notion of coalitions can be employed to explain how networks and linkages among different interest groups influence forest policy.

3.5.3 Balance of Policy Pressures Model

This model assumes that forest policy is the balance of power between two interest groups. One is the exploitative group, which promotes or supports exploitation of forests. The other is protective group, which is in favor of forest conservation. Each of these groups exerts pressure on policy makers. Forest policy changes in response to changes in the balance of pressures on policy makers. It is assumed that a state will adopt a policy favoring forest protection when the group favoring forest protection becomes stronger relative to exploitative groups. The model also assumes that policy makers respond impartially to group pressures (Grainger and Malayang, 2006). The model identifies three phases of forest policy development, namely the *exploitation phase*, the *ambiguous phase* and the *sustainable management phase*.

In the “exploitation phase”, exploitative groups are predominant and exploitation is the main goal of both stated and actual policy. This stage usually occurs at the early stages of exploitation when the government gives priority to maximizing revenue from logging timber or agricultural extension. In the “ambiguous phase”, exploitative groups remain predominant and actual policy is exploitative, but the government adopts protective stated policy just to satisfy overseas protectionist groups. Both stated and actual policies focus on sustainable forest management in the “sustainable management phase”. This

stage is reached when forests are almost completely depleted and internal protectionist groups become more powerful (Grainger and Konteh, 2007).

The model does not make any provision for negotiations, bargaining and networks among groups. It also treats each group as homogenous and, therefore, ignores intra-group conflicts. Another weakness is its assumption that policy makers are neutral. There is enough evidence to suggest that policy makers usually have some interests that they seek to satisfy (Mutahaba and Balogun, 1992; Nordlinger, 1981; Smith, 1993; Christiansen and Dowding, 1994). Block echoes this perfectly when he wrote that: “state managers collectively are self interested managers, interested in maximising their power, prestige and their wealth” (Block, 1980: 229). The proposition that policy always reflect interest of the most powerful is also highly contested (Nordlinger, 1981; Jordan and Richardson, 1987; Seidman 1998; Pierre and Peters, 2000). This is how Smith echoes his reservations about this:

“The policies that emanate from the state do not reflect the demands of groups or classes but are the result of how the state actors perceive their interests,... how they perceive particular problems... Consequently, state actors can propose policies which counteract the interests of *most powerful groups* in society” (Smith 1993: 51, emphasis mine).

Similarly, Nordlinger argues that the executive often chooses policy options that satisfy its own interests “even when its preferences diverge from the demands of *most powerful groups* in civil society” (Nordlinger, 1981:1, emphasis is mine). Notwithstanding these weaknesses, the Policy Pressure Model is very comprehensive in its analysis of forest policy changes. Its acknowledgement that there may be differences between governments’ stated policies and actual policies will be very useful in the analysis of forest policies in a developing country like Ghana, where governments may enact policies just to satisfy international donor organisations.

3.5.3.1 Stated and Actual Forest Policy

The concept of *stated and actual policy* was mentioned in the discussion on the Policy Pressure Model and this section will just elaborate the issues raised already. Actual forest policy reflects the true intentions of the government towards forest management.

This may differ from *stated* forest policy published in official documents (Grainger and Konteh, 2007). The concept assumes that since governments cannot satisfy all interest groups, one governing strategy is to design a policy that satisfies powerful groups and then implement a very different policy that satisfies the executive's interest. Stated policy then remains only as "symbolic statements" (Smith, 1985: 135).

Relying on the works of a number of scholars (such as Aucoin, 1971; Huff, 1988; Krasner, 1988; March, 1989), Grainger and Konteh (2007: 46-47) identified three main scenarios when stated forest policy may deviate from actual forest policy. First, a government may find it difficult to publicize its choice between competing forest interests of various sectors/groups of the economy. Such a government may do one or more of the following: (a) publish sectoral policies which: (i) contradict those of other sectors (ii) internally inconsistent (iii) do not reflect its actual intentions; (b) implements policy poorly; (c) maintains uncertainty (e.g. by poor forest monitoring) to discourage challenges to ambiguity.

Second, actual policy has changed due to changes in government and or priority goals compared with those at time of publication of the stated policy. The third scenario occurs when a government wants to hide, especially from international donors, activities that clash with rules of the institutional state. This involves ambiguity by delusion and delay (Grainger and Konteh, 2007).

3.5.4 Policy Network Approach

There are many variants of the network approach but the central theme is that the policy process is shaped by interests of both state and societal actors (Rhodes, 1988; Smith, 1993; John, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). The approach assumes that "the relationship between state actors and groups are relationships of dependence and therefore simplistic society- and state – centred approaches say little about empirical reality" (Smith, 1993: 75).

Policy networks exist when there is an exchange of resources between various state and societal actors or between parts of the government. Five different types of networks have been distinguished by Rhodes (1988). These are *policy communities*, *professional networks*, *intergovernmental networks*, *producer networks* and *issue networks*. Policy

communities are networks which usually involve only a limited number of actors (both state and non state) with equal distribution of resources. There is usually a high degree of consensus among actors (Rhodes, 1988; Smith, 1993). Professional networks express the interests of a particular profession. They are characterised by stability of membership. Intergovernmental networks are based on representative organisations of local authorities. Their main distinctive feature is that they exclude non-governmental groups. Producer networks are distinguished by prominent role of economic interests (both public and private sector) in policy making (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b). Issue networks are characterised by larger number of participants and unequal distribution of resources. Since several interests are represented, consensus is low.

In most network analysis, the focus has been on policy communities and issue networks, which form the extremes of the continuum (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith, 1993). According to Marsh and Rhodes (1992b), no policy area perfectly conforms to these ideal classifications. However, one could talk of a policy community when only some groups have access to policy making. Where there is no restriction such that no interests are left, there could be said to be issue networks (Rhodes, 1988; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith 1993). According to Smith (1993), policy network approach can be applied together with any macro-theory. Marxism, for instance, is related to the policy community subtype dominated by capital. Elitism also matches policy community dominated by privileged interests. State-centred approaches correspond with various networks dominated by state actors. Pluralism is more related to issue networks where there is no dominant group (Smith, 1993).

One area where there have been some disagreements on the constitution of networks has to do with the role of government in the network. While Rhodes and his followers, mainly from the British school, treat the government and state actors as equal partners in the network, the Dutch school recognises the special position of government and accord it the role of managing or steering the network (Kickert *et al.*, 1997). This perspective distinguishes two distinct network management strategies, namely *process management* and *network constitution* (ibid). Process management aims at improving the interaction process among various actors. It concerns steering strategies that seek to unite perceptions of the various actors. Network constitution, on the other hand, is concerned with bringing about changes in the institutional characteristics of networks. These may involve bringing new actors into the network (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000).

Changes in policy network are caused by economic, political and social factors which affect power structure of the groups involved (Richardson *et al.*, 1992).

The network approach is more realistic as it captures the complexity of the policy process (John, 2001). Its realisation of the fact that state actors are not neutral makes it very appropriate for analysing resource policy, especially in developing countries where the interests of state actors can never be ignored. A deeper understanding of the complexities of governance, power and the public policy can be found in the policy network approach (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Sibeon, 2004).

Despite these strengths, policy network approaches have been criticised for being too descriptive and for not adequately explaining how network changes (Dowding, 1995; John, 1998). The approach also places so much emphasis on cooperation and ignores power differences (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997). Some critics also argued that it is difficult to know where one network starts and ends (Kassim, 1994). Klijn and Koppenjan argued that most of these criticisms are inappropriate. In their view, “the network approach is solidly rooted in the theoretical history of policy sciences and organisation theory” (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000: 137).

While the approach will be very useful in this study, some of its weaknesses will have to be improved. For instance, most analysts only focus on relationships between top state officials and leaders of groups during elite circles policy-making. Network models have hardly been applied to analysis of policy implementation (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Consequently, micro- level inter-personal and informal relationships have often been ignored (John, 2001; Raab, 2001; Sibeon, 2004; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). It is my intention to help fill these gaps.

3.5.5 Actor-Network Theory

Actor-network theory is associated with Law and Callon (1988) and Latour (1996). The theory was originally developed for the analysis of the diffusion of technological and scientific innovations. Some researchers later applied it in rural studies (Woods, 1997; cited by Morris, 2003; Comber *et al.*, 2003) and in the analysis of agriculture and environmental policies (Burgess *et al.*, 2000; Morris, 2003). The theory focuses on networks that are made up of people, organisations, agents, machines and other objects.

It assumes that, in order to understand technological diffusions, one has to take account of all the human and non human entities within the networks. The policy analyst must examine the mechanisms through which networks of relations are composed, how they emerge, how they compete with other networks and how they are maintained over time (Latour, 1996; Callon, *et al.*, 1986).

The researcher must also examine how actors enlist other actors into their world and how they bestow desires, visions and motivations on these actors (Latour, 1996; Law and Callon, 1988). The theory emphasises the fact that actors are not limited to only humans because social relations are not only made by the social, but a mixture of the social and material. Associations cannot be made durable in space and time using humans alone (Murdock, 1997; Law, 1994). Actors are said to be connected by intermediaries such as materials, technologies, policy documents and money.

The success of an actor's intention to build strong networks with others depends on the ability to mobilise resources or to direct the movement of such intermediaries. It also depends on the ability to persuade others to be enrolled (Burgess *et al.*, 2000; Morris, 2003; Callon, 1986; Law, 1992). The most important aspect of such negotiations is *translation*, a multifaceted interaction in which actors construct common definitions and co-opt each other in pursuit of individual and collective goals. Latour (1986, 1996) noted that, in the process of translating ones ideas, the procession of power does not automatically ensure success unless others can be persuaded to perform the appropriate actions for this to occur.

The theory also posits that networks are dynamic and hence studies need to focus on these shifting alliances and associations. Methodologically, text analysis and interviews are relied upon to understand the actors' actions and negotiations (Callon *et al.*, 1986). One good element of this theory is that it takes accounts of diversity of actors and the interactions between them. Its combination of human and non human entities makes it suitable for analysing environmental issues (Burgess *et al.*, 2000; Morris, 2003). For instance, in analysing relationships between forest officers and local people, one may also have to look at the role played by other non-human *actants*, such as money and gifts, in establishing such networks. The model does not adequately examine power differentials, as it tends to focus too much on negotiations. It is also too complex, as it treats both human and nonhuman actors equally. Since actors may be spread over a

large space, the observation of such complex networks could pose problems for researchers.

3.6 Models of Policy Implementation

While the theories presented so far have improved our understanding of the policy process, they all tend to focus only on formal policy-making. Given that formulated policies may sometimes be significantly altered (Jenkins, 1978) or even abandoned (Parsons, 1995), there is a need to also understand the policy implementation process. This section therefore presents policy implementation models.

3.6.1 Top-Down Rational Approach

This approach sees implementation as a top-down rational activity whereby top state officials formulate policies and street level bureaucrats implement those policies (Derthick, 1972). It is assumed that implementation can only be effective when: goals are clearly defined; there are adequate resources and an effective chain of command exists (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). In recent years, some theorists in this tradition have come to accept the fact that implementation is a more evolutionary process. Majone and Wildavsky (1984: 116) wrote: "implementation will always be evolutionary; it will inevitably reformulate as well as carry out policy". These writers, however, still believe that a proper chain of command can effectively reduce policy distortions. This model placed too much emphasis on rationality, resource availability and hierarchical chain of command. It also wrongly assumes that conflicts during implementation can be controlled by a good chain of command and proper coordination. However, the model may be applicable in countries where state officials maintain heavy control over policy implementing agencies.

3.6.2 The Bottom-Up Approach

This approach, which criticised the top-down approach, posits that policy outcomes largely depend on the interests and decisions of street level bureaucrats. The implementation of a given policy may involve a multiplicity of organisations at national and local levels. This produces a complex system, which top-down mechanisms of coordination are unable to handle (Hjern and Porter, 1981). Since strict hierarchical

control is not possible, street level policy implementers have the power to change stated policies (Linder and Peters, 1987). The model does not pay much attention to the ability of top government officials to shape the behaviour of policy implementers through proper supervisions. It also failed to analyse the impact of complex networks on policy outcomes.

3.6.3 The Game Model

This model was developed to contest both the top-down rational and the bottom-up models. The model sees implementation as something that is structured by conflicts and bargaining. Various proponents, however, disagree on how to manage such conflicts. Dunsire (1978) argued that an effective implementation process will have adequate systems for controlling such conflicts. Bardach (1977), however, argued that implementation is a game of bargaining, persuasion, and manoeuvring under conditions of uncertainty. He argued further that no system can perfectly deal with the uncertainties and the conflicts that often characterise the policy implementation process. This model could be credited for acknowledging the difficult situations that policy implementers go through. However, the theory does not give adequate attention to power differentials.

3.6.4 Policy-Action Framework

This model is similar to the game model in that it recognises the conflicts that characterise policy implementation. Its proponents include Lewis and Flynn (1979) and Barrett and Fudge (1981). The model acknowledges that organisations tasked to implement policies are constrained, since some interest groups may not accept the policies. There are usually disagreements on policy goals and hence objectives are sometimes not clear. Implementation is only effective when implementers are able to bargain and negotiate proper terms with powerful interest groups. Analysts must, therefore, pay attention to interactions and negotiations between implementers and interest groups (Barrett and Fudge, 1981: 25). A major weakness of this model is that it fails to account for how the internal structure of implementing organisations affects policy implementation. The model could, however, be credited with discussing the constraints to policy implementation.

3.6.5 Policy-Type Approach

The approach is based on the premise that the effectiveness of any strategy adopted by policy implementers depends on the policy issue concerned. Most researchers use Lowi's (1964) traditional category of policy types in such implementation analysis. Ripley and Franklin suggest that it is usually more difficult to implement regulatory policies than distributive policies since the latter is often characterised by more conflicts (Ripley and Franklin, 1982). Although this approach could be credited for recognising the fact that the success of implementation depends on the policy issue being addressed, it fails to adequately discuss how other issues, such as resource constraints and the internal structure of implementing organisations, influence policy outcomes.

3.7 Organisational Theories

Given that policy implementation is often formally assigned to one or more state agencies, policy analysis inherently also involves organisational analysis (Parsons, 1995). The section that follows, therefore, reviews theories on organisational analysis.

3.7.1 Weber's Ideal-Type Model of Bureaucratic Organisation

Weber argued that the bureaucratic structure is better than any other form of organisation, due to its precision, rationality and efficiency (Weber, 1952). The ideal type bureaucratic organisation operates just like a machine and as such it does not change. It is hierarchical in nature and workers must be made to follow formal rules always. Each worker must relate to each other workers and clients formally. Technical qualifications should be the basis of employment and promotion must be based on achievements. When the organisation is not performing well, various measures (such as a review of personnel selection and training programmes) must be adopted.

The bureaucratic control, which was suggested by Weber, has been criticised by Marxists as a mechanism for dominating workforce (Edwards, 1975). Weber's attempt to equate human organisations with a machine is also unrealistic. Human beings, unlike machines, usually have the propensity to develop informal relations and networks. Rational control of workers is also not realistic. As Selznick noted, "all formal organisations are moulded by forces tangential to their rationally ordered structures and

stated goals” (1949: 251). Further, the efficiency of employees also depends on a lot of things such as resources and a good incentive packages (Masson, 1971; Pfeffer, 1997). Despite these weaknesses, the model draws the attention of researchers to the need to examine formal operation procedures and coordination during any organisational analysis.

3.7.2 Employment Relations Model

This model was put forward by Ouchi and Jaeger to contest the anomalies in Weber’s bureaucratic model. They argued that instead of hierarchical coordination, some organisations may rather perform better when employees are given more discretionally powers and where their general welfare needs are met (Ouchi and Jaeger, 1978; Ouchi, 1980). Organisations adopting this type of approach are known as clan-like type of organisations. This approach is better when employees will be working for a long time, and where it is not possible to strictly evaluate performance individually. The approach can be credited for reminding researchers about the need to examine the needs and welfare of employees. The model, however, suggests a too relaxed method for coordination. It also does not consider how resource availability affect organisational performance.

3.7.3 Structural Contingency Theory

The model posits that organisations have different contextual factors and hence there is no best way to organise. A method that can be effective for one organisation may not work for others (Galbraith, 1973: 2). Organisations that have structures that more closely match the requirements of the context tend to be more effective. There are three important elements of context. These are size, technology and the organisation’s environment. Size of an organisation determines the type of internal control that it uses. Increasing size leads to division of labour within the organisation (Child, 1972, Kimberly, 1976). Technology refers to the characteristics of inputs used by the organisation, its operation procedures and characteristics of outputs (Pfeffer, 1982). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) identify resource availability and degree of inter-organisational linkages as important features of the environment. Burns and Stalker (1961) also focused on uncertainty and the degree of stability of the environment.

This theory has filled some of the gaps in the early organisational theories by recognising how the environment of an organisation affects its performance. However, it has been criticised for assuming that organisations are always constrained by the environment. It also failed to adequately discuss some of the elements that constitute the context of organisations. This makes the theory too complex to apply (Pfeffer, 1982).

3.7.4 Strategic Choice Model

The strategic choice model posits that organisations are not as always constrained by their environment as implied by the structural contingency theory. Good managers are able to develop effective strategies to adapt to the environmental context (Miles *et al.*, 1974). An admirable feature of the model is that it realises the fact that with good strategies in place, organisations will still be able to perform well in unfavourable environments. Although the strategic model offers a good critique of contingency theory, there are limits to which managers can develop effective strategies to overcome certain constraints within the environment (Aldrich; 1979; Pfeffer, 1982).

3.7.5 Systems Model of Organisational Analysis

The systems approach considers organisations as open systems, which engage in various modes of exchange with their environment (Locket and Spear, 1980). Every organisation is part of a larger system, made up of other organisations. The performance of any focal organisation must be analysed in relation to its interactions with other organisations in the environment. The approach proposed three levels of analysis- the subsystem; the entire system and the suprasystem. Subsystem analysis focuses on the interaction patterns of various sub-units within an organisation. Analysis of the entire organisation focuses on the examination of the cultural, the structural and the technological components of the system. The "suprasystem" level of analysis examines the nature of interactions and linkages of the organisation with other organisations. One advantage of the model is that it focuses on both intra organisational and inter-organisational analysis. However, given that an organisation may be linked with so many agencies, it may be difficult to study all these relationships.

3.7.6 Zucker's Institutional Framework

This model posits that organisations are influenced by the laws and traditions of the societies within which they operate (Zucker, 1977 and 1988). An organisation's policies and implementation strategies, therefore, reflect the interplay of its own interests and demands received from the society. The demands from the society serve as external pressures on the organisation. This means that the researcher must focus on both internal and external factors. Although this model has adequately explained how organisations respond to pressures from organised groups, it fails to adequately explain how individual members of the organisation are also influenced by members of the society.

3.7.7 Resource Dependence Theory

The model was first propounded by Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) and later refined by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) and Pfeffer (1982). It is similar to Zucker's framework since it also analyses how organisations are externally constrained. The main tenet of the model is that because organisations are not internally self-sufficient, they depend on some actors within the environment for resources. These inter-dependencies affect the performance of organisations, since they receive pressures from actors with whom they are interconnected (Pfeffer, 1982: 193). There are two dimensions of the theory. First, it argues that due to resource constraints, organisations respond more to those groups/organisations in the environment that have power and control over important resources. The second dimension argues that since focal organisations also have their goals, they comply with external demands only when there is no alternative (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 44). Thus, organisations are externally constrained, but analysts must also pay attention to internal organisational decision making processes. There is also a need to examine how organisations seek to strategically adapt to their environments (Aldrich and Pfeffer, 1976: 79).

The model ignores issues such as incentive packages, operation procedures, and internal power structure of organisations. It also focuses so much on inter-organisational resource dependency but does not pay adequate attention to inter-personal livelihood dependencies between members within the organisation and societal actors. Notwithstanding these weaknesses, certain elements of the model can be relied upon for

analysing the implementation of forest policies by the Forestry Department. It will, for instance, be interesting to analyse how interdependencies between state and societal actors affect actual forest policy outcomes.

3.8 The Concept of Power

It is generally acknowledged that the concept of power is a common factor in the policy process (Foucault, 1980; Hope and Gray, 1982). Dowding (1996: 1-2), in this regard, wrote: “the answers to questions about power in society are answers to questions about the very nature of politics and the policy process”. Despite this acknowledgement of the importance of power in the policy process, there is no consensus on how power must be conceptualised (Dahl, 1961; Said, 1983; Sharp *et al.*, 2000; Lukes, 2005). Conventional accounts of power tend to equate it with domination. Elitists, for instance, see power as a property of a few elites (Dye, 1966; Anderson, 1975). The ability of those oppressed to resist domination has been acknowledged (see Dahl, 1968; Zirakzadeh, 1997), yet resistant power was often conceptualised as a weaker force (Sharp *et al.*, 2000). Recent studies have, however, demonstrated that power is more diffuse than suggested by early theoretical perspectives (Clark and Dear, 1984; Mann, 1986; Painter, 1995). It is wrong to portray figures of domination as the only people with power (Tarrow, 1994). Political power is fragile since it depends on so many people for reinforcement (Sharp, 1973).

3.8.1 Entanglements of Power Perspective

This perspective analyses the interconnections and interdependencies of contemporary power. It contests traditional conceptualisations of power as a preserve of a few elites. Most social science writings in this tradition were probably influenced by the ideas of Foucault (Foucault, 1980, 1982), who cogently captured this diffuse aspect of power as follows:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which functions in a form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate

between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power (Foucault, 1980: 98).

There are two phases of the Foucauldian power perspective. The first one is the “strategic model”, which emphasises the ability of resisting power to effectively challenge, reverse and even sometimes overcome the forces of domination (Thompson, 2003). A subsequent conceptualisation, which Foucault came to favour, is “governmentality”. Exercise of power, according to “governmentality”, is a “conduct of conduct”, i.e. “the more or less deliberate attempt to shape the actions of others or oneself” (Dean, 1999: 198). This second formulation emphasises the fact that resistance force is not always reactive whereby it only reacts to dominating force. Resistance force is also sometimes autonomous. In this formulation, power is not always a violent *face-to-face* encounter between two adversaries. Freedom, therefore, does not disappear everywhere power is exercised. In some cases, freedom may well appear as a condition for the exercise of power (Thompson, 2003: 122).

The notion of entanglements of power was recently refined by Sharp *et al.* (2000), who argued forcefully that the practice of domination and resistance are inextricably linked and produce entanglements of power. They argued that power must be conceptualised as an amalgam of *forces, practices, processes and relations*. The *forces of power* involve the use of power over others (as in coercion or persuasion) or the power to act effectively within a particular situation. The *practices of power* involve the use of strategic knowledge within a particular situation. The *processes of power* involve a particular method of doing particular actions over time, while the *relations of power* involve the myriad social, economic, cultural and political connections and networks within and between groups and institutions (Sharp *et al.*, 2000:21).

This relational conceptualisation of power implies that both rulers and those being commanded have some powers (Sharp, 1973; Chazan *et al.*, 1992). The approach emphasises subtle forms of power, which operate based on associations (Latour, 1986). Murdoch and Marsden (1995:372) stated that “those who are powerful are not those who hold power but those who are able to enrol convince and enlist others into associations”. The fluidity of power prompts some researchers to argue for a potential conceptualisation of power (Rose, 1967; Mokken and Stokman, 1976; Foucault, 1982; Dowding, 1996). Lukes (2005: 69) wrote: “power is a potentiality, not an actuality -

indeed a potentiality that may never be actualised”. Studies by a number of researchers (Arendt, 1986; Philo, 1992; Cresswell, 2000: 264; Crang, 2000) also lend credence to this relational conceptualisation of power.

Robinson noted that, in some scenarios, power is exercised as a form of ‘friendship’. He, therefore, advocated for a model of power that emphasises friendship, consisting of mutuality, negotiation and respectfulness for the subject (Robinson, 2000: 67). In such scenarios, those who are supposed to wield power rather form alliances with the subjects (Atkinson, 2000). Valentine and Longstaff (1998: 148) also demonstrated how inmates and prison officers in England are often “locked up in alliances, conflicts and collusions which involve daily compromise, accommodation and negotiation”.

The main weakness of the entanglements of power perspective, especially as presented by Foucault, is that it pushes the relational aspects of power too much and ignores the fact that some actors have more power than others (Sibeon, 2004). Despite this weakness, the perspective reminds researchers of the fact that even marginalised actors can exercise their own forms of power.

3.8.2 Views on How Power Should Be Studied

Lukes classified the views on power into three categories. These are: the *one-dimensional*, *two-dimensional* and the *three-dimensional* views (Lukes, 1974 and 2005). The “one dimensional” view is credited to Dahl (1961) and Polsby (1963). It studies power by examining behaviour of actors in concrete decision-making situations to find out which actor prevails in each situation. The situations have to involve direct, observable conflicts of subjective interests, seen as overt policy preferences. To these researchers, “direct conflicts between actors present a situation most closely approximating an experimental test of their capacities to affect outcomes” (Polsby, 1963: 4). This approach does not consider the strategies of those who have been excluded from the political process.

The two dimensional view, presented by Bachrach and Baratz (1970) to contest the anomalies in the one dimensional view, focuses on the examination of the interests (seen as observable preferences and grievances) of all actors. They explained that those with power also have the ability to dominate the political agenda by withholding certain

issues from the public. Hence, there must be a multidimensional analysis that also looks at the non-observable aspects. Since power is not only reflected in concrete decisions, the researcher must consider the chance that some actors could limit decision making to relatively non controversial matters and or exclude others from the process. There may be consensus among the various actors, yet there may be grievances and conflicts which are not brought to the political domain. Bachrach and Baratz (1970: 8) wrote: “to the extent that a person or a group consciously or unconsciously - creates or reinforces barriers to the public airing of conflicts, that person or group has power”. Researchers must, therefore, examine both decision-making and non-decision making processes. A *decision* is “a choice among alternative modes of action” (ibid: 39), while a *non-decision* is a “decision that results in suppression or thwarting of latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision maker” (ibid: 44). This approach also stresses the need to examine actual, observable, conflict, overt or covert.

The three dimensional approach, presented by Lukes (1974, 2005), posits that those with power are also able to distort the judgement of their subjects so that the real interest of the latter is manipulated. Lukes criticised the early approaches for insisting that there must be observable conflicts wherever power is exercised. He argued that the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent conflict in the first place. Hence, there are situations where there may be no actual observable conflict, since that might be averted, yet there may still be *potential latent conflict*. Conflict is said to be latent in the sense that it is assumed that there would be a conflict of interests between those exercising power and those subjected to it, were the latter to become aware of their real interests (Lukes, 2005: 153). Consequently, apart from examining observable behaviour, researchers must also look at the structures which shape interests and desires of people (Lukes, 1974, 2005).

3.9 Perspectives on Governance

The policy process cannot be well explained without an understanding of the concept of governance (Culpitt, 1999). It is difficult to provide a universally acceptable definition of the concept of governance (Rhodes, 1996; Pierre and Peters, 2000; Painter, 2003; Barnett, 2003). However, the concept has often been used to capture the broad power relations between rulers and subjects (Culpitt, 1999). Watts (2003: 12), for instance, defines governance as “the structure of patterns of relations between various political

actors". Klijn and Koppenjan (2000: 136) define it as "directed influence of societal processes", while Jonas and While (2005: 73) define it as any social mode of coordination, in which the aim is to control or facilitate social activities. In view of the fluidity of power, governance does not only involve an application of hierarchical forms of control but more so the use of persuasion to seek cooperation of subjects (Ackerman and Kruegler, 1994; Rose, 1999; Barry *et al.*, 1996). Rulers rule through governmental rationality, a field of power aimed at shaping conduct (Foucault, 1991).

3.9.1 Models on governance

According to Pierre and Peters (2000), there are four structural models of governance. These are: governance as hierarchies; governance as markets; governance as networks and governance as communities.

3.9.1.1 Governance as Hierarchies

In this type of governance, society is directed through a system of command and control. Governance is conducted by and through vertically integrated state structures. State institutions enforcing laws function in a hierarchical system of command and control. Critics argue that due to globalisation and declining state resources, the hierarchical model is not effective in the contemporary world (Rhodes, 1996; Pierre and Peters, 2000). Further, while the state may be employing a hierarchical form of governance, some of the actors within its network may not conform to the state's interests and objectives (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Local resistances also make some areas within the national space ungovernable by the state's hierarchies (Watts, 2003). Such areas can only be better governed through a power-sharing strategy that involves networks between local elites and the executive. Traditional conceptualisations of governance as top down exercising of power are, therefore, not realistic (Burchell, 1991; Ackerman and Kruegler, 1994; Sharp *et al.*, 2002). Despite these weaknesses, hierarchical models of governance cannot be totally discarded because, in both developed and developing countries, central governments still maintain tight hierarchical control over certain resources, local government and many sectors (Pierre and Peters, 2000).

3.9.1.2 Governance as Markets

This type of governance entails assigning the roles of resource allocation and the steering of the economy to market forces. For instance, instead of electing state officials to take decisions about services, the market forces dictate what services clients want to use and what producers produce. Apart from the fact that it empowers citizens, the model is not costly (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Market forces may, however, lead to resource depletion and environmental problems. There are certain public goods and services whose production cannot be left in the hands of market forces.

3.9.1.3 Governance as Communities

This perspective argues that communities can and should be allowed to govern themselves and resolve their common problems with a minimum state involvement. Both the state and local governments are said to be too big to handle different problems of various communities. In addition, state and local government actors are too far and they usually employ too much bureaucratic procedures which are unable to solve community problems (Pierre and Peters, 2000). There is therefore the need to allow members of the community to govern themselves. The model wrongly assumes that communities can easily agree on the nature of problems and their solutions. Although there are sometimes marked power differentials even within small communities (Leach *et al.*, 1999), the model ignores how these affect the ability of local communities to govern themselves.

3.9.1.4 Governance as Networks

The network approach, which is usually referred to as policy networks, is perhaps the most familiar model in the literature on contemporary governance (see, Rhodes, 1996; Pierre and Peters, 2000). Instead of the traditional command and control way of governing, government is said to be sharing power or co-governing with different societal actors (Rhodes, 1996, Kickert, 1997; Pierre and Peters, 2000). Governing of the economy is based on a network between state officials and societal actors. In this regard, Rose sees governance as the outcome of all the “interactions and interdependencies; the self organising networks that arise out of the interactions between a variety of organisations and associations” (Rose, 1999:17).

It is argued that: “[t]he development from government towards governance - the decreasing reliance on formal legal powers - has clearly strengthened the position of the policy networks” (Pierre and Peters, 2000: 20). This approach is in line with the “analytics of government” school of thought, which posits that governing is not only about controlling subjects, and that it also includes the use of persuasive tactics (Dean, 1999). Although the approach captures the reality of the fluid nature of power in the contemporary world, some researchers tend to push this too far (see for instance, Smith, 1993; Rhodes, 2000), thereby ignoring the fact that state actors have special powers which are not available to societal actors.

3.9.2. Choice of Governing Strategies in Africa

3.9.2.1 The Colonial Legacy and the Ideology-Based Models

The colonial legacy model argued that post colonial African states adopted governing strategies inherited from their colonial masters. British colonies tend to adopt a more decentralised system, following the indirect rule practiced by the British. French colonies, on the other hand, tend to use a more centralised system, in line with the tight direct rule used by France (Lonsdale, 1981; Miles, 1994). A major weakness of this model is that it does not adequately explain why countries ruled by the same colonial powers sometimes have different governing structures.

The ideology-based model posits that the governing strategies adopted in various countries are determined by the political ideologies of early post-colonial Africa leaders (Miles, 1994). This model fails to explain institutional variations within the same country (Boone, 2003). Both models failed to analyse how the organisation of local societies influences governing strategy (ibid). This last factor has been well discussed by Catherine Boone (2003) and this is presented in the discussion that follows.

3.9.2.2 Boone's Model

Boone (2003), who rejected both colonial legacy and the ideology-based models, argued that the strategies of control adopted by post-colonial rulers are based on bargains between the central rulers and local elites. These governing strategies usually vary across sub-regions of the national space. Collaboration between local elites and central

rulers is determined by factors such as: communal structure, class relations, and source of rural elite power. Four ideal types of institutional configurations have been identified. These are *power sharing, usurpation, administrative occupation and non-incorporation*. Institutionalised power-sharing occurs when local elites wield non-state forms of power over their subjects and are also economically dependent on the central government. In such circumstances, central rulers rule the countryside indirectly through rural elites (i.e. mainly chiefs and land owners). This form of indirect rule was used by the British during the colonial era. The system was also used in ruling Senegal's Groundnut Basin. Such an indirect rule usually produces a kind of "decentralised despotism", which does not expand grass roots participation but rather increases the power of local elites.

Usurpation occurs where the rural economy is hierarchical and rural elites do not economically depend on the central rulers. The rural elites are more autonomous and threatening to the central rulers. Central government will try to destroy the foundation of their neo-traditional authority by establishing its own institutions at the local level. There are dense networks of state institutions at the local level but the centre's own agents retain control. This means that institutions are spatially deconcentrated but power is centralised. Boone stated that this was the case of Asante in Ghana, where the Nkrumah regime sought to destroy the power of the chiefs. Cases of this were also mentioned in the Abomey region of Benin and Chagga district of Tanzania. It is further argued that central rulers are usually unable to totally usurp the powers of the local elite by such strategies. Consequently, state agents at the local level are likely to face competition from such local elites over the control of the local resources.

Administrative occupation occurs when a rural society is not hierarchical and, therefore, no rural elite exists. If this area is a zone of commercial agriculture or has some useful natural resources, the central regime will have an interest in incorporating it into the national economy. However, it will attempt to govern from the centre rather than building dense networks of state institutions in the rural areas. The regime avoids devolving power to local actors due to fears that such a strategy could lead to the emergence of a new local elite, which opponents can rely on to challenge the executive. This strategy, she noted, was adopted to rule Lower Casamance in Senegal where the society was highly egalitarian. Central rulers, in this scenario, will not want to decentralise but if forced to do so, then they will adopt administrative deconcentrations that ensure that their own agents are in tight control of the new local institutions. In such

cases, central government gets closer to rural communities but there is no increase in local people participation.

A strategy of non-incorporation, whereby a central regime will not build any institutional apparatus in the area but will rather allow local populations to govern themselves, occurs when the peasant society does not have any viable economic resource, and it is not threatening to the centre. The presence of government activities in such areas will be minimal, even if forced to govern such regions under current decentralisations. The author cited zones occupied by nomadic groups in the Sahel and parts of rural Congo, where central governments presence has still been minimal, as examples of this latter case. Each strategy, according to Boone, is not permanent. Institutional changes may result from changes in central government's basic goals or preferences. Again, changes in social structure of the periphery, for instance, weakening of rural notables' authority over subjects, can also lead to changes in governing strategy.

The model fails to analyse how networks are formed between street level bureaucrats and local people. This is odd since even in cases where government maintains its own staff at the local area, informal interpersonal networks may develop between local actors and the street level bureaucrats. However, by focusing on spatial analysis of governing strategies, the model has perfectly introduced geographical dimensions of governance into political theory.

3.10 Local Community Participation in Natural Resource Management

The preceding discussion mainly focused on the conventional policy process whereby policies are formed at the national level and implemented by one or more organisations. It is considered imperative to review some of the literature on forest decentralisation and community forestry, given the fact that such issues have gained much currency in recent years.

3.10.1 Contested Views on Community Management of Natural Resources

The ability of local people to manage their resources has been a source of debate in the resource management literature. Within the realm of theory, Hardin's thesis, *The Tragedy of the Commons*, was one of the earliest writings on the subject. He likens

communally owned resources to a finite pasture that is opened to all herdsmen in an area. He then argued that each rational herdsman will want to increase the number of his animals to get more income. This will consequently lead to the degradation of the common pasture (Hardin, 1968). The implication of Hardin's thesis is that when a group of people are in a situation where they could mutually benefit, if all adopted a rule of restrained use of a common resource, they are not likely to do so unless they are coerced by an external force. Each individual has an incentive to ignore the social and environmental costs of his or her resource use for fear that even if he or she adopts conservative methods, others will continue to use the resource indiscriminately (Wade, 1988). In his thesis *The Logic of Collective Action*, Olson (1971:2) made similar arguments that suggest that rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests unless coerced.

Based on these arguments, it has been suggested that the only way to prevent the ultimate destruction of the common resource base is control by the state or an external organisation (Ehrenfeld, 1972; Carruthers and Stoner, 1981; Smith, 1981). Ophuls (1973) has argued that, due to the tragedy of the commons, environmental problems cannot be solved through collaboration. He suggested that a government with very strong coercive powers is needed to solve environmental problems. Some studies have reported scenarios parallel to the "tragedy of the commons". Wainwright and Wehmeyer (1998) reported that one major problem faced by a community integrated conservation and development project aimed at conserving wildlife in Zambia was the fact that certain individuals continued to poach the animals to satisfy their personal interests. Similarly, Gibson and Marks (1995) noted that local hunting does not decrease in areas where participatory programmes are being undertaken in Africa because some farmers and hunters are interested in only their personal gains.

Despite these claims, this perspective has been contested (Wade, 1988; Gudykunst, 2000; Ostrom, 2003; Agrawal, 2007). Analytically, Hardin and his followers have made many sweeping generalisations based on inappropriate assumptions which are hard to find in the real world. For instance, Hardin confuses "no property" with "common property" (Wade, 1988). The former, otherwise known as "open access property", is used for situations where there is completely unrestricted access and this is the situation that Hardin assumes (Wade, 1988; McKean, 2000). In reality, it is much easier for the common owners to make and enforce rules to govern common property resource use.

By failing to make appropriate distinction, Hardin and his followers generalise their results for “no property” to cover “common property” (Wade, 1988). As Rees (1990) noted, such common property resources are open only to those within specific communities, governed by strict rules of social conduct and collective responsibility. These social and cultural rules may have been built over a long period of time to ensure the survival of the society and are, therefore, effective in managing natural resources. It is only when the traditional control mechanisms break down that resource degradation may set in (Perrings, 1987; Banana and Gombya-Ssembajjwe, 2000).

There are well documented examples of peasant communities managing resources without any destruction of the commons. The open-field systems of medieval Europe and the present day Andes have been cited by Wade (1988) as evidence of local communities’ ability to manage the commons without state intervention. Becker and Leon (2000) reported a complex forest management system in some Yuracare settlements in Bolivia, where apart from managing the forests, the people also planted and nurtured plant species that are preferred by the game they hunt.

3.10.2 Decentralisation and Community Participation in Resource Management

In recent years, debates over local communities’ ability to manage resources have been rekindled by contests over the prospects of decentralised management schemes. Although the term decentralisation is contested (Conyers and Hills, 1984; Smoke and Lewis, 1996; Turner and Hulme, 1997), it broadly refers to the transfer of power from central governments to local actors (Smith, 1985; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). Cheema and Rondinelli (1983) identified four major types of decentralisations. These are *deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatisation*.

Deconcentration involves the transfer of functions from the central government to its own field staff located outside the national capital. This is also referred to as field administration (Olowu, 2001:3) or bureaucratic decentralisation (Rolla, 1998:27-39). Delegation involves the transfer of authority to an organisation which may have some semi-independent authority to perform certain functions. Devolution is a system through which the central government transfers certain functions to independent local units. Privatisation refers to the transfer of some functions from central government to private or non governmental organisations. In practice, several types of decentralisation are

combined (Parker, 1995; Olowu, 2001). Most of the so called decentralisation programs in the developing world are just some form of deconcentration (Adamolekun, 1991; Diouf, 1998; Olowu, 2001). As far as the management of natural resources is concerned, decentralisation must give decentralised bodies a higher degree of autonomy (Kaimowitz *et al.* 1998; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Agrawal, 2001; Gray, 2002; Ribot, 2008). Agrawal and Ribot (1999) proposed “democratic decentralisation”, which entails the transfer of power to downwardly accountable local representatives, as the best form of power transfer for effective resource management.

One argument in favour of decentralised natural resource management is based on the belief that the plural participation that goes with decentralisation will reduce management cost due to proximity to local resource managers, and reliance on local knowledge (World Bank, 1997; Ribot, 2001; Larson, 2002). It is also argued that since local people are located very close to natural resources, they can supervise resource management better than central government officials, who have legal authority over vast areas (Carney and Farrington, 1998; Larson, 2002). Decentralisation can also lead to equitable distribution of the benefits from natural resources (World Bank, 2000; Ribot, 2001; Larson, 2002). This will lead to an improvement in the livelihood of forest users. Proposals based on such arguments usually call for the integration of conservation and development programmes in which local communities are encouraged to design their own methods of forest conservation and undertake development projects at the same time. A number of such integrated conservation and development projects have been carried out in many communities in the developing world (Wainwright and Wehrmeyer, 1998; Becker, 2003). Decentralisation will also enable marginalised groups to take part in the formulation and implementation of forest policy. This will give them a greater sense of ownership over the resources, and also ultimately increase their willingness to observe stated rules (Ostrom, 1990; Carney, 1995).

Almost all the points raised to support decentralised natural resource management have come under attack. One point that has come under strong attack is the argument that decentralisation will make it possible for local knowledge to be tapped for natural resource management. The same argument, when reversed, implies that resource management will not be effective where appropriate local knowledge is lacking. According to Larson (2002) technical expertise on the management of natural resources is generally uncommon and hiring specialists may be expensive for local governments.

Local resource managers may also not be willing to enforce strict laws of regulation, due to tribalism and nepotism (Lutz and Caldecott, 1996; Kaimowitz *et al.*, 1998; Larson, 2002).

It has also been argued that advocates of decentralised forest management usually seem to ignore inequalities and related intra- and inter-community resource struggles. They, therefore, treat local communities as homogenous entities that are capable of maintaining socially and ecologically sustainable natural resource management systems (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). In the real world, there are many conflicts within local communities about natural resource use (Chambers, 1997; Larson, 2002). Boundary conflicts have also been cited (Sarin, 1996; Ahluwalia, 1997). Shah and Shah (1995) reported that a decentralised community based approach to forest management in parts of India resulted in a situation where forest dependents in some communities raided the forest reserves of nearby weaker communities in order to allow for the regeneration of their own forest.

Further, unequal power relations at the community level imply that decentralisation may not give everybody the same level of opportunity to influence policy (Ghimere and Pimbert, 1997). Decentralisation may rather hinder equitable distribution of the benefits of natural resources, since powerful local politicians may dominate powerless citizens in the sharing of such a local cake (Carney, 1995). The process may benefit local elites at the expense of marginalised social groups such as women (Larson, 2002).

3.10.2.1 Empirical Support For and Against Decentralised Forest Management

There are some examples where decentralisation/collaboration led to better forest management, while there are other equally good cases where decentralisation did not achieve good results (Enters and Anderson, 1999; Agrawal, 2007). One good example where local people have demonstrated their ability to manage forest resources was reported by Turker (2004) in his study of Mexico's Monarch Butterfly Reserve. He found that there were no effective institutional arrangements, but some community institutions were resilient and supported conservation even though the political economic context undermines their authority. A similar case was reported by Banana and Gombya-Ssembajjwe (2000). The authors showed that colonial and post colonial regimes in Uganda vested forest lands within central governments. However, in some

areas, local people were working as guards, and deforestation rates in such areas were generally lower than in areas where only government guards worked.

Pandit and Thapa (2004) also did a comparative study in the Nepal mountain forests. They compared the rate of degradation in forests being managed by central governments and those under the management of local communities. The authors concluded that the rate of degradation of *timber products* in forests being managed by governments did not differ from that of forests under community management. However, *non-timber* forest products were being depleted more rapidly in government protected forests than in forests under community management. Becker also reported a good community managed forest reserve in Loma Alta in Ecuador. This success story was due to collectiveness and the fact that members of the local community share a long history of local decision making about land allocation and thus have the capacity to make rules to regulate forest exploitation (Becker, 2003).

A number of cases where decentralised forest management programmes did not achieve good results have also been documented. Even in countries where community participation resulted in better forest management, there are some localities where such programs have not benefited forests. I have already cited an example in Nepal where community management was more effective than state control, yet in the same Nepal, there were some areas where community participation failed. Lachapelle *et al.* (2004) documented this when they made a study in three communities located within the forests in the middle hills of Nepal. They revealed that the state government decentralised forest management to enhance community participation in forest management but traditional power structures, such as caste and gender, made it difficult for the members of the local community to work together for the preservation of the forests. I have also already mentioned that programmes initiated for local participation in wildlife preservation in some forest reserves in Zambia failed because many farmers did not comply with preservation rules due to personal cost-benefit calculations (Wainwright and Wehrmeyer, 1998).

3.10.3 Frameworks for Analysing Decentralisation

This section presents three frameworks for analysing decentralisation. It also presents the Dubois model which focuses on the evolution of participatory forest management approaches.

3.10.3.1 Cheema and Rondinelli Framework

Cheema and Rondinelli (1983) identified four major sets of factors that influence the implementation of decentralisation. They proposed that any analysis of decentralisation programmes must examine these factors, which include: the socioeconomic and political setting of a nation; inter-organisational relationships; resources availability and characteristics of implementing agencies in terms of staff numbers, skills etc. The framework does not pay attention to local power structures. It also ignores the importance of representativeness and accountability of local actors to the effectiveness of any decentralised programme.

3.10.3.2 Olowu's Framework

According to Olowu (2001), any analysis of a decentralisation programme must examine the *goals* which the programme sets to achieve and seven mechanisms, namely: types of responsibilities devolved to local actors; level of financial autonomy given to local actors; extent to which decision making powers have been transferred to local actors; how decentralised personnel are managed; enforcement of local government accountability; linkages between decentralised agencies and other organisations outside the state in the delivery of services. This framework failed to consider how local power relations affect decentralisation programmes.

3.10.3.3 Actors, Powers and Accountability Framework

Agrawal and Ribot (1999) propounded this framework for the analysis of forest decentralisation programmes. The authors argued that decentralisation only works when powers are transferred to local representatives who are downwardly accountable to their constituents (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). Any analysis of forest decentralisation programmes must, therefore, focus on three distinct dimensions, namely *actors, powers*

and accountability. Analysis of actors must examine whether those receiving devolved powers are the true representatives of the local people. Analysis of powers must examine the types of power that have been transferred. This involves an examination of whether local people have power to: create rules; make decisions; ensure compliance and adjudicate disputes. It must also be established if representatives are downwardly accountable to the citizens (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

The framework is more comprehensive than previous models. However, it also tends to neglect the influence of local socio-political structures and informal networks on the outcome of decentralised programs. It must also be stressed that all the contemporary decentralisation models fail to capture how decentralised programmes are shaped by multiple network relationships.

3.10.3.4 Dubois Model on the Evolution of Participatory Management Programmes

The model focuses on the evolution of participatory programmes in the developing world. It posits that forest management in the developing world has passed through two stages and it is now entering a third stage. The stages are: (a) the technocratic era; (b) the participatory era and (c); and the political negotiation. The *technocratic era* occurred in Africa around the 1960s and was characterised by what he termed “management for the forest and against the people”. The colonial administration, during this era, excluded local people from resource management. Community rights over resources were also restricted since local people were seen as the problem.

The participatory era, which witnessed the pursuit of participatory management approaches, stretches from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. The shift was part of a broader emerging development paradigm, which places emphasis on involvement of local people in development activities (Chambers, 1994). Participatory approaches have been adopted more widely in Asia than in Africa (Shepherd, 1991; Woodcock, 2002). The *emergence of political negotiation* era is characterised by what Dubois terms “forest management with the people and actors”. This approach is still emerging and is backed by state policy in some parts of South East Asia, especially India and Nepal (Woodcock, 2002). Collaborative forest management needs to be politically negotiated so that each stakeholder’s role must be negotiated (Woodcock 2002: 17).

A major weakness of this model is that it fails to adequately explain why different management approaches may co-exist in some regions. While these broad paradigm shifts have been reportedly seen in parts of Africa (Woodcock, 2002)) and South East Asia (see Poffenberger, 2000), changes in networks in different eras have not been well examined. These network relationships are bound to be shaped by the distribution of endowments in various countries and hence country-specific studies are important to understand what factors shape collaboration between state and societal actors within different eras.

3.11 Conclusions

Although several useful insights have been gained from this literature review, there are some gaps that need to be filled. The review shows that contemporary policy models are not suitable for analysing, in an integrated way, policy formulation and implementation. The Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999) and the Balance of Policy Pressure Model (Grainger and Malayang, 2006) are quite comprehensive, yet they tend to focus only on *formal* policy-making.

On the other hand, existing policy implementation models (See for instance, Barrett and Fudge, 1981; Majone and Wildavsky, 1984) have not paid adequate attention to interactions at formal policy-making circles. They also tend to focus only on top-down processes of coordination. The few models which focus on bottom-up processes also tend to ignore hierarchies. As Sabatier (1986) and Morgan (1993) noted, there is a need to design comprehensive models that combine both top-down and bottom-up approaches. The literature on organisational theory also tends to focus only on formal rules and resource availability. Organisations must be analysed not only in relation to material resources, but also in relation to culture, power and gender relations. Attention must be given to the potential of organisations to change under human agency (Berry, 1997; Leach *et al.*, 1999; Klooster, 2000).

Of the various approaches on public policy analysis, the policy network perspective, which is not totally blind to power differentials, will be the most appropriate approach for this study, given the fluidity of power in the contemporary world (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Sibeon, 2004). However, existing network models tend to only focus on analysis of inter-governmental relationships at formal policy-making circles (see for instance,

Rhodes, 1988; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993). Interpersonal relationships between street level policy implementers and societal actors have not been fully explored. As John noted, what is needed is “an approach which can examine the complexity of the links and show how personal contacts can affect policy outcomes....” (John, 2001: 148). It is my hope to help fill some of these gaps.

CHAPTER FOUR

MATERIALS AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this chapter is to devise a new technique to analyse, in an integrated way, forest policy formulation and implementation in an African setting where the informal dimension of political relationships and institutions is as important, if not more important, than the formal dimension. As the common factor in these relationships is the concept of power, the first part of the chapter outlines a new approach to modelling power in this context. The second part shows how forest policy formulation and implementation can be represented in this approach and lists some hypotheses derived from the methodology. The third part discusses the methods that were used for the collection and analysis of data.

4.2 Modelling Power

Even though it is generally acknowledged that a model of power is required for any rigorous analysis of the policy process (Hope and Gray, 1982; Parsons, 1995; Dowding, 1994, 1996), there is still no consensus on how power should be conceptualised (Dahl, 1961; Scott, 2001; Lukes, 2005). My conceptualisation is largely based on the Foucauldian perspective, which has also been refined by many scholars (See, Valentine and Longstaff, 1998; Dean, 1999; Sharp *et al.*, 2000; Luke, 2004). A key principle of this perspective is that power is fluid and spreads through society (Foucault, 1980: 98).

Of the two phases of the Foucauldian perspective (see Chapter 3), my model is based on “governmentality”, which posits that the exercise of power is a “conduct of conduct”, that is “the more or less deliberate attempt to shape the actions of others or oneself” (Dean, 1999: 198). This formulation recognises the fact that exercise of power is not only a *face-to-face* violent encounter between two adversaries; it also involves subtle “forms of influence”. There is no simple difference between the ruler and the subjects (Thompson, 2003). My adoption of this relational conceptualisation of power does not mean that I am totally blind to unequal power structures. I assume that power is not

equally distributed but it is still relatively fluid. So that even marginalised actors have some spaces to exercise their own forms of power.

4.2.1 Elements of Power

Lukes (1977: 4) definition of power as “the capacity to bring about consequences”, highlights the important elements of power that will guide my conceptualisations. The notion of “capacity” is usually ascribed to an *actor* or an *agent* (Dahl, 1957; Lukes, 1986; Sibeon, 2004). An actor/agent is an entity “that has capacity to formulate and take decisions and to act on some of them, the question of which decisions are acted upon, or can be acted upon, being an empirical matter” (Sibeon, 2004: 119). Actors whose power relations will be analysed in this study include government leaders (the executive), international donors and environmental NGOs; the Forestry Department; local communities; timber contactors; chainsaw operators and individuals that possess a direct, significant and specific stake in the forests (Woodcock, 2002).

4.2.1.1 Power as Capacity

As clearly captured by the guiding definition, power can be examined as a “potential” or “capacity”. Following Hussein and Ketz (1991), potential power will be analysed by examining three variables, namely: *abilities, constraints and opportunities*. An actor’s ability to achieve desired interests depends on his/her rights and resources. *Constraints* are the limits to the abilities of an actor. They explain why some actors do not act even when their interests are being threatened. This resonates with rational choice theories (Dowding 2001). *Opportunities* provide actors with favourable conditions for the successful exercise of power.

The potential aspect of power implies that the ability of any actor to influence the policy process is time and space-specific. Each actor has the capacity to achieve success only within certain contexts. I term this “context-bound” ability (Dahl, 1968; Lukes, 2005). Another issue which is related to the potential aspect of power is the cost of employing a particular form of power. One may have power to achieve certain things but he/she may not employ that form of power when the cost of exercising it outweighs expected benefits (Harsanyi, 1962; Goldman, 1972). This is useful for explaining why force may not be applied in certain circumstances.

4.2.1.2 Forms of Power

There is a distinction between power capacity and actual exercising of one's power. The latter is usually referred to as "mechanisms of influence" or "forms of power" (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Russell 1975; Galbraith, 1983; Ledyaev, 1997). I use these phrases simultaneously to refer to all the mechanisms through which an actor influences other actors in a way that they would not otherwise act. This is in line with the phrase "bring about" in the guiding definition. Several researchers have attempted to classify these forms of power (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Wrong, 1979; Galbraith, 1983; Lukes, 2005) but the classification provided by Ledyaev is most appropriate here. Ledyaev (1997) classifies power into six forms, namely: *force*, *coercion*, *inducement*, *persuasion*, *manipulation* and *authority*. These forms differ in "the source of a subject's submission to the power holder" (Ledyaev, 1997; 183).

Force is a violent form of power whereby submission is achieved through the employment of negative sanctions, which usually involved influencing a subject's physical body or environment (Bierstedth, 1950; Wrong, 1988; Connolly, 1993). Bacharach and Baratz (1970: 27-28) perfectly describe how force operates when they wrote that: "... in a situation involving force one's objectives must be achieved, if at all, in the face of the others *noncompliance*..... once the fist, the bullet, or the missile is in flight, the intended victim is stripped of choice between compliance and non-compliance".

In the case of *coercion*, compliance is achieved through threats of negative sanctions (French and Raven, 1959; Bacharach and Baratz, 1970). With regards to *inducement*, a subject's compliance is based on a reward from the one exercising power (De Crespigny, 1968: 198). *Manipulation* involves influencing a subject without explicitly making him/her aware of the actual intentions of the power holder (Easton, 1958: 179). *Persuasion* exists when compliance is achieved by the presentation of rational arguments that appeals to the subject (Wrong, 1988). *Authority* involves situations where the subject complies because of the conviction that the power holder has the legitimacy to command (Bacharach and Baratz, 1970; Scott, 1994) or the perception that the power holder is a "knowledgeable" actor (Ledyaev, 1997). I assume that all these forms of power are important for understanding the complex policy process, in which many actors are acting and reacting to the actions of others (Owen, 1995; Scott,

2001). I assume that various actors employ different mechanisms at different stages of the policy process. The effectiveness of each strategy will be analysed contextually.

4.2.1.3 Issue Scope and Context-Bound Elements of Power

While acknowledging the fact that power is not evenly distributed, I assume that it is still quite fluid. So both state and societal actors have the ability to influence certain *issues*. Lukes (2005) differentiates between *single-issue* and *multi-issue* powers and that distinction applies here. In the case of single-issue, an agent's power can only prevail over a particular issue. On the other hand, the actor with multi-issue power has the ability to prevail over several issues. The issue-scope element of power does not mean that an evaluation of the relative powers must be based on the number of issues over which different actors prevail (as suggested by Polsby, 1963). The analysis will evaluate the significance of the issue over which each actor's power prevails. For instance, if government leaders exclusively formulate many policies but those excluded manage to frustrate the goals of such policies at the implementation stage then the government leaders only have power over official policy-making. Given that implementation results determine actual policy outcomes, one can conclude that those excluded have more influence on the policy process than the government.

As noted already, the ability to achieve desired outcomes only within certain contexts is termed *context-bound ability* as against *context transcending ability* (Luke, 2005). In the latter scenario, the same agent can achieve the same results across a range of different circumstances (ibid). Though the executive may have a more context-transcending ability, its power is not total. There are situations where some areas are difficult to govern, due to resistances from local people. Such areas become what Watts (Watts, 2003:29) terms "ungovernable spaces".

4.2.1.4 Interests as the Driving Force of Power

The last key concept in the guiding definition is "consequences" and this is assumed to be *outcomes*. As stated by Debnam (1984:55) "the term power cannot be used without reference to an effect". Outcomes are the impacts that flow from action or inaction by actors (Levy *et al.*, 1974; Anderson, 1975). The "outcomes of power must serve the interests of the powerful" (Lukes, 1986: 5). How to analyse interests usually depends on

the view of power being employed. The “one dimensional view” of power conceptualises interests as overt policy preferences of the political actors. The “two dimensional view” treats interests as policy preferences of participants, but it also analyses the grievances of actors who have been excluded from the formal policy process (Chapter 3).

The “three dimensional view” is based on the belief that those with power are able to structure the very preferences of their subjects through manipulation of the entire social system. Consequently, observable preferences of the subjects do not tell about their *real interests* (defined as what their actual interests would have been if the system had not been influenced). Even if there are no observable conflicts, there could still be *latent conflicts* in the sense that there would be conflicts between those exercising power and those subjected to it, were the latter to become aware of their *real interests* (Lukes, 2005: 153).

The three dimensional view is more comprehensive but its application is very difficult (Hindes, 1986). Hence, I will analyse interests based on the second view. I use interests, therefore, to refer to the policy preferences of all actors participating in the political process and those excluded from active political participation. Interests are also assumed to include basic needs of particular groups. This resonates with Feinberg’s (1984) assertion that one can objectively conceptualise interests to include basic goods needed for a satisfactory human welfare. Such welfare interests include basic items, such as health, shelter, personal security, adequate nourishment, income, wealth and other essentials, needed for survival (Sen, 2002). Conceptualising interests objectively is not unproblematic, given the fact that the actors may not be aware of those interests (Lukes, 2005). All interests will therefore be examined through what respondents say and their actions in particular situations, as revealed by documents.

4.2.1.5 Investigating Power Relations

It has been stated already that the “two dimensional approach” will be adopted for this study. The “three dimensional approach” is theoretically more comprehensive. However, it is inappropriate for this study since investigating such things as real and latent interests is complex (Hindes, 1986). Again, my choice is based on the advice of Hussein and Ketz (1991) that, once power is relatively fluid so that no single actor is

able to control grievances of others, the focus on latent conflicts is no more important. While mainly employing the two dimensional view, I will also draw on a few insights from the third view. For instance, I will examine how the political system might contribute to mobilisation of bias against some groups. Again, I will analyse how certain macro-level political structures will mandate compliance. This is in consonance with the advice of Lukes (2005) that since his three dimensional view is more difficult to apply, it is possible for researchers to incorporate some of its elements into the second view. The second view will also be useful for analysing hidden policy agendas.

4.2.1.6 A General Model for Analysing Power

Combining all the key elements presented so far, the new power model focuses on four issues, namely: interests, capacities, mechanisms of actual exercise of power and outcomes. The relationships between these are shown in figure 4.1. The model assumes that various actors have different interests and different capacities for achieving these interests. Since there are constraints to these capacities, each actor has influence only within specific contexts. Actual outcomes produced in these complex interactions reshape the interests of actors and the mechanisms they employ on subsequent occasions. A first step in an analysis of power is an identification of interests of the various actors. General questions here include: (a) what are the interests of the various actors in that policy area? (b) are there conflicts of interests? (c) how do these interests change from time to time?

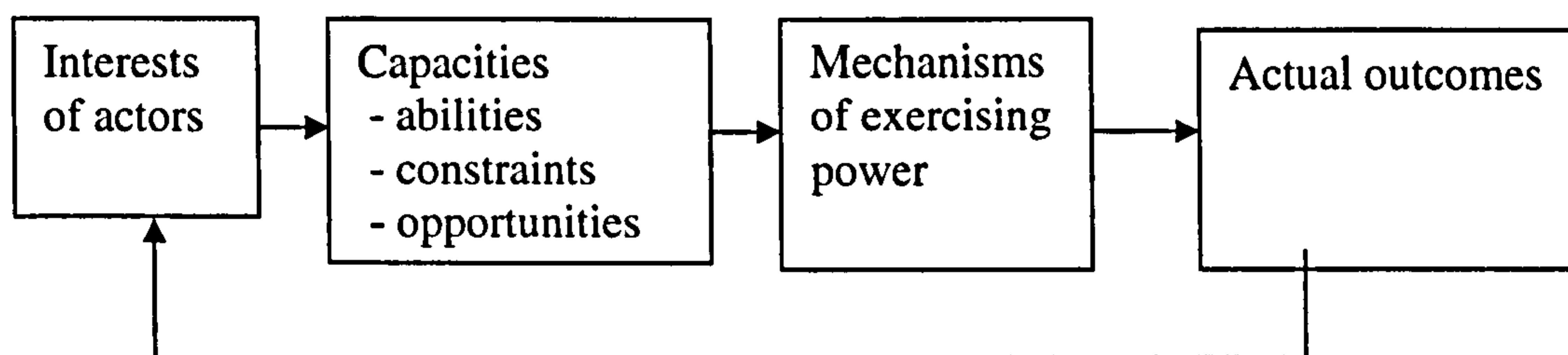


Figure 4.1 A general model for analysing power

Once interests are identified, the next stage is to examine the powers that various actors have to pursue their respective interests. Following earlier conceptualisations, power could be studied as a capacity or potential. Using the work of Hussein and Ketz (1991), three variables must be examined in measuring the capacities of various actors. These are *abilities, constraints and opportunities*. In examining abilities, the focus will be on

differences in endowments (resources and rights). The ability of any actor also depends on his physical location and relationship with other actors (Dowding 2001). Three distinct questions that need to be addressed in this regard are: (d) what are the abilities of each of the actors? (e) what are the constraints that each actor faces? (f) what opportunities does each actor has to influence the process?

Since power potential may never achieve desired outcomes, an examination of the actual ways through which actors exercise their powers is the next important stage in any power analysis. Based on Ledyayev (1997), six forms of exercising power (i.e. force, coercion, inducement, persuasion, manipulation and authority) are assumed to be in operation within the process. It is further assumed that: (i) all actors are strategically adopting different mechanisms of influence to achieve certain interests; (ii) strategies adopted depend on the rights and resources possessed by each actor or group of actors, their perceptions about the capabilities of other actors and the context within which they are operating; (iii) different actors are more influential in different issues and within different spaces; (iv) the mechanisms employed by each actor change from time to time in response to changes in interests, changes in actions of others and changes in resource distribution.

Such a formulation implies that while some strategies involve violent forms of power, others involve more subtle forms, such as persuasion, manipulation and inducement. In analysing the success of any exercise of power, I will not only focus on individual actors, but also on how they enrol and cooperate with other actors. This is based on the realisation that "power is an outcome of collective action. Therefore, to explain power.... we need to examine how collective action comes about, or how actors come to be associated, and how they work in unison" (Murdoch and Marsden, 1995:372).

The questions that need to be answered when examining actual mechanisms of exercising power are: (g) what forms of power does each actor employ to influence other actors? (h) have there been some dependencies, alliances or networks? (i) how do mechanisms of influence change from place to place and time to time? (j) what specific issues are various actors influential in?

4.3 Modeling Policy

Given my preference for a relational conceptualisation of power, a policy model that recognizes the influence of both state and societal actors is certainly the most appropriate option. The policy network approach to governance and public policy is therefore preferred to the other simplistic state-centered or society-centered models, which tend to grossly misrepresent the complexity of the policy process (Smith, 1993; Pierre and Peters, 2000; Hill and Hupe, 2002). However, due to certain weaknesses of the existing network approach, especially its ignorance of power differences, my model will also draw on certain elements of the hierarchical model. This is logical because hierarchical forms of governance still exist in both developing and developed countries (Pierre and Peters 2000).

The general criticisms against the policy network approach have been presented already (see Chapter 3), and I will not repeat all of them here (since not all those criticisms are even appropriate, see Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). However, I will briefly highlight some of those weaknesses that will be addressed in this work. While there are several versions of the network model, the differences in perspective mainly relate the role of government in the network. Rhodes and other colleagues (mainly from the British school) tend to treat both government and societal actors as having more or less equal power (Rhodes, 1981, 1997). Government is said to be “guiding the networks” albeit with very limited control. Policy networks have thus been referred to as “self-organising” or “governing without government” (see Smith, 1993; Rhodes, 1997, 2000). This perspective ignores unequal power structures within which networks operate.

On the other hand, Kickert and his followers (mainly from the Dutch school), while emphasising “co-governance”, also recognise the fact that government has special powers, due to its control over resources and unique legitimacy as representative of common interests. This perspective, therefore, accords the government the special role of managing or *steering* networks from a distance (Kickert, 1995; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). This position is more realistic but how can the government manage different networks that span across the country from a distance? Again, given that the executive also has interests, how can it always manage the network neutrally? Like Rhodes and his followers, it appears the types of networks being emphasised by the Dutch school are only those between organisations. This is seen clearly in the writing of Klijn and

Koppenjan (2000, pp136), who refer to “network management” as “mediating and co-ordinating *inter-organisational* policy making” (my emphasis).

It is my thesis that governments do not only steer networks *from a distance*. They also actually take part in the interactions within networks in order to achieve their own interests. Again, there is a multiplicity of networks (formal and informal, inter-organisational and inter-personal). Consequently, the executive may be steering inter-organisational networks but it may not have control over interpersonal networks, which have more influence on actual policy outcomes.

Besides, given the fact that the network model emerged in response to criticisms of hierarchical models (Smith, 1993; Pierre and Peters, 2000), its proponents tend to ignore power differentials (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997). This is a criticism that can be specifically leveled against Rhodes and his followers but it can also be extended to the Dutch school, which recognises the special position of government, but still fails to analyse how that influences interactions among policy participants.

Furthermore, current policy network models also tend to treat groups as homogenous. They therefore neglect vertical relationships. As John (2001; 148) noted, what is missing from the current policy network approach is “the complexity of personal and professional connections and the multilayered character of relationships between individuals”. Since organisations/groups are usually internally differentiated, there is a need to consider inter-personal relationships within each group. For instance, an understanding of the power relations between traditional rulers and ordinary citizens is important for explaining the horizontal relationships between a local community (as a whole) and the Forestry Department.

Another weakness is that existing network models tend to focus only on relationships at the meso - and macro-levels (Raab, 2001). In such formulations, policy analysis only focuses on formal policy-making (see for instance, Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith 1993). Few researchers have applied policy network theory to analyse policy implementation (Provan and Milward, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). In most cases, stated policy has been wrongly treated as policy outcomes. Consequently micro-level relationships or “face-to-face interactions” are usually not analysed. This has led

to a situation whereby network models do not link interactions at micro, meso and macro levels (John, 2001; Raab, 2001).

4.3.1 Constitution of Policy Networks

The main concept which lies at the centre of my integrated network model is “mutual dependency”, which is based on a relational conceptualisation of power (see my power model). Since power is fluid, actors in many social or political processes sometimes have to cooperate with one another in pursuing common interests. This cooperation brings about interdependencies. There are several forms of interdependencies, since actors have various interests (i.e. economic, social and political). These include: economic dependencies, livelihood dependencies, political dependencies and resource dependencies. Sustained mutual dependency produces networks, which I define as sustainable mutual interactions or associations among different actors. Various types of networks occur around social, economic and political issues.

Consequently, policy networks, which I define as associations between and among state and societal actors around policy issues, are intertwined with other social and economic networks. This resonates with the *social network analysis* model, which is based on the notion that all aspects of life (i.e. economic, social and political) entail social networks of relations (Wasserman and Faust, 1994:3). A social network is “a set of players and a pattern of exchange of information and/or goods among these players” (Annen, 2003: 451). It must be noted that many network theorists recognise the link between mutual dependency and policy networks (see Owen, 1995; Rhodes, 1996; Kickert *et al.*, 1997). However, dependency has often been defined narrowly in terms of only “resource dependency” between and among organisations. Such a focus on only inter-organisational resource dependencies is not enough. I argue that just as resource dependency between organisations produces inter-organisational networks, individuals within organisations may also depend on other actors. This produces inter-personal networks.

Various dependencies operate at various stages of the policy process. During formal policy-making at elite circles, interactions may mainly be governed by resource dependencies and political dependencies, in which certain groups are involved just to legitimise the position of the executive. These interactions may also entail more of

inter-organisational interactions, in which certain powerful actors in each group define the interests of their respective groups. At the policy implementation stage, where individual compliance is necessary, different dependencies may influence actual policy outcomes. For instance, individual street-level policy implementers may have different form of interdependencies and networks with individual citizens. These inter-personal networks may erode stated policy goals.

The implication here is that, in analysing the influence of interactions on policy outcomes, one must focus not only on inter-organisational resource dependencies, but also on other forms of dependencies. It is also important to analyse how inter-personal dependencies are shaped by the context within which various actors find themselves.

4.3.2 Multiplicity of Policy Networks

I explain multiplicity of networks in terms of two concepts, namely “variety of interests” and “internal differentiation of groups/organisations”. In relation to variety of interests, it is argued that since actors usually have multiple interests and interdependencies, each participant may belong to multiple networks. Again, groups are usually internally differentiated (Leach *et al.*, 1999; Sibeon, 2004), and this means that any group/organisation is just a network of individual actors. Interests of individual members at various positions of the organisation/group may differ based on their respective positions/roles (Block, 1980; Hall and Ikenberry, 1990; Jessop, 1990; Archer, 1995). Thus, while two organisations may be interacting horizontally, individual members within each organisation may also be interacting vertically. I term this “vertical inter-personal networks within groups/organisations”. Some of these individuals may also be interacting with actors within other groups/organisations (i.e. horizontal inter-personal network across groups).

In order to illustrate this multiplicity of policy networks, I use figure 4.2 to model networks between a state organisation and an interest group. For the sake of simplicity, I assume that there is a vertical state network G, which is made up of a hierarchy of state officials (i.e. G1, g2 and g3). These officials are located at several positions within the national space, with G1 representing the top leadership. Another vertical network ‘A’ is that of an interest group. A1 represents the leadership while a2 and a3 are lower level actors within the group. While each vertical chain is categorised as a group, there

could be a situation whereby the interests of those positioned at various levels of each group vary according to function/territory (Smith, 1993).

In the state chain, for instance, those at the top of the network may have interests and aspirations such as political power, wealth and prestige (Block 1980). On the other hand, the concerns of street level officials may be how to raise enough income to meet their basic welfare needs (Sen, 2002). Again if A is taken to represent a local community, one can distinguish internal stratifications made up of chiefs, elders and the ordinary local citizens. This implies that even when only two groups are interacting, there can be multiple inter-personal networks among their members.

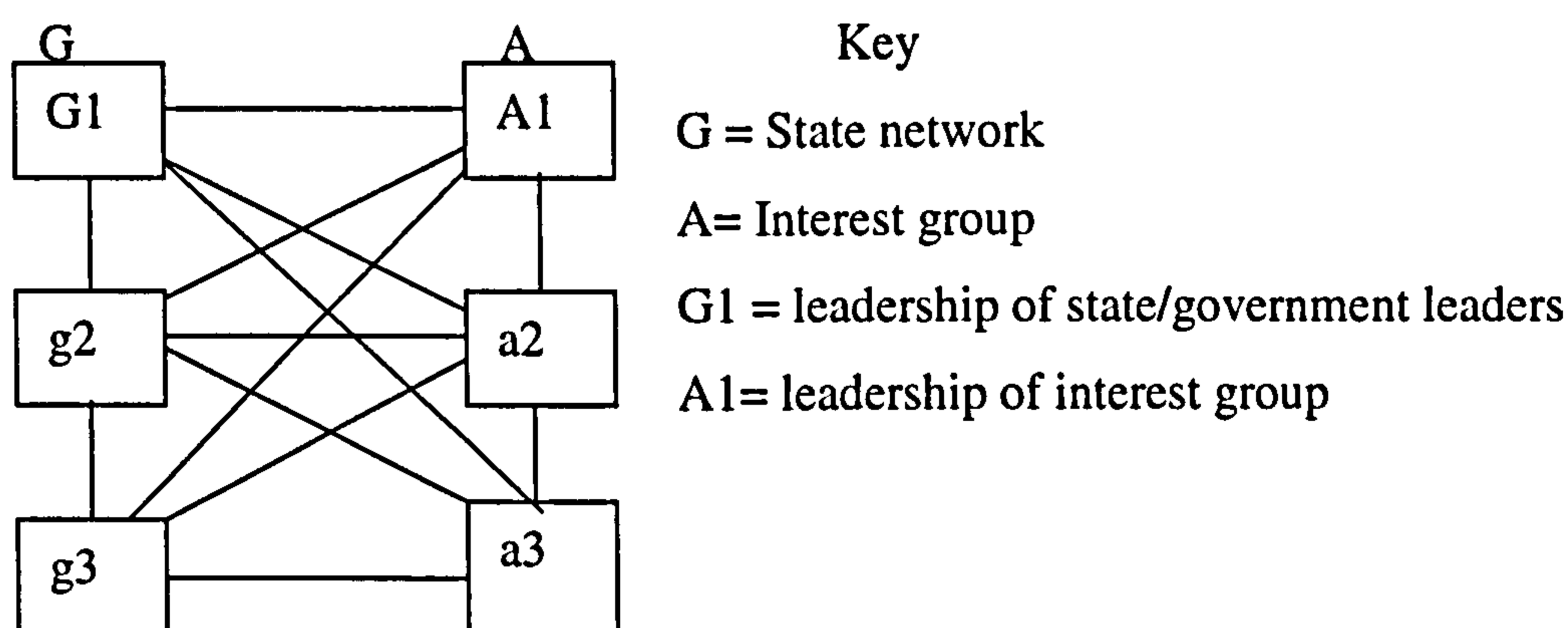


Figure 4.2 Networks between state actors and an interest group

As demonstrated in the diagram, apart from the vertical networks linking members of the same group, several networks exist across different groups. For instance, members at g3 and a3 can form inter-personal networks irrespective of the networks between their superiors. Thus, even if two groups are not formally cooperating, some of their members may do so if they have similar interests. I use the term “congruence of interests” to refer to such scenarios whereby members of different groups have similar interests.

In situations where groups/organisations are highly stratified, government’s formal policy networks with groups tend to link only the top leaders. Street-level bureaucrats and individual members of those groups may, however, also be locked up in various networks. It also follows that even if government has no formal network with any group, state actors at the community level can still form their own informal networks with individual members of community, if such networks stand to benefit them

personally. Following these conceptualisations, street-level state actors are likely to connive with societal actors to distort stated rules if: (a) the goals of such rules do not satisfy their personal interests; (b) they have very strong ties (e.g. ethnic, religious) with interest groups; (c) their morale is not boosted because of poor condition of services etc; (d) the personal gains from such networks and distortions are much higher than rewards from their own organisation; (e) there is poor supervision of such state officials.

4.3.3 Micro, Meso and Macro Linkages

I stated already that existing policy network models only focus on inter-organisational relationships at the meso-level. Micro-level inter-personal relationships have never been fully modelled. Such a flaw is partly due to the application of policy network approach to analysis of only *formal* policy-making process. Even where the importance of inter-personal relationships has been recognised (Heclo and Wildavsky, 1974; Wilks and Wright, 1987), they have not been analysed due to claims that focusing only on inter-organisational networks makes the research process manageable (John, 2001). Such excuses are inappropriate, since it is better to engage with the complexities in social reality than ignore their existence (Limb and Dwyer, 2001).

I take policy network analysis a step ahead by linking processes at different time-space extensions (micro, meso and macro levels). However, I will, for the sake of brevity, combine macro and meso scales and represent them as “macro”. Hence, I will mostly be referring to only micro-macro relationships. Micro-level analysis focuses on meanings, positions and actor-actor relations in small-scale (local) settings of face-to-face interactions, otherwise known as situations of co-presence (Giddens, 1984; Sibeon, 2004). Macro-level analysis involves study of large time-space extensions of actors and socio-political conditions (Sibeon 2004: 54).

Micro and macro processes are treated as being interdependent. Inter-personal interactions at the micro level, when repeated over wider space, can produce institutions and structures at the macro level. These macro level structures can subsequently influence interactions of individuals at micro level (Sibeon, 2004). This is in line with Giddens (1984) “duality of structures” notion. The point here is that macro conditions structure micro interactions, yet these very inter-personal interactions influence the macro world. Micro processes result from actors-in-situations using different resources

to influence one another and the process (Murdoch and Marsden, 1995). Presented this way, my approach situates micro relations in relation to the macro structural conditions of the political economy. As the Bergarian theory of social analysis posits

[T]he micro-world and what goes on within it only makes full sense if it is understood against the background of the macro-world that envelopes it; conversely, the macro-world has little reality.... unless it is repeatedly represented in the face-to-face encounters of the micro-world (Berger and Berger, 1978:18-19).

Even though I agree with the general notion that all policy networks relationships are informal (Rhodes, 1986; Kickert *et al.*, 1997), I will mostly refer to macro/meso level *inter-organisational* networks during formal policy formulation as formal networks. *Interpersonal* networks, which are based on face-to-face interactions, will mostly be referred to as informal networks.

4.3.4 Interactions in Policy Networks

I assume that interactions within any network are driven by the interests of the actors. Interactions revolve around solving the tension between dependencies on one hand and conflicting interests on the other (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). The interaction processes generate rules, which in turn, govern behaviour and actions of actors in the network. Rules provide recognizable and meaningful behaviour patterns for participants (Machado and Burns, 1998) but they are also made and remade through interactions and practices of participants (Giddens, 1984; Leach *et al.*, 1999).

Actors can be influential only when they possess certain resources and rights that make them indispensable to others. Such resources and rights provide actors with “veto power” (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). Based on the entitlement framework of Sen (1981) and Leach *et al.* (1999), I use a brother term “endowments” to refer to the “rights and resources” that social actors have, and argue that actors’ endowments determine their ability to shape the actions of others. These endowments are transformed into entitlements, defined as “legitimate effective command”, which enhances people’s capabilities to direct and shape the actions of others. Legitimacy is used to refer to command sanctioned by a statutory system or customary rights or both (Leach *et al.*, 1999: 233). If interactions are driven by interests, how do I conceptualise these

interests? I have already presented my conception of interests (see section 4.2.1.4) but some further clarifications are necessary here. First, the fact that dependencies are based on interests suggests a prior existence of interests before networks develop. However, this does not mean that interests are fixed. Based on “symbolic interactionism” theory (Mead, 1967; Wiley, 1994; Plummer, 2000), I assume that interests help to constitute networks but they are also shaped and elaborated during situational-interactions within networks. Through their interactions, actors may redefine and sometimes even abandon original interests in preference for new interests that may emerge within situations of co- presence.

It is also assumed that interests of members within the same group/organisation vary according to positions. Following Archer’s concept of “vested” or “positional” interests, I assume that individuals within the organisation/group have different interests based on their positions and roles. Since interests are attached to certain positions, then structure conditions (not determines) particular actions (Archer, 1995, 1998). Structures are used to refer to the conditions that influence actors’ decisions and actions. Structures also enhance or constrain actors’ capacities. Defined this way, structures include but are not limited to: institutions; other actors and their motives, capabilities and actions; power distribution and resources that actors may employ (Sibeon, 2004: 53).

While structures are products of the intended and unintended actions of people, they also “subsequently shape people’s action; not by strict determination but by providing flexible orientation points which may either constrain or enable what is possible” (Leach *et al.*, 1999: 230). All interactions are situated in time and space. In contextualising interactions, Thrift (1985: 11) suggests that the researcher must examine how the presence or absence of certain resources promote or hinder certain actions. Given my adoption of the word endowments, my analysis of context will broadly focus on the endowments of the various actors and how these affect the abilities of various actors to influence others. Contextuality, therefore, helps me to introduce the “issue scope” and “context scope” elements of power, into my modelling framework.

Again, given that actors have a range of role involvements (Archer, 1995 and 1998), I assume that positional interests are multiple and sometimes conflicting. Where an actor’s positional interests conflict with the interests of his/her group, he/she is likely to engage in actions that are at variance with the goals of his/her group. This means that an

actor, at any particular time, may have to abandon some organisational interests to satisfy his/her personal interests. In deciding which interests must be abandoned in order to satisfy others, actors apply the concept of opportunity cost, based on their ordering of the different endowments from alternative options.

There are also situations where an actor may abandon assigned roles in one network in order to fulfil opposing role expectations in other networks. I employ the "complexity organisational model" (Machado and Burns 1998) to explain this scenario. Machado and Burns (1988: 355) argued that any organisation/informal network is organised and regulated by a system of rules, making up a particular normative order. When different organising modes are integrated, there are bound to be "zones of incongruence" or tensions at the interfaces of the different organising modes. This may result in conflicts and contradictions in actor's roles.

For instance, a forest guard is positioned at the interface of the Forestry Department (i.e. a formal organisation) and the rural community (an informal group). The Forestry Department employs formal administrative organising mode characterised by hierarchy and fixed standard rules. On the other hand, the rural community is organised by informal rule systems, such as norms that stress reciprocity, friendliness and flexibility. In this case, tensions and conflicts may arise because of clashes of organising modes at the community level. If the guard should be accepted within the community network, then he may be forced to abandon some of the formal roles assigned to him by his superiors. This may affect the overall performance of the Forestry Department.

Following Mouzelis (1991, 1995), analysis of interactions will, therefore, focus on three dimensions, namely *role/positional*, *dispositional* and *situational-interactional* dimensions of actions. The "role/positional dimension" of analysis examines how positions and roles of different actors influence interactions. The "dispositional dimension" examines how attitudes, skills and norms shape actions within specific situations. The "situational-interactional" dimension focuses on the analysis of emergent features of the interactional situation itself. Such analysis will involve examination of the micro processes during "face-to-face" interactions, in which various actors monitor actions of others and strategically respond to such unfolding actions. Such analysis must also take account of norms, informal rules and other structures that enable or constrain individual actions.

4.3.5 Power Differentials and Conflicts in Networks

As already stated, contemporary network models have been criticised for focusing too much on cooperation and ignoring power differentials and conflicts (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997; Barnett, 2003). Power differentials have been accounted for by incorporating elements of a hierarchical model of governance into this framework. As Colebatch (1998) argued, the policy process has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. The vertical dimension sees policy as a *rule* whereby authorised decision makers transmit formal rules to subordinate officials to implement. The horizontal dimension is concerned with relationships between state actors and various actors outside of the line of hierarchical authority.

It is clear that the integrated policy network model emphasises subtle forms of power. This, however, does not suggest that the model is only based on cooperation. Since there are multiple networks and different interests, there are occasions where conflicts are not easily resolved through cooperation. In such circumstances, violent forms of power may be applied against certain actors in *competing* networks. Here again, the distribution of endowments (rights and resources) determines who has power to mobilize such forces against others. Actors have power if they have the rights and resources which enable them to influence the actions of others. However, since resources are not equally distributed among actors (Knight, 1992), power too is not equally distributed. Power differentials are, therefore, explained in terms of differences in the rights and resources. Such differences may be structured by the macro-political order.

4.3.6 Changes in Policy Networks

Changes in policy networks are explained by changes in economic, political and social factors (Mills, 1992; Smith 1993; Richardson *et al.*, 1992), which result in changes in interests and relative powers of various actors. Economic changes, such as those concerning international markets, affect the values of different resources and hence interests and the relative powers of groups (Lipietz, 1987). These changes in turn affect existing networks. Internal conflicts, such as misunderstanding between state actors and their partners, may also result in network changes. Political factors that are assumed to

be important drivers of network changes include changes in the political system, changes in government and international agreements among states.

4.3.7 An Integrated Policy Network Model for Analysing Forest Policy Formulation and Implementation

Based on the preceding conceptualisations, I now devise a policy network model for analysing the formulation and implementation of forest policy. Though the model is designed specifically for analysing forest policy, it can also be applied for analysing policy in other sectors. Policy trends are explained by the relationships between interest groups and the state. The state is defined as “set of institutions which have authority to make the rules that govern society” (Smith, 1993: 2). Pressure groups (hereafter referred to as groups) are organisations which represent the interests of certain sections of society (Wilson, 1990, Grant, 1989).

Key elements of the integrated policy model include *fluidity of power; mutual dependencies; resources and rights; formal and informal networks and multiplicity of networks*. The main assumptions are:

1. Due to the fluidity of power, there are various dependencies between and among state and societal actors, and these dependencies produce multiple networks.
2. Interactions within networks are shaped by different positional interests, which are conditioned by macro-political structures. However, interests are also elaborated by situated interactions.
3. Since actors may belong to multiple networks, there are sometimes role conflicts. In such situations, an actor decides what actions to take based on his/her ordering of the multiple endowments from alternative sources.
4. Actors have influence on the forest policy if they have rights and resources (endowments) which enable them to shape the actions of others. Since no particular actor has control over all resources and interactions in multiple networks, various actors have ability to influence different stages of the process.

5. Policy formulation may involve only a few actors, due to mobilisation of bias against some actors but those excluded can still influence actual policy outcomes, if they have the resources to maintain inter-personal networks and exchange relationships with individual policy implementers.

In the discussion that follows, these assumptions are justified and developed to explain processes at the two stages of the policy process.

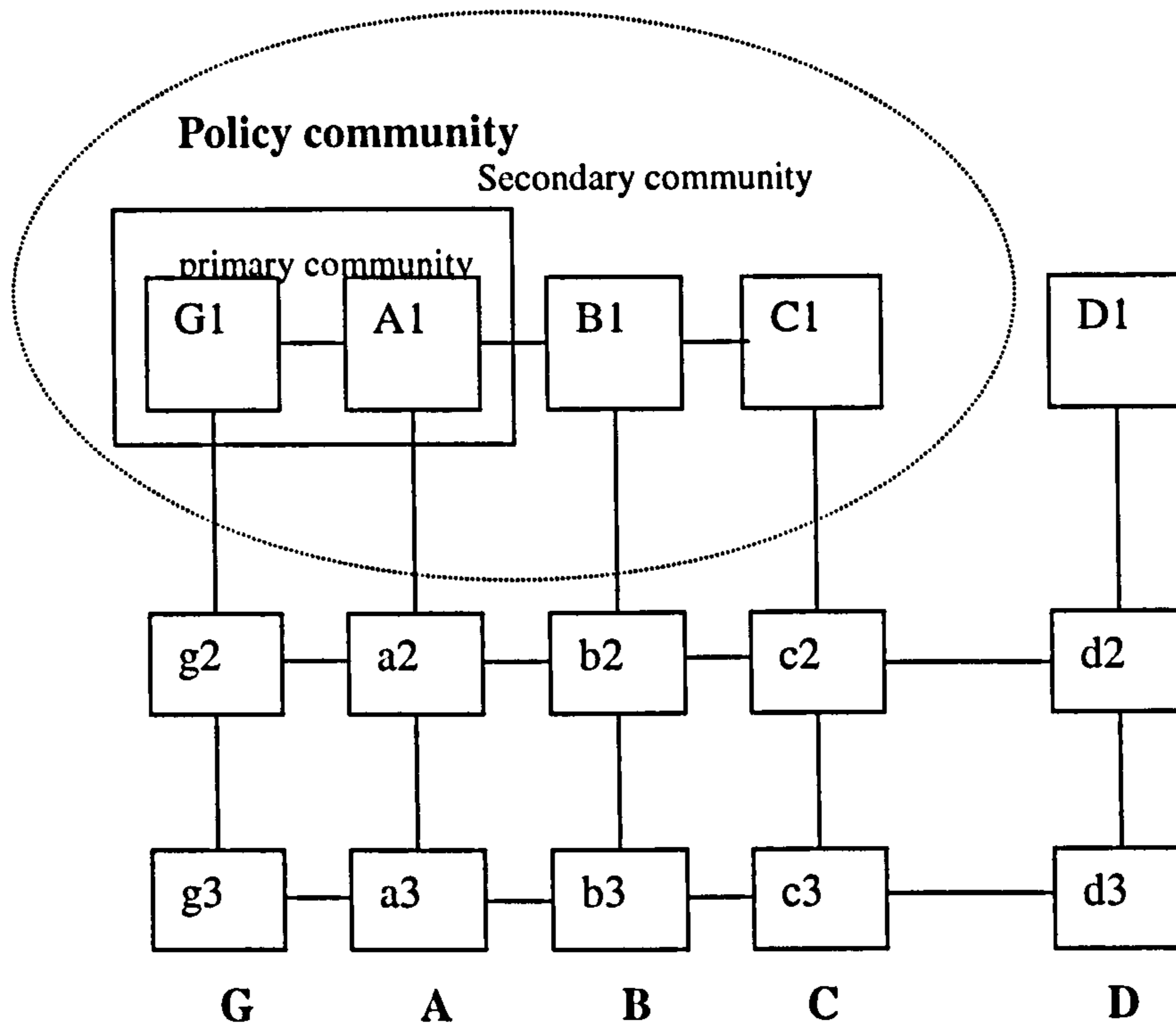
4.3.7.1 Policy Formulation

The model assumes that policy-making in Ghana, like most developing countries, is highly centralised, being controlled by the executive. Top state bureaucrats of relevant state departments may also take part in policy formulation, if they are seen as having relevant expert knowledge (Day and Klein, 1992; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a). Government leaders (policy makers) collectively act for the national interest (Grainger and Konteh, 2007) as seen through their ideological lens. Yet they are not neutral, since they also have some interests to protect (Block, 1980). This particular assumption is the main point of departure between my model and the other policy models discussed (see Chapter 3).

There are many chains of interest groups but some groups are consciously and unconsciously excluded from elite circles policy-making (Ripley and Franklin, 1980). Such exclusions warrant the need to distinguish between “insider” and “outsider” groups. The former group is consulted regularly for their views on policy. The latter group is unable to gain recognition of policy makers (Grant, 1989). Following this classification, groups that directly take part in formal policy formulation are assumed to be “insiders” and they form the *policy community*. A policy community contains a limited number of actors, usually top members of the government and senior bureaucrats of relevant state department as well as one or two interest groups who interact to take formal policy decisions (Smith, 1993: 60).

In figure 4.3, G represents the state political network, with G1 as the executive. Chain A represents the relevant state department, with A1 being its topmost bureaucrats/experts. Chains B, C and D represent interest groups (both local and international). Their respective leaderships are B1, C1 and D1. Groups, B and C are assumed to be involved

in policy making alongside G and A. Since only the leadership of each group usually directly takes part in formal policy-making, it is only G1, A1, B1 and C1 (topmost horizontal network) that form the policy community. It is the executive (government leaders) that controls access to this more or less formal policy network (policy community), and hence the rules of the game favour it more than other members.



Key

G - Chain for state politicians, with G1 as government leaders (the executive)

A- State department, with A1 being leaders of that department

B, C, D – Interest groups

Figure 4.3 Integrated policy network model

This is logical because the executive has territorial authority to make national policies (Hinsley, 1986). It is at this top level (i.e. within this policy community) that government's network management role (i.e. reconciling differing interests, Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000) may be tenable. Since this policy community involves both formal and informal groups, it does not have all the features of the ideal policy community. For instance, resources are not equally distributed among groups. Again perfect consensus is not always achievable since interest groups may disagree with the state actors on policy goals. There may be levels of exclusions within this policy community. Hence, there

could be two layers - a core/primary community and a periphery/secondary community (Laumann and Knoke 1987; Smith, 1993).

The core/primary layer is made up of key members who determine main policy directions. The executive and top bureaucrats (i.e. G1 and A1) form this core/primary. The periphery/secondary community (i.e. B1 and C1) have occasional access to the policy process. Members in the secondary policy community may become outsiders, if they feel that their interests are threatened by activities of those in the core community. Although members in the secondary community are not as influential as those in the primary community, they can still influence formal policy, if they have useful endowments, which give them strong "veto power".

Group D is not directly involved in policy-making, and hence it constitutes an "outsider". While such "outsiders" have limited influence on formal policy decisions, some of their demands, expressed in the form of protests, may occasionally influence policy if they get more support from the wider public. Groups that are part of the formal policy community (i.e. B and C in the figure) are those that have certain resources and or those who must be co-opted in order to ensure legitimacy (Mann, 1984). Groups that manage to have some of their members in government are also more likely to have access (Truman, 1951). Business groups also have access, due to expectation of profits by government (Lindblom, 1977; Truman, 1951). During democratic governance, groups in majority may have access because of their vote (Beer, 1982).

Access to this elite policy community is also assumed to depend on historical, institutional and ideological factors (Smith, 1993). Historically, past policy decisions determine groups that are involved. Institutionally, operation procedures may favour only some groups. Ideologically, groups with radical ideologies are not likely to be included in the formal policy community (Gaventa, 1980). Conceptualised this way, I distance myself from the position of the Dutch school that the executive makes sure that all interests are represented. Actors are included in the formal policy community only if their involvement is not perceived as a threat to the interests of the executive.

Interactions between policy actors at this formal policy-making level are complex. Interest groups try to lobby the executive, while it is also lobbying powerful groups to accept its stance on policy. "Outsider" groups may also be using public protests to

register their demands. Non-violent forms of exercising power - persuasions, manipulations, and inducements are more prevalent at this level where groups seek to convince, persuade, negotiate and co-opt others. Coercion may also be used by both insiders and outsiders.

Since policy formulation is restricted to only a few actors, only a few issues are discussed (Laffin, 1986; Laumann and Knoke, 1987). In this case “the interests that dominate vary and change and need to be understood in an historical and political context” (Smith, 1993: 74). In many cases, however, the emergent policy decision reflects the interests of government leaders, which may only be modified slightly by its relationships with interest groups (Smith, 1993; Seidman, 1998). The desire of government leaders to protect their interests, while at the same time winning the favour of many powerful groups, leads to policy ambiguities (Grainger and Konteh, 2007), since certain clauses are just inserted to prevent conflicts with powerful actors (Martland, 1995).

Given these postulations, major policy changes are explained by changes in socioeconomic and political factors, which structure interests and relative powers of major policy actors. Changing in forest interests of these major actors corresponds with changes in policy and networks. Implementation results of previous policies can also bring about incremental changes in policy. This is in consonance with the assertion of Owen (1995) that the policy process is prone to many changes, since actors are acting and reacting to each other.

4.3.7.2 Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is assumed to be the responsibility of one main state agency. However, implementation also involves interactions with societal actors, who are still trying to influence policy outcomes. Using figure 4.3, I assume that A is the relevant state department responsible for policy implementation. Members of A (i.e. A1, a2 and a3) interact with each other as they perform various roles. Roles are “clearly articulated bundles of rights, duties, obligations and expectations” (Knoke, 1990:7), yet while institutional roles are defined, individuals are also able to analyse, recreate and make choices about institutional roles (Giddens, 1984; Smith, 1993).

Due to resource dependency, A interacts with one or more of other groups (i.e. G, B, C and D). This interdependence leads to inter-organisational networks. There is also a tendency for members of A (i.e. located at A1, a2 and a3) to have inter-personal networks with those belonging to other groups. As demonstrated in figure 4.2, these networks can be horizontal or diagonal (though for simplicity only horizontal ones are shown in figure 4.3). Actors that are not involved in formal policy-making and those who are not satisfied with the stated policy may be able to influence actual policy outcomes, if they have the necessary endowments to maintain mutual networks with actors at a2 and a3. In such a situation, stated policy could only be effectively implemented, if actors with dispensable resources are brought into the formal policy community and their interests satisfied.

Similarly, even though resource availability of A is important for successful policy implementation, the actions of members at a2 and a3 and their informal relationships/networks determine actual policy outcomes. This means that interactions within the formal policy community shape stated policy, but actual policy outcomes are determined more by interactions in the informal networks at the community level. In view of the importance of such informal networks, it can be said that power relations are on a person to person basis. The collection or chain of person to person relationships constitutes the network and also the ways in which institutions, defined as "regularised patterns of behaviour between individuals and groups in society" (Mearns, 1995: 103), are generated. Consequently, even though some groups may be excluded from the official policy formulation process, they may also sometimes effectively employ the "weapons of the weak" (Scott, 1985) to erode the goals of policy formulated at elite circles.

This suggests that, in order to understand policy outcomes, one must examine both the resource constraints and the role orientations, which implementers ultimately adopt (Lester and Goggin, 1998). Implementation of stated policy, therefore, depends on: (a) strengths (in terms of resource availability, autonomy; personnel numbers) of policy implementation agencies; (b) morale of individuals implementers, especially those at the street level; (c) the extent to which actors who have indispensable resources are involved in the formal policy community; (d) the networks between policy implementers and societal actors. In analysing the networks between implementers and societal actors, the following questions must be addressed: What is the nature of

dependencies between policy implementers and societal actors? How do these exchanges influence policy implementation? What are the relationships between these networks and formal organisational deficiencies?

Given these postulations, the analytical strategy involves an examination of the multiple levels of action (O'Toole 2000) and complex relationships. If the model is correct, then actual policy outcomes must not only be determined by formal operation procedures and resource availability, but also by multiple interactions among state and societal actors. Such relationships are to be examined within the context of the entire "practical political economy"- a concept that refers to "how human practices of resource use are shaped by social relations at multiple levels over time" (Walker, 1995: 1).

4.3.7.3 Hypotheses

Based on the model, the following hypotheses are stated:

1. Policy changes correspond to changes in the interests of main policy actors and their network relationships.
2. Stated policy is determined by interactions within the formal policy community but actual policy outcomes are determined more by informal networks.
3. The success of a policy is significantly determined by the extent to which actors who control indispensable resources are involved in the formal policy community.
4. Forest officers take decisions on their actions based on their ordering of multiple endowments which they receive from alternative options.
5. Disparities between stated forest policy and actual policy outcomes are caused by: (i) the combined effects of resource constraints and informal networks. (ii) Failure to implement some stated policies, due to policy ambiguities adopted by government to contain the demands of powerful groups.

4.4 Methods

The methods employed in this study were *largely* qualitative. However, some quantitative techniques were also used at certain stages. Such a triangulation of methods was deemed appropriate in view of the strengths and weaknesses of individual methods (Bryman, 1992; Mikkelsen, 1995). The qualitative method is said to be flexible and effective for getting deeper understanding of specific situations (Quinn, 1980; Minichiello *et al.*, 1995; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Winchester, 2005), yet it is not very effective for measuring intensity (Patton, 1990; McCracken, 1988). The quantitative approach allows for generalisation, predictions and comparison (Maxwell, 1992; Holland and Campbell, 2005), yet its flexibility has been contested (see Brannen, 1992).

In justifying the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods, some researchers criticised the dualistic view, which tends to represent the qualitative method as being subjective and “ungeneralisable”, and the quantitative method as objective, “generalisable” and value free (see Philips, 1998; Winchester, 2005; Holland and Campbell, 2005). Despite their different epistemological backgrounds, both the qualitative and quantitative methods are scientific and equally good for different purposes (Holland and Campbell, 2005). Hence, they can be combined where appropriate (Sechrist and Sidani, 1995; Sharan, 2002).

It has also been argued that the use of quantitative and qualitative data can cross validate each other around a common reference. Where applicable, therefore, researchers must look for quantitative evidence to “check” qualitative statements (Fitzpatrick and Boulton, 1994). This view has been contested on the grounds that, even if the results from different data sources tally, there is no guarantee that the inferences involved will be accurate (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Meeto and Temple (2003) have pointed out that it is wrong to assume that the use of different methods will *automatically* enhance validity. Triangulation must not only be concerned about looking for patterns of convergence (Temple, 1997). Since social reality is multifaceted, the use of different methods may be motivated more by the desire to bring to bear all necessary dimensions of the problem (Meeto and Temple, 2003), instead of *merely* cross validating one method against the other. Devine and Heath (1999: 49) captured this perfectly when they wrote that: “triangulation can be used effectively to explore the dynamics of complex social phenomena, highlighting the multi-layered and often

contradictory nature of social life". This nuanced conceptualisation of triangulation is the basis for combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in this research.

Qualitative techniques, such as interviews, focus group discussions and content analysis of documents, were useful in analysing interests of various actors, their mutual dependencies, their networks and power relations. These methods helped to explore the interactions among various actors. They also helped to understand the lived experiences, complexities, negotiations, perceptions, conflicts and shared meanings of actors' everyday social worlds and realities (Limb and Dwyer, 2001). For instance, through a combination of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, it was possible to understand the experiences, perceptions, contested views and daily activities of forest guards and local farmers. This is in consonance with the assertion of Johnston *et al.* (2000) that qualitative methods provide access to the motives, aspirations and power relationships that account for how places, people and events are represented.

The combination of different qualitative methods was also important for explaining the complexities, contradictions, ambiguities and messiness of human behaviour and everyday life (Valentine, 2001). For instance, through various interviews and focus group discussions, the reasons why some local farmers still collaborate with guards, despite the fact that they (farmers) are not getting any reward from the state, have been uncovered. In contrast, quantifiable data was useful in areas where rates and charts were necessary for showing intensity and frequencies. For instance, it was possible to use descriptive statistics for analysing the views of forest officers on condition of service and resource availability. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, therefore, enabled me to account for intensity of cases, while at the same time unravelling different dimensions of the research problem.

4.4.1 Field Research Dairy

The primary data used for this study was collected by the researcher himself in Ghana between 15th February and 15th July 2006. My first point of contact was the Head Office of the Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines in Accra, where I met two officials of the ministry and informed them about my research. A letter of "introduction", which was obtained from the departmental Postgraduate Research Tutor at the University of Leeds, was presented to them during this meeting on the 17th July 2006. Although I told

them that the research is purely for my PhD, these top state officials asked me several questions about how the results would be published. They also wanted to know if I have some connections with the DFID or any other multilateral organisation. After about an hour of discussions with them, they finally agreed to take part in the research. I was expecting that they would give me a note to take to the Forestry Commission, but they told me to go there and introduce myself. So I proceeded to the Forestry Commission where I met a top official, who quickly agreed to assist me. He introduced me to some employees of the Commission and also gave me the name of one official at the Forestry Department who could help me. From there, I went to the Forestry Department's Headquarters to see the "contact person" (i.e. a forest manager). He took me to the office of one of the directors, where I introduced myself again. The director also asked me similar questions as those asked at the ministry. He then told me he would send a circular to the other employees so I could come back to start my research the following week.

I used the next few days to conduct the pilot survey at the Greater Accra Regional Forest Office. The actual key informant interviews and questionnaire survey among forest officials in Accra started in the last week of February. Scheduling meetings with individual top officials of the Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines, the Forestry Department and some NGOs was exceptionally difficult. Some officials failed to keep their appointments, and I had to "chase them". In order to use my limited time wisely, I performed multiple tasks within each week. For instance, I travelled to the Eastern and Central regions to interview some regional and district forest managers on days that I did not have any appointment in Accra. On 29th March 2006, I finally moved from Accra to the Eastern Region. Apart from visiting a number of communities in this Region to interview forest officers, I spent about 5 weeks doing household interviews, observation and focus group discussions at Ahinkwa, a forest community.

My first contacts within the local communities were the chiefs where some alcoholic drinks were presented as customs demands. The purpose of the research was often discussed with the chiefs and elders. At Ahinkwa, the chiefs easily agreed and scheduled a meeting between us (myself and my three field assistants) and the local people. It was quite easy to convince the local people, since I come from the same traditional area and speak the same language. Therefore data collection at Ahinkwa was relatively easier than at Saponso (I discuss these two field sites in detail below).

I moved to parts of the Central and Western Regions in early May 2006 and stayed there till the first week of July 2006. Within this period, I interviewed forest officers in a number of communities, and also spent a total of about 5 weeks at Saponso where I conducted interviews and focus group discussions with local people. Although we followed similar traditional protocols as in Ahinkwa, it was more difficult to convince the people of Saponso about the nature of the research. The chief accepted the drinks and asked us to go and come back in three days time to meet the community. This meeting was very tough as a number of people were initially suspicious about my true intentions. It took several hours of discussion to convince them. The local people however, subsequently cooperated with us as we got some interesting experience from this community.

It is clear from the above that a distinct nature of this research had to do with movement from one town/village to the other. This was necessitated by the complex nature of the survey, which involved participants who were dispersed across the national space. It was difficult to fit all appointments within my original timetable. Thus, for instance, while I moved outside Accra in late March 2006, I still had to come back there to interview a few officials, who rescheduled their initial appointments. Again, while staying in the rural communities, I had to travel sometimes to some regional/district offices to interview some forest managers. This made my work difficult and further resulted in much larger travel costs than initially anticipated.

4.4.2 Questionnaire Survey

4.4.2.1 Questionnaire Design

Questionnaires were used to obtain data from forestry officials at all levels of the Forestry Department. Specifically, information was sought from forest officers on such issues as: resource availability; autonomy of their organisation; operational procedures; supervisions; conflicts and informal relationships/networks. In order to be sure that the questions were clear and appropriate, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a sample of forest officers selected from the Greater Accra Regional forest office.

4.4.2.2 Sampling Procedure and Administration of Questionnaire

The semi-structured questionnaires were administered to some officials of the Forestry Department at the national, regional and local levels. A proportionate stratification sampling technique was used to select these respondents. Officials at each unit and level within the Forestry Department were grouped into appropriate categories or strata. Separate samples were then randomly selected from each stratum. The actual number of respondents selected from each stratum depended on the percentage of entire employee population in that stratum. Respondents, therefore, represented all categories of workers within the Forestry Department. About 110 officials were selected initially for this questionnaire survey, but 8 of them refused to take part in the survey (see Chapter 8). Consequently, 102 officials took part in the questionnaire survey. Thus, the general response rate for the questionnaire survey was 92.7%.

I personally administered most of the questionnaires, and this partly contributed to the high response rate. I was also able to ask questions in the local languages, where necessary. Direct administration also ensured a low incidence of missing cases. However, some respondents were not willing to answer certain questions. The question on bribery (i.e. question 39, see appendix I) produced the highest number of missing cases. About 16.7% of forestry officials interviewed did not answer that question. Again by administering the questionnaire directly, I was able to ask more probing questions as a follow up to some interesting answers that emerged. This was very important since a sizable number of the questions were open-ended. Responses were noted down on each questionnaire, but some were also electronically recorded whenever the respondent agreed to such direct recording.

4.4.3 Interviews

Interviews were used for the collection of data from various categories of respondents. First, in-depth interviews were held with a number of key informants. A key informant is a person who is considered to have some depth of knowledge concerning the research problem and who is willing to talk (Broshenka and Castro, 1983). About 27 key informants were given in-depth interviews. These were selected from the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, the Environmental Protection Agency, Forestry Department (at

national, district and local levels) and some environmental management NGOs. These people were interviewed about general issues that concern forest management in Ghana.

In-depth interviews were also held with some municipal officials, chiefs, assembly men and community elders. Issues that were discussed with these people include: interests of local actors; their level of participation in forest policy formulation and implementation; power relations and land tenure issues. Some timber contractors and “illegal” chainsaw operators were also interviewed about their interests, activities and interactions with forest officers. Since the key informants had different backgrounds, different interview guides were used for each group. The interview guides just contained list of relevant topics to be discussed. So each in-depth interview was just a form of conversation or discussion around various topics.

Apart from key informants, interviews were also held with household heads, who were randomly selected from two forest communities, Ahinkwa and Saponso (see Figure.4.4). Sixty five household heads were initially selected based on a simple random sampling technique but 2 of them refused to be interviewed. Consequently, 63 household heads were finally interviewed in the two communities. Interviewing local people helped the researcher to get diverse opinions. For instance, key informants, at the Forestry Department’s headquarters in Accra, had suggested that members of the community forestry committees are paid for their labour. However, this was contested by local farmers.

Even at the community level, some of the statements given by key informants were contested by ordinary farmers. For instance, the local chiefs suggested that the farmers wanted the government to allow them to manage forests themselves, but this was contested by some farmers, who stated that what they needed is greater access to livelihood resources. This is in consonance with the assertion of Broshenka and Castro (1983) that the use of *only* key informants may produce unrepresentative data, since no one individual can ever represent all perceptions and views of his or her community.



Figure 4.4 Researcher interviewing a household head in a forest community

A flexible interview guide was used to interview household heads (see appendix). Though I am aware of the disadvantages of using such unstructured interview guides, especially the tendency to produce responses that varies from respondents to respondents (Valentine, 1997), I chose this path based on my conviction that such an approach would allow for detailed discussion of issues. The flexible guides allowed for an exploration of unanticipated themes that emerged during interviews. The purpose of such interviews was not to put things in someone's mind, but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed (Quinn, 1980; Nicholas, 2000). Interviews with key informants and local household heads were mainly recorded electronically, but important points were also written down at certain times. Some forestry officials did not want to be recorded, for fears that their views would be reported to their superiors, and so notes were taken in such instances.

In addition to the key informant and household interviews, informal conversational interviews were also held with some local people (not necessarily household heads). These were essentially part of the observation, as one aspect of direct observations is asking questions where necessary. Interview guides were not used at all in such informal interviews. Discussions were just like normal conversation with local people, especially special groups such as women and charcoal producers. Such informal

conversational interviews emerged naturally and allowed respondents to talk about topics within their own frame of reference. Some of these conversations were recorded where the interviewee agreed. Others were written down just after the conversation. I was aware of the general weakness of such techniques, especially the fact that they may be subject to the common problem of bias, poor recall or inaccurate articulation (Yin, 1994: 85). However, it was my belief that the technique would allow me to unravel other issues that might not even be revealed through standard interviews. This appeared to have paid off. For instance, through this method, farmers that were seen on their farms, and some women found making traditional sponges, were interviewed on their activities and relationships with forest guards.

The informal interviews also helped to overcome some of the sampling problems. It was thought, for instance, that most of the household heads would be men and as such informal conversational interviews with more women would help to get some insights from more women as well. This turned out to be useful, as it was possible to interview some women, who were fetching firewood and producing sponges (See Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5 Informal interview with a sponge producer

4.4.4 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group is “a one-off meeting of between a few individuals who are brought together to discuss a particular topic chosen by the researcher(s) who moderate or structure the discussion” (Bedford and Burgess, 2001: 121). The approach was used to explore the “different feelings and meanings” (Conradson, 2005) that different people in forest communities hold about forest policy.

Two discussions were held in each of the two communities, one for men and another for women. Women were separated from men because, in such traditional societies, some women may not feel comfortable debating issues with men. This is due to patriarchal traditions which tend to construct men as superior over women. Discussions were recorded, but notes were also occasionally taken on group dynamics, mood and gesture (see Figure 4.6). One of the focus groups was made up of 10 participants, while the other three were made up of 9 participants each.



Figure 4.6 Focus group discussions with farmers at Saponso

The dialogic character of the method was found to be very useful. Participants were able to debate on issues naturally. This resonates with the assertion that the approach places the individual in a group context, where conversations can flourish in what can be

considered more common place social situations (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996; cited by Bedford and Burgess, 2001: 123). The method also enabled me to understand how views are contested. For instance, while some participants stated that they wanted forests to be managed by the community, others challenged these views. Besides, the approach allowed for an exploration of how experiences and meanings are negotiated and contested between participants (Valentine, 2001). In one-to-one interviews, the researcher may ask for clarifications but rarely contest what respondent says (Goss, 1996; Cameron, 2005). However, in the group context, the views of participants can be amplified or contested without informants feeling that their knowledge is being challenged by the researcher (Bedford and Burgess, 2001: 124). I was aware of the criticisms of the method, especially its inability to allow individual perspectives to come out clearly (Conradson, 2005), and this is why it was combined with individual interviews.

4.4.5 Observations

An observation involves the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour and artefacts in a social setting. The approach was mainly employed at the community level. Apart from visiting a number of forest communities to interview forest guards, the researcher stayed in two forest communities for some months. This allowed him to directly observe various activities, including the daily activities that go on in the forests; how rural dwellers make use of forest products and local people's relationships with forestry officials. As already noted, observation was integrated with the informal conversational interviews. As these things were observed, relevant questions were asked through informal conversations.

The type of observation employed conforms more to the "non-participant type", in which the observer remains relatively separate from his study population's activities (Broshenka and Castro, 1983). The participant type, in which a researcher tries to become a member of the observee's social world, was not employed, given the fact that the issues to be observed were relatively open and could therefore be seen once an observer lives in the community. Further, though the participant type helps the researcher to develop more trust with the group under study, a longer period of time would have been needed for this to be applied (Dowler, 2001).

Though the researcher has a long history of residence in rural Ghana, where he grew up himself, staying in different communities for this research enhanced his understanding of the complex relationships in rural Ghana. The method also helped him to understand some of the issues that came up in the interviews and questionnaire surveys. For instance, the complex relationships between guards and local people could only be understood when one observes rural life directly. This is in line with the assertion of Broshenka and Castro (1983) that observation is the foundation of data collection because even when interviews are used, observing actions directly helps to better explain the feelings of respondents.

4.4.6 Secondary Data Sources

The nature of this project necessitated relying heavily on official documents and other reports. Relevant official documents (administrative records, reports etc) from various local organisations, such as the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, the Forestry Commission of Ghana, the Environmental Protection Agency, District Assemblies and Environmental NGOs, were used for the analysis. Other secondary data sources include journals, articles, books, official reports and internet sources.

4.4.7 Data Analysis

Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative data were subjected to intensive content analysis. Quotations were used to emphasise certain statements and assessments. The quantitative analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics, such as frequency tables, percentages and graphs, to describe trends. In view of the fact that analysis was limited to descriptive statistics, Microsoft excel was found adequate for the analysis.

4.5 Context of the Study Area

This study focused on the whole of Ghana, as it is not possible to do a forest policy analysis for only one community. However, since forests are located within only a few communities, observations and the interviews were done only in those communities where there are forest reserves. While a number of forest communities were visited to interview forest guards, the household interviews and the focus group discussions were

held in two communities, namely Ahinkwa in the Eastern Region and Saponso No.3 in the Western Region. These communities were selected strategically to ensure representation of the forest communities in Ghana. As stated in Chapter 2, the high forest zone is made up of two sub-zones, namely the evergreen forest and the semi-deciduous forest (see figure 2.1). I therefore decided to select one community from each of these sub-zones. It was also my aim to ensure that one community was selected within a *degraded* forest reserve, while another was selected from a reserve that is in a relatively good condition. Another criterion was to ensure that each selected community has a population size of at least 500 people. To meet the geographical representation criteria, I decided to choose one community in the Eastern Region to represent the semi-deciduous forest zone and another from the Western region to represent the evergreen forest zone.

Having considered a number of forest communities in the Eastern region, Ahinkwa was found to be the best. Apart from having relatively high population, the forest reserve there is almost totally depleted and as such it could represent degraded forest reserves. Besides, the language spoken there is the researcher's native language, and it was thought that it would be easier to gather data from respondents in that village. On the other hand, Saponso No.3 was chosen to represent a relatively better managed forest within the evergreen forests. Unlike Ahinkwa, I did not know this community before the research but I quickly decided to select it after visiting several forest communities within the evergreen forests. Although the Saponso forest is relatively well managed, logging activities were common in the area, and a lot of non-timber forest products (e.g sponges, chewing sticks, pestles) seen being processed for sale during our first visit. Besides, while most forest communities in the area have very low populations, Saponso has a population that is greater than 500. Thus, both Ahinkwa and Saponso met some already established criteria.

4.5.1 Features of the Community Study Sites: Ahinkwa and Saponso

Ahinkwa is a farming community in the Yilo Krobo District of the Eastern Region (see Figure 4.7). Its population was about 1472 at the time of this survey. Almost all the people living in this village are Krobos of the Ga-Adangme stock. Local administration is in the hands of the community chief and the elders. Like many forest communities, Ahinkwa is very remote and generally inaccessible. The only road that links this

community with a bigger village in the area, Agogo, is in a very bad condition. In fact, the road which has not been tarred is characterised by deep gullies, and it is almost unusable in the rainy season. Only a few vehicles go to this village on Fridays to carry foodstuff to the periodic market at the Agogo. The community also lacks many social amenities like electricity and health centre.

The peasant farmers in this community produce a variety of annual crops, notably cassava, maize, cocoyam and plantain. The dominant land tenure system is the *decentralised customary system*, in which land is owned and controlled by families or individuals (see Chapter 2). The patrilineal inheritance system, in which all sons inherit lands and other properties from their fathers, is the main system of inheritance. Female children cannot inherit any landed property, since they are supposed to depend on their husbands. While large logging firms were very active in this community prior to the early 1980s, only small-scale illegal chainsaw operators are currently operating in the area. The departure of the large firms is due to reduced stocking as a result of over-exploitation.

In order to improve the condition of the reserve, the Forestry Department introduced the taungya farming system in the area in the late 1970s. Under this system, farmers were allowed to cultivate crops on some degraded forest lands. In return, they must plant trees on those farms for the Forestry Department (see Prah, 1994). This management programme failed due to conflicting interests between food crops production and tree planting. The system was officially stopped in the whole country in 1987 (Owusu *et al*, 1989), but some farmers still connive with the guards to make farms illegally on forest lands (see Chapter 7). Local people also extract useful forest resources, such as fuel wood, chewing sticks, sponges, medicines etc, from the remaining forest reserves.

On the other hand, Saponso No3 is a farming community in the Mpohor-Wassa East District of the Western Region. There were about 561 people living there during the time of this research. The general features of this community are similar to those of Ahinkwa, although there are some differences that need to be stated. The area is located within the Wassa traditional area. However, unlike Ahinkwa which is made up of people from only one ethnic group, Saponso is made up of people from different ethnic groups, notably Ga-Adangbe, Akan and Ewe. Most of these people are farmers, who migrated from other regions. This community also lacks social amenities and is

inaccessible. Unlike Ahinkwa where the production of annual food crops is the main economic activity, the production of cocoa, Ghana's main export crop, is the dominant farming activity at Saponso. Farmers here do not make farms on reserve lands, as the taungya farming was never introduced in this community.

As mentioned already, the reserve here is in a better condition than that of Ahinkwa. Both large scale logging firms and illegal chainsaw operators are active in the area. In contrast to the *decentralised customary system* pertaining at Ahinkwa, the *centralised customary tenure system* (see Chapter 2) is the main system of landownership as Saponso. As the title of the land is entirely held and controlled by a traditional authority, local farmers at Saponso are not recognised as actual beneficiaries of any timber harvested on their farms (see Chapter 7).

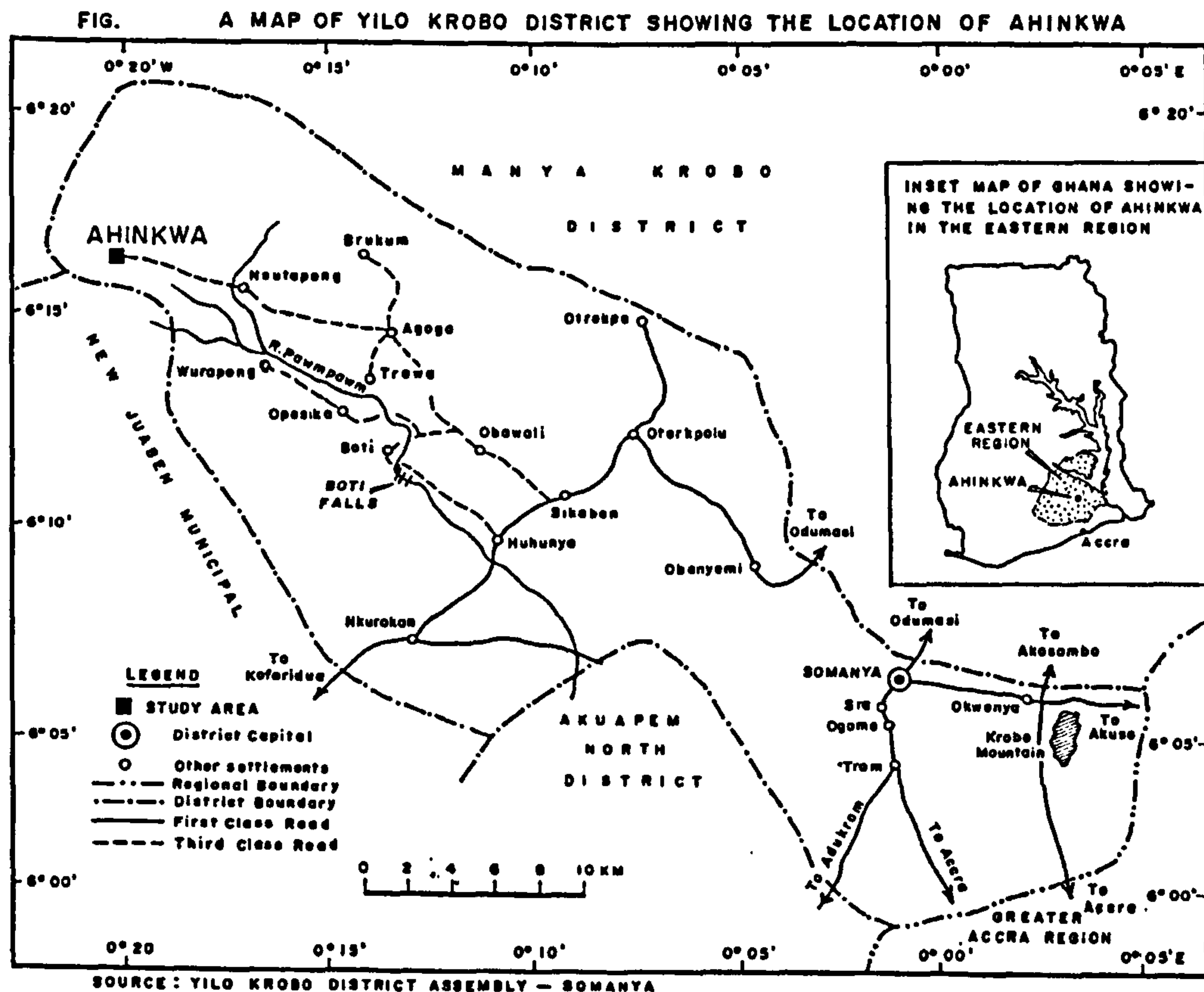


Figure 4.7 Map of the Yilo Krobo District showing Ahinkwa

FIG. A MAP OF MPOHOR-WASSA EAST DISTRICT SHOWING THE LOCATION OF SAPONSO No. 3

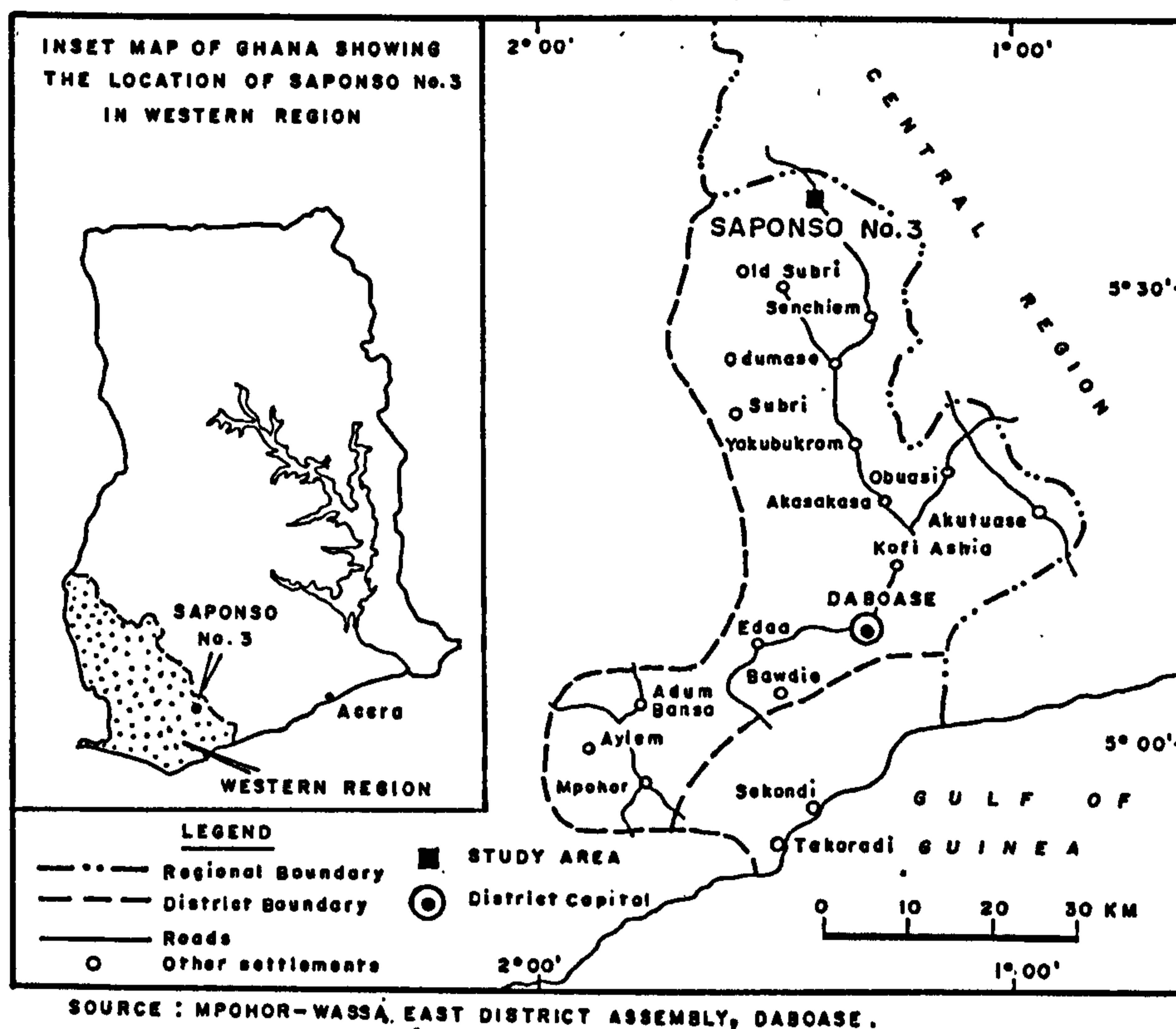


Figure 4.8 Map of MpoHOR-Wassa East District showing Saponso

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Established guidelines for dealing with ethical issues in social science researchers (see Valentine, 2001; Limb and Dwyer, 2001; Dowling, 2005) were considered throughout this research. The most common ethical dilemmas focused on participation, consent and confidentiality (Grbich, 1999; Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Valentine, 2001; Limb and Dwyer, 2001). I obtained informed consent from individuals and organisations that participated in this research. The actual purpose of the study was explained to all those concerned and they were told that their participation was optional. Participants were also assured of confidentiality. Forest officials were interviewed privately, and their statements were presented anonymously. Participants were assigned “pseudonyms” so that their actual names were not stated in the thesis.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRENDS IN STATED AND ACTUAL FOREST POLICIES IN GHANA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the historical trends in stated and actual forest policies in Ghana. A more rigorous analysis of these policy statements is reserved for Chapter 6. While there have been only two comprehensive formal policy statements in Ghana, namely the *1948 Forest Policy* and the *1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy*, many other important legislative landmarks have helped to shape these formal policy statements. The evolution of policy presented here, therefore, also highlights these.

5.2 The Pre-Colonial Era

Although formal or “scientific” forestry in Ghana was introduced by the British colonial administration (Logan, 1946, Foggie, 1962; Smith, 1996), local communities were conserving some forests long before the advent of colonialism (Owubah *et al.*, 2001). Such pre-colonial forest conservation was mostly driven by environmental concerns and religious motives. The reserves were mainly forests left on the banks of water bodies and sacred groves (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). There were no stated forest policies but management of forest was based on unwritten community by-laws (Foggie, 1962; Brookman-Amissah, 1985; Kotey *et al.*, 1998; Owubah *et al.*, 2001). While by-laws differed from one chiefdom to another, they all prohibited cutting of trees in sacred groves. Breaking of such by-laws was considered a taboo, which could attract the punishment of the gods of the land. By-laws were quite effective for managing sacred groves and this is supported by the fact that most of these sacred groves are still intact (Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995), and are often better preserved than other reserves (Norton, 1991). They also contain some of the rarest species in Ghana (Mayers and Kotey, 1996).

While community by-laws prohibited extraction of forest resources from sacred groves, there is no evidence that they prohibited exploitation of resources outside them. Trade with European merchants started after the Portuguese arrived in 1471, and became even more intensive with the subsequent arrival of other Europeans, notably the Dutch,

English, Danish and Swedish. While early trade with Europe largely involved gold and slaves, forest products were among the commodities exported to Europe during the latter part of the pre-colonial era when slave trade was abolished. Wood products exported included ebony (*diospyrus ebenum*), barwood (*pterocarpus erinaceus*), camwood (*Baphia nitida*) and some redwood species (Reynolds, 1974). Non-timber forest products were also exported. For instance, the export of cola nuts from the Ghanaian forests started in the 15th century, and became a major export commodity when the slave trade declined in the 1820s (Lovejoy, 1985). Palm oil, initially obtained from wild trees, was another forest product export recorded as early as 1790. The crop was later cultivated by the Krobos and the Akuapems in the Eastern Region (Reynolds, 1974), and this might have contributed to the significant destruction of forests that occurred within these areas before the 1900s (see Fairhead and Leach, 1998).

It must be emphasised that such pre-colonial international timber trade occurred in other West African countries as well (see Adeyoju, 1976; Grainger and Konteh, 2007). Thus, although the level of exploitation was not so high, it is still important to put on record that some level of exploitation occurred in the whole West African sub-region before the advent of colonialism. Large quantities of West African timber oak was imported into Liverpool for the purpose of ship building as early as 1823 (Adeyoju, 1976; Parren and Graaf, 1995).

The argument that timber exploitation in Ghana predates colonialism is consistent with the findings of Fairhead and Leach (1998) that significant portions of Ghanaian forests were destroyed long before the 20th century. Such destruction might have been due to a combination of farming and logging activities. Given the tight control that traditional authorities wielded on their territories at that time, exploitation of timber would not have been successful without their consent.

5.3 The Colonial Era (1874-1957)

The colonial era can be divided into three different periods. First, the early colonial period, when there was no stated policy, although actual policy focused on exploitation. Second, the early reservation period, when both stated and actual policies focused on conservation and sustainable management. In the third period, exploitation became

dominant *actual* policy goal again, although stated policy with exploitative goals only re-emerged in 1948. The discussion that follows presents the details of these trends.

5.3.1 The Early Colonial Period (1874-1900)

There was no stated forest policy during the first three decades of the colonial period but there is enough evidence to suggest that exploitation of timber and other important resources was the actual policy pursued by the colonial administration. In order to finance the newly established colony, the colonial administration was interested in valuable forest products (Parren and Graaf, 1995). Even though botanical surveys in West African forests were conducted by the turn of the 17th century (ibid), renewed interest in finding valuable forest products encouraged British botanists and foresters to increase their exploration of the forests during the early part of colonial rule (Hall and Swaine, 1981). While timber exploitation could not penetrate much into the interior because of the poor infrastructure at that time (Kotey *et al.*, 1998), significant portions of Ghanaian forests, especially those along the coast, were logged in this period (Logan, 1947; DeGrassi, 2003). Given that the colonial administration did not raise any objections to such exploitation, it can be inferred that its actual policy was exploitation.

The administration was particularly interested in controlling lands, in order to gain natural resource revenue (DeGrassi, 2003). To achieve this aim, it attempted in 1894 to create “Crown lands” by passing what became known as the *Crown Lands Ordinance*. This sought to vest “waste and forest lands and minerals” in the hands of the colonial administration. The Bill was fiercely resisted by native people, under the leadership of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (made up of an association of chiefs and the educated elite), on the grounds that it ignored the fact that they had inherited lands from their ancestors. In 1898, Her Majesty’s Government ruled that the local colonial administration should allow the natives to exercise ownership of such lands (Kotey *et al.*, 1998; Parren and Graaf, 1995).

5.3.2 The Period of Formal Forest Reservation (1900-1939)

Environmental crises narratives shifted the goals of actual policy to sustainable management and conservation in the early 20th century (Chipp, 1922, 1923; Oliphant, 1932; Foggie, 1962; Grove, 1997). These environmental concerns were raised by some

botanists and foresters, such as H.N Thompson (Grove, 1997). In view of opposition to the Crown Land Ordinance, the colonial administration's attempts to regulate forest exploitation initially focused on regulating concession rights as no forests were under formal reservation at this time. The first regulations to control harvesting of timber were set out in the Concession Ordinance of 1900. In 1907, a Timber Protection Ordinance was passed to prevent the felling of immature trees (Troup, 1940). Under this ordinance, a forest officer was appointed to inspect trees before they could be felled. Following recommendations by the British forester, H.N Thompson, a Forestry Department was established in 1909 to supervise the creation and management of reserves.

The indirect benefits of forestry (such as the preservation of a good climate for the cultivation of cocoa and timber supply) were often used to support the need to preserve the environment. For instance, Chipp warned in his Forest Officers Handbook that rapid deforestation would inevitably result in the "disappearance of cocoa, kola and oil palm industries as commercial ventures" (Chipp 1922: 47). Similarly, Ghana's forest statement to the 1928 Empire Forestry Conference emphasised "the reservation of areas of permanent forest suitably distributed through the cocoa growing zone... to maintain that zone as a forest climate" (Gold Coast, 1928, cited by Kotey *et al.*, 1998: 44).

This observation contradicts the argument of some writers (see for instance, Logan, 1947; Amanor, 1996; DeGrassi, 2003) that exploitation of timber, or what Grainger and Konteh (2007) terms "exploitation of forests as a commodity", was the *underlying* factor that shaped colonial forestry discourse. While the colonial administration decided to set aside some of the forests as reserves, early attempts to pass a comprehensive forestry ordinance were resisted by native people who thought that these were ploys to gain control over land ownership after its failure to implement the Crown Lands Ordinance. A Forest Ordinance that empowered the Governor to constitute as reserves any "wastelands", ambiguously defined as lands that were "unoccupied or uncultivated" (see 1910 version), or land which "appears to be unoccupied" (see 1911 version), was drafted in 1910 and later amended in 1911. However, both versions could not be implemented as they were rejected by the native people as attempts to usurp their ownership rights (Degrassi, 2003). The administration, however, managed to introduce property marks in 1921. In 1925, the Chief Conservator of Forests was given the powers to regulate logging within concessions and to prescribe penalties when necessary.

Meanwhile, serious attempts to constitute state forest reserves continued in the latter half of the 1920s. Against the background that native people were resisting any attempts by the colonial foresters to demarcate some lands as state forests, the administration had to persuade native people to undertake forest reservation under their own by-laws (Brookman-Amissah, 1985). In consultation with the chiefs, the administration was now able to pass more comprehensive legislative instrument to guide forest reservation and management. Three important legislative statutes, namely the Native Authority Ordinance, the Forest Ordinance and the Concession Ordinance, were passed to help the constitution of forest reserves during this initial reservation period.

5.3.2.1 Native Authority Ordinance and the Forest Ordinance

The Native Authority Ordinance of 1927 (Cap 111) and the Forest Ordinance of 1927 (Cap 157) were the first comprehensive legislative statutes that were passed to promote forest reservation and sustainable management during this period. The *Native Authority Ordinance* empowered native authorities to constitute forest reserves under their own by-laws. It led to the formation of a local government, the “Native Authority”, made up of a paramount chief and his traditional council of elders. This maintained a kind of “power-sharing” with the colonial administration, under what was known as “indirect rule” (see Chapter 2). The local authority was responsible for supervising the constitution and management of forest reserves under community by-laws.

The 1927 Forest Ordinance empowered the government to constitute reserves on any land, even if it was against the will of the land owning community. In principle, the constitution of an area as forest did not affect ownership of the land. However, control and management of the forest reserves was exercised by the Forestry Department on behalf of the government. Though it was stated in the ordinance that an alternative decentralised mode of management by the owner(s) under the supervision of the Forestry Department could be adopted, this alternate decentralised mode was never pursued by the Forestry Department (Kotey *et al.*, 1998; Oppon, 2004). All timber resources outside reserves were vested in the state “in trust” for the landholding communities. Even though both the Native Authority Ordinance and the Forest Ordinances were passed around the same period, it was the former that was actively pursued in this early reservation period, since local people resisted any attempts by the colonial administration to constitute forest reserves against their wishes (Smith, 1996).

Most reserves in Ghana today were, therefore, constituted using provisions in the Native Authority Ordinance. By 1944, 127 of the 200 existing reserves had been created by native authorities (DeGrassi, 2003).

5.3.2.2 The Concession Ordinance, 1939

This ordinance provided for a system of grants of timber rights by traditional land and forest holding authorities. It also gave traditional authorities the right to collect royalties/revenue on timber products harvested from both reserve and off-reserve forests. Traditional authorities, by this ordinance, negotiated timber concession agreements with logging companies directly.

5.3.3 The Late Colonial Period (1939 -1957)

Although stated policy did not change from protection until 1948, actual forest policy changed from conservation and sustainable management to exploitation in 1939. The initial reservation plan was abandoned (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994; Smith, 1996) as much attention was now focused on exporting timber. Thus, although stated policy still maintained protective policy goals, actual policy shifted to exploitation instead. The current Executive Director of the Ghana Forestry Commission, Nii Kotey, calls this the “timberisation period”, to reflect the much greater focus on timber exploitation (see Kotey *et al.*, 1998: 99). The change in actual forest policy was mainly propelled by increased international demand for timber products during and after the World War II (Smith, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Export demand was so high that some tree species, such as wawa (*Triplochiton sclerexylon*), which were hitherto not exported, were exported from Ghana (Kotey *et al.*, 1998).

5.3.3.1 The 1948 Forest Policy

The 1948 Forest Policy was the first major comprehensive forest policy in Ghana. It provided for:

1. Conservation of forest environments by protecting major water catchment areas and maintaining climate conducive to major agricultural crops.
2. Management of the permanent forest estate on a sustainable basis.

3. Promotion of research in all branches of scientific forestry.
4. Utilisation of areas not dedicated to permanent forestry.
5. Provision of technical advice and cooperation in schemes for preventing soil erosion and in land use plans.

While the policy has some sustainable management goals, its overall focus was evidently exploitative (CFMU, 1999). Thus, both stated and actual forest policies in Ghana became exploitative in 1948. Forests were, at this time, classified as either productive or protective. Forests under protection were those that were seen as protecting watersheds or serving as shelter belts while productive forests were to be logged. By the early 1950s, only 30% of total reserve area was designated for protection, while the remaining 70% was declared for production (Mayers and Kotey, 1996). In addition, all off-reserve forests were declared productive. Thus, although only 22% of forests were under reservation, the 1948 policy implicitly provided for liquidating timber in the off-reserve forests. As the timber trade became even more lucrative, the government actually emphasised massive logging outside reserves, since it was argued that such timber, if not harvested, would be destroyed by local farmers when extending their farms (Kotey *et al.*, 1998; DeGrassi, 2003).

Though poor record keeping makes it difficult to demonstrate the corresponding increase in logs produced and exported throughout this period, available data show that between 1950 and 1955, for instance, the volume of industrial logs produced increased by over 100% from 0.56 million cubic meters in 1950 to 1.14 million cubic meters in 1955 (see Page, 1974; Gillis, 1988). More than half the logs produced in 1950 (0.29 million cubic meters) were exported.

5.3.3.2 Trees and Timber Ordinance No 20, 1949 (Cap 158)

The Trees and Timber Ordinance was passed to ensure that maximum benefits from timber exploitation went to the state. It aimed at regulating and controlling the timber trade through registration and issuing property marks to holders of concessions. Under the ordinance, loggers also had to be issued with licenses and permits before they could log in the forests.

5.3.3.3 Local Government Ordinance, 1951 (No 29)

As the timber trade boom continued, the colonial administration became interested in redirecting much of the timber revenue into the state's coffers, rather than allowing traditional rulers to control it. This led to the passage of the Local Government Ordinance 1951. The ordinance provided for establishing elected local councils, thereby marking the end of indirect rule. While this policy was justified by the need to promote local democracy and share forest revenue more equitably (Mayers and Kotey, 1996), the actual reason might be that the government was finding it more difficult to control revenue collected by chiefs. By making use of local councils, it hoped to still appear democratic and closer to the local people while at the same time being able to control natural resources directly, since officials of the local councils were more likely to take directives from central government than traditional authorities.

5.4 The Post-Independence Era (1957 – present)

The post independence era can be divided into two periods. The first stretches from independence to 1994 while the second is from 1994 to the present.

5.4.1 The Early Post-Independence Period (1957-1994)

The first half of the post-independence era was characterised by increased exploitation. Both stated and actual policies continued to be exploitative. The 1948 policy was still the stated principal policy, though some remedial legislative instruments, many of which aimed at expanding government's control over off-reserve forests, were passed during this period. The need to generate foreign exchange to support the newly independent Ghana, together with the booming international timber trade, made exploitation a rational economic option for the Nkrumah Government and its successors. Industrial wood production (in million cubic meters) increased from 1.14 in 1955 (late colonial period) to 1.83 in 1960 and then to a peak of 2.05 (of which 1.08 was exported) in 1973 (Page, 1974; Gillis, 1988). By 1967, concession rights had been issued for 75% of the forest reserves and for all the off-reserve forests (Mayers and Kotey, 1996).

One important policy that shaped forest management during this early post-independence era was the “indigenisation” policy adopted by the Nkrumah government in the mid 1960s. Before independence in 1957, the timber industry was dominated by four large foreign corporations and one domestic firm. Together these accounted for 80% of timber exports (Gillis, 1988). A combination of elements of the wider indigenisation policy, such as preferential concessions to local timber companies and stricter control over foreign firms, led to the departure or nationalisation of many foreign timber firms and the emergence of a plethora of local timber firms (Blay *et al.*, 1968; Aggrey, 1976).

According to Mayers and Kotey (1996), Nkrumah’s indigenisation policy led to an increase in the number of timber firms from 121 to 361 by 1967. Most of these were involved in cutting logs, not processing them. The number of sawmills alone also increased from 43 in 1960 to 61 by 1970 (Gillis, 1988). Local timber firms were highly subsidised because many were operating at a loss. Only two out of the 102 concessions granted through the then Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources between 1961 and 1971 went to foreign companies. Apart from preferential concessions, soft loans (usually at negative real interest rates) were given to Ghanaian timber companies. Again, royalty levels were kept very low so as to keep these companies in business (Peprah, 1982).

Successive governments after the overthrow of the Nkrumah’s administration did not significantly change either actual or stated policies which continued to be exploitative. The high exploitation rate, therefore, continued but declined in the late 1970s. This was due to global economic recession and lack of inputs in the timber industry, which caused most local timber firms to collapse. Exploitation started growing again in 1984 as a result of the inflow of foreign capital, mostly from Lebanese entrepreneurs and later by the Economic Recovery Programme and Structural Adjustment Programmes.

Legislative instruments adopted in this era focused on restricting forest communities’ user rights rather than sustainable management in general. Thus, marginalisation of local communities and their chiefs, which started in the latter part of the colonial period, reached its apogee in the post-colonial era. A significant development throughout the early post-colonial era was, therefore, the passage of laws to strengthen government controls over trees in off-reserve forests. In the sections that follow the details of these policies are discussed.

5.4.1.1 Protected Timber Land Act, 1959 (Act 34)

This Act declared all off-reserve forest lands as protected timber lands and gave the Forestry Department power to regulate the expansion of farms in these areas. It was introduced to prevent conversion of off-reserve forest into farmlands, at least before the timber could be extracted by timber companies. This is because even though the 1948 Policy gave government some powers over trees outside reserves, farmers still had the right to farm, so this Act empowered the Forestry Department to restrict farming activities that could damage trees on off-reserve forests.

Implementation of this policy was, however, fiercely resisted by local farmers. As chiefs were by this time not much involved in policy implementation, officials of the Forestry Department attempted to demarcate these protected “timber lands”, but rumours went round that these demarcated lands were going to be turned into reserves. Acting on these rumours, farmers rushed to colonise the areas. When the government later actually designated these areas as reserves, more landless farmers, even some from non-forest regions, migrated there to acquire lands from chiefs, who now gave such forest lands arbitrarily and cheaply just to make sure that they were converted into cocoa farms so as to prevent the Forestry Department from taking over them (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). All attempts by the government, even sometimes relying on the military, were fiercely resisted by local farmers and chiefs (Boateng *et al.*, 1961).

5.4.1.2 Administration of Lands Act, 1962 and Concessions Act, 1962

The failure of the government to implement the Protected Timber Act of 1959 was probably the main factor that led to the enactment of these two Acts. The Administration of Lands Act vested the management of all “stool lands” (i.e. lands owned by traditional communities and controlled by chiefs (see Chapter 2) and forests (both on- and off-reserves), as well as collection of revenue (royalties and rent), in central government. The Concessions Act stated that all timber resources, both on- and off-reserves, together with all land declared as forest reserves or subject to timber concessions, were vested in the state in trust for land-owning communities. The Act also vested the right to grant timber concessions and management of all timber resources in the central government. It also removed the rights of chiefs to grant concessions. Prior to passage of the Act, traditional authorities could grant timber concessions within their

“governable spaces”, but the central government argued that chiefs were not taking good care of off-reserve forests.

5.4.1.3 Forest Protection Decree, 1974 and Trees and Timber Decree, 1974

The Forest Protection Decree (1974) was passed to prevent local people from entering the forests without permission. It was introduced because it was thought that some of their activities could lead to destruction of valuable trees. Local communities now had to obtain permission from the forestry department before they could enter the forest reserves even for non-timber resources they needed for subsistence. Meanwhile, these communities were still seen as the actual owners of such lands and reserves.

The Trees and Timber Decree (1974) established that it was a crime for a person to fell a tree for export without a valid property mark. Through these decrees and the Concessions Act, the government extended its jurisdiction significantly over forests harvesting rights, even outside reserves. As many Ghanaians directly depend on forests for their livelihoods, these post-independence forest policies were even more draconian than those used in the colonial era. Thus, the post-independence era best typified what Dubois (1997) and Woodcock (2002) call the period of “managing trees against the people”. Such restrictions led to a situation whereby local people rather connived with illegal loggers to harvest timber. As Gillis noted, as a result of these restriction “the Ghanaian forest is now even more vulnerable to the tragedy of the commons than when property rights were vested in tribal groups” (1988: 312)

5.4.1.4 Trees and Timber (Amendment) Law, 1983 (PNDCL 70) and Forest Protection (Amendment) Law, 1986 (PNDCL 42)

In order to halt the rate of deforestation, which became very alarming in the 1980s, the PNDC government made amendments to previous legislations to deter people from exploiting trees without a permit. The Trees and Timber (Amendment) Law imposed stiffer penalties for violation of the Trees and Timber Decree. The Forest Protection (Amendment) Law imposed higher punishments for violation of the Forest Protection Decree. However, these statutes did not do much to protect forests because, like previous ones, they still focused on how to prevent local people from using forest resources while giving timber companies the opportunity to exploit them.

5.4.2 Second Phase of the Post Independent Era - (1994-present)

This period saw a reversion of stated policy from exploitation to sustainable management, due to sustained international pressure on policy makers. The actual policy goal, however, cannot be said to be truly protective, since exploitation of timber today, though somewhat lower than in the late 1980s, is still high. For instance, the total volume of wood harvested in 1999 was 3.9 million cubic meters. Though about 60% of this was said to be illegally harvested, the legal component alone is much higher than what would have been sustainable for the current forest capacity (Birikorang, 2001). This stage can best be described as a “complex ambiguous stage” since stated policy maintains protective goals yet actual policy still focuses on exploitation of timber. The reason for this ambiguity is that the stated policies of this present era are much influenced by international donor pressures, while actual policy reflects the executive’s interests (see Chapter 6). International calls that led to the revision of stated forest policy in 1994 started in the late 1980s, due to over-exploitation of forest resources, which actually re-emerged in the late 1980s.

Interestingly, the factors that led to rapid forest loss in the 1980s also have some international socio-political undertones. Even though the Ghanaian timber industry was on the verge of collapsing in the late 1970s, the adoption of a World Bank and IMF sponsored Structural Adjustment Programmes, which aimed at promoting exports, led to a revival of the industry. Many private timber companies were granted huge financial capital to expand production. Between 1983 and 1986, about \$140 million, coordinated largely through the World Bank Export Project, was committed to the timber industry purposely to purchase equipments and add value to Ghanaian timber (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). International demand for timber also increased tremendously due to new markets in Asia. These factors led to increase in exploitation of timber. For instance, official output in 1981 was just 400 000 cubic meters but this increased gradually over the years and reached 1,200,000 cubic meters in 1988 (Mayers and Kotey, 1996).

By the late 1980s, there was intense public outcry and international calls on the government to adopt more sustainable forest policies and strengthen the state forestry agencies. Within Ghana itself, some organisations, such as Friends of the Earth raised their voices about rapid deforestation. These were also carried out by the local media, though not as intensively as was merited by the problem, partly because of the lack of

press freedom at the time, yet it was enough to inform international groups about the problems. Donor agencies, such as ODA (now DFID) and the World Bank also expressed concern about rapid forest loss and the need to revise Ghana's forest policy (Smith, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). A multi-donor mission under the Tropical Forestry Action Programme reviewed the forestry sector in 1986 and recommended that the Forestry Department must be supported under the Forestry Resource Management Project which was programmed for the period 1989-1995. The UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, as well as the ITTO Target 2000, all exerted some degree of pressure on the Ghanaian government (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994). The World Bank Preparatory Missions for the Forest Resource Management Project (FRMP) also called for a new policy, on the grounds that the 1948 Forest Policy was ineffective in reducing rapid forest loss.

Following this intense pressure, the Ghana Forestry Commission was formed in 1993 under the Forestry Commission Act, 1993 (Act 453) to advise the government on forest policy. It was initially made up of people drawn from all the sectors of the economy but excluded farmers (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Under the reforms, the Forestry Department became semi-autonomous agency under the umbrella of the newly created Forestry Commission. The Commission was, therefore, the main government institution that coordinated formulation of the new policy.

5.4.2.1 The 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy

The main aim of the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy was the conservation and sustainable management of forest and wildlife resources so as to maintain high environmental quality and ensure equitable distribution of optimum benefits to all segments of society (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994). More specifically, it aimed to promote:

1. The sustainable management of Ghana's forest and wildlife resources, so as to preserve important soil and water resources and for conservation of biological biodiversity.
2. The development of viable forest-based industries, especially in secondary and tertiary processing, so as to satisfy domestic and international demands.

3. Public awareness and local community participation in forest and wildlife conservation, so as to maintain life sustaining systems.
4. Research-based and technology-led forestry and wildlife management.
5. Effective capability at national and local levels for sustainable management of forest and wildlife resources.

What made the policy different from that of 1948 was its proposed emphasis on the involvement of local people in forest management. It also presented specific principles on the rights of local people to have access to basic forest resources which they need for their livelihood. These principles include:

1. The rights of people to have access to natural resources for maintaining a basic standard of living and their concomitant responsibility to ensure the sustainable use of such resources.
2. The need to incorporate traditional methods of resource management in national strategies where appropriate.
3. A share of financial benefits from resource utilisation should be retained to fund the maintenance of resource production capacity and for the benefit of local communities.
4. The need to develop a decentralised participatory democracy by involving local people in matters concerned with their welfare.
5. The government proposes to place particular emphasis on the concept of participatory management and protection of forest and wildlife resources (1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy, section 3.0).

The policy also sought to promote sustainable management of off-reserve forests. This was in sharp contrast to the 1948 policy, which had an implicit expectation that forest resources outside reserves would be extracted without replacement (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994). The Forestry Department was tasked to control collection of fees from trees harvested from off reserve forests too. This aspect was in line with the Timber Protection Bills passed in the first phase of the postcolonial era but not actively pursued. The policy recognised the need to add more value to timber before export. Consequently, there was a ban on the export of timber logs after 1995 and chainsaw operators were banned from harvesting timber even from off reserve forests. The latter was one of the most ambiguous aspects of the policy because local people are supposed

to obtain their wood from timber companies, yet the companies are still mostly producing only for export (Birikorang, 2001). The policy also aimed to promote reforestation of degraded forests. Funds have been sourced from donor agencies for the promotion of reforestation in degraded forests. While the 1994 policy is the most recent comprehensive policy statement, it was still followed by certain remedial legislative instruments. Thus, Ghana's forest policy resonates with Lindblom's (1959, 1965) ideas of *mudding through or disjointed incrementalism*. In the section that follows I will present some of these remedial legislative instruments.

5.4.2.2 Trees and Timber (Amendment) Act, 1994 and Forest Sector Development Master Plan 1996

The Trees and Timber (Amendment) Act, 1994 sought to amend the Trees and Timber Decree, 1974 by raising the amounts imposed as property marks and fines for illegal timber harvesting. This demonstrates that there were some cases of what Grainger and Konteh (2007) call ambiguity by delay. These result from the fact that government did not revise fines from time to time. In this particular case, the amount imposed as property marks and fines in 1974 was not revised until 1994, even though during this period, inflation was more than 1000% (see ISSER, 1995). In such circumstances, the property marks and the fines were always far below the actual market price of the timber. This made it lucrative for people to harvest timber illegally because even if they were caught, they could still pay the fine and pocket huge profits. On the other hand, the 1996 Forest Sector Development Master Plan (FSDMP) was an operation plan designed to guide forest management up to the year 2020 (MLF, 1996). It outlined strategies to strengthen forest sector institutions and proposes punitive actions against forest offences.

5.4.2.3 The Timber Resource Management Regulations

These legislative instruments were passed to regulate timber extraction in both on- and off- reserve forests. The first of these was the Timber Resource Management Act, 1997, which makes it an offence for any person to harvest timber both on and off-reserves unless he or she holds timber rights in the form of a timber utilisation contract for the area of land concerned. Both individual and stool lands could be subjected to contracts. An application for timber rights should be made to the Forestry Commission, which

must refer it to an evaluation committee made up of the Chief Conservator of Forests and officials from the Forestry Department. The application must be accompanied by several documents, which include: a harvesting plan prepared in accordance with sustainable management principles; an assessment of the likely environmental effects and a proposed programme to redress any such effects and provide for the social needs of the communities. The financial capabilities of the firms must also be checked.

In 1998, it became clear that this policy was difficult to implement since local people were not cooperating, apparently because they were not involved. Consequently, it was amended by the Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1998. With this amendment, the Evaluation Board was now expanded to include two members of the District Assembly, and a representative of the Traditional Council of the area of the land. If the land was owned by a family then there must be one representative from the family. The provision that if a land belongs to an individual, then his or her consent must be sought before granting timber rights suggests that the government respects the rights of landowners. However, this is contradicted by the 1962 Concessions Act, which gives government the right to compulsorily acquire land.

The amendment also required a reforestation plan to establish at least 10 hectares of forests for each 100 hectares of the contract area; and an agreement to provide social amenities of local people in the contract area must be made before the people start harvesting. Yet the power of the local people to decide which amenities they want is limited, as the policy states that social responsibility expenditure should not exceed 5% of the royalty for the area in question. The policy also proposes that Timber Utilisation Permits are to be issued to local communities, District Assemblies and Non Governmental Organisations, where these groups need to harvest trees for non commercial purposes. However, it fails to specify application procedures and procedures for making appeal.

5.4.2.4 Forest Plantation Development Acts

In response to international pressure and growing local concern about rapid deforestation, the Government of Ghana has, since 2000, embarked on forest plantation schemes, especially in highly degraded forest reserves. To provide financial assistance for the development of private commercial forest plantations, the Forest Plantation

Development Fund Act was passed in the year 2000. Money used for the fund was, and is still, derived from a timber export levy as well as loans and grants provided by international organisations. A beneficiary of the fund is entitled to exercise rights of ownerships over any timber produced. This act was amended by the Forest Plantation Development Fund (Amendment) Act 2002. A few changes were made but this was mainly in the composition of the board that manages the fund. This board was and is still made up of several people, mainly from the Forestry Department and Ministry of Lands and Forestry, but local people are not involved.

5.4.2.5 Forest Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002

This policy amends the Forest Protection Decree 1974 (NRCD 243). It sets higher penalties for offences such as cutting timber, setting fires in forests, hunting, setting traps, fishing and collecting and conveying of any forest produce. Anybody who wants to engage in any of these activities needs to obtain permission from a forest officer whose rank is not below that of Assistant District Manager. This amendment contradicts the portion of the 1994 policy which emphasises “the rights of people to have access to natural resources for maintaining a basic standard of living”. There are again several ambiguities here, because local people who need even basic things like sponges must seek permission from the District Forest Office, usually located several kilometres away. Forest officers at community level are, by this law, not allowed to grant permission.

5.4.2.6 Proposed Adoption of Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan

In December 2006, Ghana finalised negotiations with the European Union to enter into a “Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) based on the EU’s Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan. The plan proposes a third party certification and validation of timber as a way to check illegal logging. The EU proposed that it would eventually import timber from only sustainable managed forests. Given that it is the largest importer of Ghana’s timber, the government of Ghana took these threats seriously. This could be also seen as a policy driven by external pressure.

5.4.3 The Reality of Policy Changes in Present Ghana (since 1994)

Despite the emergence of numerous policy statements with protective goals since 1994, actual policy is still largely exploitative. Established sustainable cut levels have been exceeded annually since 1990 (Birikorang, 2001; Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994). A recent official report indicated that the current annual timber harvest is around 3.3 million cubic hectares (Ghana News Agency, 2008). This figure is much higher than the ideal sustainable cut. The continued high level of exploitation, at a time when protection is the main focus of stated policy, is a justification for terming the contemporary period an ambiguous phase.

5.5 Conclusions

Forest policy in Ghana has passed through several twists and turns. Although there have been only two comprehensive formal policy statements, namely the 1948 Forest Policy and the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy, several remedial legislative instruments were passed and this indicates that the forest policy process in Ghana closely approaches Lindblom's (1959, 1965) disjointed incrementalism model. The combined trend in stated and actual forest policies passed from an exploitative phase to sustainable management (1900), ambiguous (1940), exploitation (1948), and ambiguous phases (1994). The stated forest policy goals in many cases do not correspond with actual policy, reflecting several cases of ambiguity. There was a scenario of ambiguity by delay in the late colonial era when actual policy changed in 1939, yet stated forest policy only changed in 1948. Fines for logging offences were not revised regularly. For instance, the levels of fines imposed in 1974 were not revised until 1994.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF FOREST POLICY IN GHANA

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the formulation of Ghana's forest policy, using the integrated policy network model. If the model is correct, major policy changes should correspond to changes in forest interests and network relationships among the various actors. Despite the fact that policy formulation and implementation are interrelated, it is assumed that each of the subsystems can be analysed separately (Grainger and Konteh, 2007).

6.2 The Pre-Colonial Era

Actual forest policy in pre-colonial Ghana can be portrayed as being shaped by two "contradictory" interests, conservation interests and exploitation interests. Protection of sacred groves demonstrates attempts to promote conservation. On the other hand, exploitation interests may have contributed to the forest exploitation which took place before the advent of formal colonial rule (see Chapter 5). By-laws on sacred groves could be seen as "stated" policy, since they were formulated based on the legitimate procedures for making rules in the traditional societies. Individual members shared a common religious interest which portrayed the protection of such "traditional forests" as vital for the survival of the community. Thus, although there were marked power differentials (see Chapter 7), religious beliefs united both elite and ordinary citizens into "moral communities" (Fortes, 1940; Radcliffe and Brown, 1952; Leach *et al.*, 1999). Policy networks were, therefore, intertwined with religious networks, generating what could be termed politico-religious networks.

On the other hand, trading networks between and among traditional rulers and European merchants led to the exploitation of forests outside sacred groves. This early exploitation was more concentrated on the coast (Parren and Graaf, 1995). Thus, actual forest policy, especially outside traditional reserves was largely exploitative because it satisfied the interests of traditional rulers and European merchants, who were linked in trading networks. These trading networks began developing in the 15th Century, when trade with Europeans started (Reynolds, 1974), by which time community networks

were already in existence and traditional beliefs already in practice. Initially, trade on the Gold Coast mainly focused on gold and slavery. Chiefs played a very important role in this early trade (Reynolds, 1974; Arhin, 1979; Adu Boahen, 1986) and this helped to generate trading networks with European merchants (see Chapter 7). Various commodities, such as cola nut, oil palm and timber became important export products after the abolishing of the slave trade in the 1820s (Reynolds, 1974; Lovejoy, 1985). Thus, in addition to gold, these commodities were used to maintain the already existing trading networks. Here, existing trading interests were elaborated during “situational-interactions” (Sibeon, 2004). This resonates with the theory of “symbolic interactionism” (Mead, 1967; Wiley, 1994; Plummer, 2000). The actors just re-negotiated their interests and terms of interactions to correspond with the politico-economic changes at the macro level - the abolishing of slave trade.

Such networks were sustainable because they were based on mutual dependencies. The merchants had economic interests, which were based on their desire to get a cheap supply of these African goods. On the other hand, chiefs also needed merchandise goods, such as guns, gunpowder, spirits, jewels etc to enhance their political and economic interests (Arhin, 1979; Reynolds, 1974). Actor-Network theorists have used the term “actants” or “intermediaries” to refer to such items that link various actors within any network (see Law, 1992; Burgess *et al.*, 2000; Morris, 2003). Within the field of policy analysis, the term has often been used to refer to tangible goods (materials) that are exchanged among various actors. My findings demonstrate the importance of both intangible and tangible actants in shaping forest management. First, religious beliefs, which united citizens and traditional rulers into “moral communities”, constituted “intangible actants/intermediaries”. On the other hand, timber and the other commodities exchanged between traditional rulers and European merchants constituted “tangible actants/intermediaries”.

The links between “endowments” and the ability to influence the actions of others were clear. The chiefs were exercising their authority, based on certain rights accorded them, as those responsible for protecting the territories. European merchants, on the other hand, did not have any traditional rights to influence formulation of forest by-laws. However, by relying on their endowments, which were based on their control over merchandise goods, they managed to influence actual policy through their networks with traditional rulers. The observation also demonstrates the case of power being

exercised through networks (Valentine and Longstaff, 1998; Dean, 1999; Sharp *et al.*, 2000; Lukes, 2004). Murdock and Marsden (1995:372) were right when they wrote that: “those who are powerful are not those who hold power but those who are able to enlist and convince others into associations”. Indeed, the European merchants were able to transform their potential power, which was based on control over merchandise goods, into actual exercise of power in the form of inducement.

6.3 The Colonial Era (1874-1957)

The colonial era witnessed several twists and turns in policy. Exploitation, which started in the pre-colonial era, continued until 1900 because it still satisfied the interests of major policy actors. Subsequent changes in the interests and endowments of the colonial rulers brought about policy changes. Thus, as predicted by the integrated model, changes in forest policy in the colonial era were mainly in response to changes in the forest interests of the main policy actors, namely the colonial executive and traditional authorities. These changes also corresponded with reconfigurations of the networks.

6.3.1 Continued Exploitation (1874-1900)

Exploitation continued for about three decades after the colonial administration took over the running of the country. The main policy actors, occupying the core policy community, were the officials of the colonial administration and the traditional rulers who practiced a kind of “co-governance” or what has been termed “indirect rule” (Mamdani, 1996; Boone, 2003; Oppon, 2004). European merchants were a business group who had access to the policy community because of their close ties with the main policy actors.

Though there was no stated policy, exploitation of timber became the actual policy since it satisfied the mutual interests of all the main actors in the policy community. As in the pre-colonial era, traditional authorities were still interested in natural resource revenue while merchants were interested in cheap supply these resources. These interests were “congruent” with the desire of the colonial administration to generate revenue to ensure financial security in running the new colony. Cooperation among all these actors was necessary as traditional rulers still wielded control over land and natural resources

(Ayee and Tay, 1998; Oppon, 2004), so exploitation of timber would not have been possible without their consent.

6.3.1.1 Inter- and Intra-Network Struggles Over Resource Control

Despite the fact that all the dominant policy actors favoured timber exploitation, there were occasional conflicts and struggles among them as a result of a desire to control resource revenue. The most significant struggle occurred in 1894 when the colonial administration attempted to pass the Crown Lands Ordinance, which would have vested control of forests and minerals in its hands. Traditional rulers and the native people worked together to resist this bill because they knew it would limit their control over resource revenue. These struggles within the policy community demonstrate the fact that conflicts can occur even within closed networks involving a few actors. This observation contradicts the assertion by some policy network theorists (see Rhodes, 1988; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith, 1993) that there is always a high degree of consensus within any policy community because of the small number of actors and similarities of interests. Such assertions are not realistic as they fail to recognise multiplicity of interests and network relationships.

Actors have various interests and belong to multiple networks. Consequently, even when they are cooperating within a given network, their relationships are constantly being negotiated, since each group of actors may want to maximise its control over the network. Interactions within networks often involve “bargaining games”, which are aimed at allocating resources within networks (Coleman, 1990; Thatcher, 1998; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Such bargaining games are sometimes characterised by conflicts, since various groups want to maximise their interests. In this case, while both traditional rulers and executives were cooperating in view of their mutual exploitation interests, each group also wanted to have significant control over resource revenue, and this was the source of conflicts.

Furthermore, traditional rulers, apart from being members of the formal policy community, also belonged to the local community network. Hence, they were located at the interface or “zone of incongruence” (Machado and Burns, 1998) of the traditional community network and formal policy community. In contesting the Crown Land Bill, the traditional rulers appeared to have followed the interests of their community

networks. Here, they even relied on the support of civil society. If it is taken that traditional rulers and the colonial executive belonged to the “co-governance network” (formal policy community) then the struggles between the two groups could be seen as “intra-network struggles” due to differences in “positional interests”. On the other hand, if it is understood that traditional authorities belonged to the “community network” then struggles with the colonial administration could be seen as “inter-network struggles”.

It is evident that identification and management of conflicts within networks is very complex, since *intra-network conflicts* are usually embedded within *inter-network conflicts*, and this is due to such issues as varieties of interests and multiplicity of networks (see Chapter 4). Failure to identify these issues is what has led some theorists (see for instance, Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith, 1993) to wrongly conclude that conflicts do not usually occur within closed policy networks (i.e. policy communities). Understanding these issues is important for understanding conflicts in coalitions and network relationships in the contemporary world. When negotiated network relations fail, a group that breaks away from the policy community is likely to team up with other outsider groups. This is exactly what happened when the traditional rulers joined civil society to fight the Lands Bill. These complex struggles also support my criticism of the balance of policy pressure model, which only classified actors as either “exploitationists” or “protectionists” (see Grainger and Malayang, 2006). Such a dualistic classification does not provide an adequate framework for examining intra-group conflicts. In this case, both traditional rulers and the colonial administration could be seen as constituting an exploitative group, yet while their exploitative interests were congruent, they did not agree about resource control.

6.3.2 Formulating the Early Forest Reservation Ordinances (1900-1939)

Environmental crisis narratives, which were mainly created by renowned visiting colonial foresters, shifted the policy of the colonial administration from exploitation to conservation and sustainable forest management by the early 1900s. However, opposition by traditional rulers made it difficult for the colonial administration to successfully pass any significant formal conservation policy until 1927, when traditional rulers agreed to support formal reservation. This paved the way for the passage of the 1927 Forest Ordinance and Local Authority Ordinance which marked formal reservation and sustainable forest management in the era.

6.3.2.1 *Pressure from Visiting Colonial Foresters*

Pressure from visiting colonial foresters was an external factor which led to this major policy change. The British forester, H.N. Thompson, who made early recommendations for reservation, previously worked for the Indian Forest Service and was working in the Nigerian Forest Service when he visited Gold Coast for the survey. Visiting foresters were able to influence the colonial administration on the basis of their expertise, which was seen as giving them authority. They were seen as “knowledgeable” actors (Ledyae, 1997), who could predict the environmental cost of deforestation. The situation here lends credence to professionalism and technocratic models, which emphasise the power of professionals and technocrats in influencing policy decisions (Bell, 1960; Dunleavy, 1980). It appears that the success of foresters in shifting the interests of the colonial administration was based on the persistence of their crisis narratives, which started as early as 1900 and continued into the 1930s. As captured below, the foresters gave several warnings about the environmental and economic implications of forest loss:

“Property of this kind [forest], from which derive the well-being and prosperity of the country, is peculiarly the heritage of posterity, not for the sole enjoyment of the existing generation. If the British Government be regarded as trustees of these people, then the present beneficiaries have been allowed to squander valuable capital and impoverish the trust” (Oliphant, 1932: 2).

The argument that overseas pressures, stemming from environmental concerns rather than exploiting forests as a commodity, was the main driving force behind forest reservation policy in the then Gold Coast can be pressed home further if it is remembered that the launching of scientific forestry in the Gold Coast was actually part of a broader environmental discourse which became prevalent in all British and French colonies (Smith, 1996; Grainger and Konteh, 2007). Indirect socio-economic problems, such as a possible decline in cocoa production and potential shortage of water, were often cited by colonial foresters (see Chip, 1922; Oliphant, 1932) to buttress the perceived environmental threat and the need to take reservation seriously. For instance, Chipp warned that rapid forest loss would inevitably result in the “disappearance of cocoa, kola and oil palm industries as commercial ventures” (Chipp, 1922: 47). This statement placed emphasis on indirect benefits rather than timber exploitation. Section

4.4 of the 1927 Forest Ordinance, which was the landmark policy establishing reserves, also emphasised the indirect benefits when it stated:

“It appears to the Governor ... on the advice of the Conservator of Forests that the destruction of the forests thereon is diminishing or is likely to diminish the water supply, or is injuring or is likely to injure the agricultural conditions of neighbouring lands...” (Forest Ordinance, 1927 Section 4.4)

Similarly, Oliphant wrote that: “water supplies and agriculture depend upon the forest” (1932: 6). The emphasis on indirect environmental benefits was even clearer when he wrote that:

“The climatic effect of deforestation is not necessarily obvious to the existing generation... Legislation for forest conservation must be based on the recognition that the forests set aside for ensuring climatic stability and the permanent satisfaction of the timber requirements of the country are national property, held in trust for posterity” (Oliphant, 1932: 7, 8).

The reason why timber exploitation was probably not so much an issue was the fact that, although exploitation was still going on, there was no shortage of timber in Ghana at that time. Much of the concern was with destruction of forests by extension of farms for the production of cocoa. A number of formal policy statements attributed rapid forest loss to farm extension and shifting cultivation, rather than logging. For instance, H. W. Moor (1924:82) wrote:

“[M]any of [the] forested areas are honeycombed with farms that are continually expanding... the state of affairs appears to have been brought about since the introduction of cocoa, i.e., within the last 30-40 years. With the rate of expansion in the future being the same as it was in the past it is obvious that the coming generation will see the destruction of the remaining forests”

The *Gold Coast Handbook* (1935: 55) also made mention of how farming activities were destroying the forests: “The process of shifting cultivation, the principal agricultural system in the country, is steadily eating into and diminishing the extent of

the remaining forests” These pieces of evidence challenge the assertion of DeGrassi (2003:7) that:

“[C]olonial powers seeking to elicit consent by recalcitrant subjects to more direct, centralised control over lucrative timber and cocoa revenue constructed, circulated, and invoked scientific discourses that savannisation was endangering the public goods provided by forests”.

Cocoa was produced mainly by individual local farmers and as such one finds it difficult to understand how reservation of forests could have been linked to attempts to divert cocoa revenue into the coffers of colonial administration. There is no doubt that the administration knew that forests so reserved could be a major source of timber in the future. Indeed some statements that appeared *later* openly made mention of this direct benefit. The Chief Conservator, H. W. Moor (1935), for instance, wrote:

“A forest reserve is not a museum piece to be looked at, but not touched, it is something to be worked. When any commercial industry creates the demand, the reserve is there to satisfy it”.

Apart from mentioning indirect benefits, such as preserving the climate for cocoa production and water supply, Chipp (1923: 68-69) also emphasised the direct benefits when he noted that the forests of the Gold Coast were “a source of lumber to the heart of the Empire”. The distinction is that colonial foresters were aware of the fact that reservation might help to produce more timber in the near future. Yet, the prime factor that pushed the reservation policy in this *initial period* was environmental concern.

6.3.2.2 *Transforming the Interests of Traditional Authorities*

Attempts to convince traditional rulers and their communities to accept reservation proved difficult. Foresters were sometimes so frustrated that they thought local people just did not understand the western idea of scientific forestry. This was captured in the report of the visiting colonial forester H.N Thompson (1910), cited by Kotey *et al.* (1998:13), when he complained about the difficulties faced in “explaining atmospheric humidity in a native language that had no word or form of words by which the idea can be expressed”. However, initial resistance to reservation was not only due to

misunderstanding of forest science, but more a result of lack of trust, and fears that reservation was a ploy to usurp local people ownership rights. Resistance to reservation was eventually overcome by the late 1920s. In order to win their support, traditional rulers were given more powers over timber revenue. They negotiated concession agreements directly with timber companies, and collected royalties (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). These incentives helped to transform the interests of chiefs, as they came to realise that reservation would benefit them financially (Amanor, 1999).

This scenario reflects the notion of “partisan mutual adjustment” or “sensible politics” (Lindblom, 1965, Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993). The strategy employed by the colonial administration is also in line with the position of “analytics of government” school of thought, i.e. governing is not only about controlling subjects, it also entails persuasive tactics (Dean, 1999). The colonial executive, being aware of the fluidity of its power, employed subtle forms of it to enrol the chiefs into their network. This also resonates with the notion of *translation* - a multifaceted interaction in which actors construct common definitions and co-opt each other in pursuit of individual and collective goals (Callon, 1986; Law, 1992; Burgess *et al.*, 2000; Morris, 2003). As Latour (1986, 1996) noted, in the process of translating ones ideas and interests, the possession of power does not automatically ensure success unless others can be persuaded to perform the appropriate actions for this to occur.

6.3.2.3 Formal and Informal Networks through Indirect Rule

The choice of “indirect rule” as the governing strategy in the Gold Coast was dictated by a combination of interests of the colonial executive and the nature of power structures in traditional Ghana as well as interests of traditional rulers. Before the advent of colonialism, power in the then Gold Coast was divided among traditional rulers, who governed different territories or chiefdoms (Oppon, 2004). After the colony was established, traditional rulers still wielded significant control over local politics in view of their control over lands and local matters. Lack of colonial personnel and the fact that traditional rulers still wielded tremendous control over the citizens made power-sharing the best governing strategy for the colonial administration (Lugard, 1922; Boone, 2003; Oppon, 2004). Traditional rulers supported power-sharing because of the financial benefits, such as royalties, fines and concessions (Danso, 2000; Amanor, 1996, 1999).

Indirect rule represents an early network form of governance which can also be considered a form of what is now referred to as co-governance (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Barnett, 2003; Kooiman, 2003). It could also be seen as an early form of decentralisation in Africa. However, it does not conform to the tenets of complete decentralisation in which local power holders are supposed to be downwardly accountable to their subjects (Ribot, 2001). Traditional rulers were upwardly accountable to the colonial executive, constituting a kind of “decentralised despotism” (Mamdani, 1996). This did not expand grass roots participation in local governance but rather increases the power of local elites (Boone, 2003).

The impact of indirect rule on actual forest policy in Ghana needs to be analysed within a temporal framework. In the early colonial era the overall effect of indirect rule was more exploitative, as both colonial officials and traditional rulers used their networks for forest exploitation. This contributed, as noted already, to the continuation of exploitation in the early colonial era (1874-1900). However, indirect rule also played a positive role in overcoming local resistance to reservation policy since chiefs, relying on their authority, were in a better position to convince their citizens of the need to set aside some of their lands for reservation. On the other hand, since chiefs were not accountable to their citizens, indirect rule perpetuated the already existing phenomenon whereby chiefs enjoyed certain rights and saw themselves as above reproach. Indirect rule also allowed traditional rulers to continue to exercise de facto ownership rights over timber resources, both on and off reserves (Logan, 1947; Gold Coast, 1950; Kimble, 1963; Asante, 1975; Amanor, 1996, 1999; Danso, 2000).

6.3.2.4 Employing Policy Ambiguities to Contain the Demands of Traditional Rulers

It is evident from the preceding discussion that, as a result of attempts by the colonial administration to make concessions to traditional rulers, who were a powerful group in the policy community, forest policy in the early colonial era was characterised by a number of ambiguities. Early instances of policy ambiguity were observed in the draft Forest Ordinance of 1910 (revised in 1911) which could not be implemented because of local resistance. This sought to empower the Governor to constitute as reserves any “wastelands” (see Chapter 5). Ambiguity here was related to the definition of wastelands as lands that were “unoccupied or uncultivated” (1910 version) or lands which “appear to be unoccupied” (see 1911 version). Farming in Ghana (and elsewhere

in Africa) involves a long period of fallowing. Therefore, taking lands that were uncultivated or unoccupied to be wastelands was really an ambiguous position. This appears to be caused by the complexity of the reservation issue at the time. Given the serious opposition to reservation, the colonial administration probably thought that the best way to get the policy accepted was to state that it would not affect other land use patterns, hence the choice of the word “wastelands”.

The 1927 Ordinance was also characterised by ambiguities. In view of resistance to any attempt to take land ownership from the local people, it was stated clearly that reservation of any area would not change ownership. Yet the same policy provided for the Governor to be able to reserve any land he wished, even if it was without the consent of the traditional authorities. Thus, different sections of the policy are inconsistent. Such ambiguities are caused by attempts to satisfy various powerful actors (Rees, 1990; Grainger and Konteh, 2007).

6.3.3 World War II and the Re-Emergence of Exploitation (1939-1957)

Exploitation re-emerged as the actual policy in 1939. This change was brought about by World War II, which raised international demand for timber. This led to exportation of new tree species (such as *Triplochiton sclerexylon*) which were hitherto not exported (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). The minimum allowable diameters which various species must attain before they could be harvested were also relaxed to meet the international demand (Parren and Graaf, 1995). When the Chief Conservator wrote, in 1935, that a forest reserve is not a “museum piece” and that it would be worked “when any commercial industry creates the demand” (Moor, 1935); he was probably thinking of a local industry that might emerge some decades later. However, the war brought his expectations forward, and even created a stronger demand than he probably imagined. So the war created a powerful condition that distorted the “genuine” environmental concerns raised by the colonial foresters.

These short term economic benefits of exploitation apparently influenced the formulation of the 1948 forest policy, which was the first comprehensive forest policy in Ghana. The policy sought to make forest management consistent with the new exploitation interests of the main actors in the policy community. Its provision for “maximum utilisation” of all off-reserve forests and the subsequent designation of 70%

of reserves for timber production demonstrates its exploitative nature (see Chapter 5). Indeed the policy explicitly emphasised progressive utilisation without replacement of the remainder of the forest resources not permanently dedicated to forestry prior to their destruction to farming (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Direct benefits of the reserves through exploitation were now emphasised, and the policy makers justified this as important for both the local and the global economy. The policy noted how reserves would ensure the supply of forest produce to meet local requirements and the demands of the export trade (*ibid.*).

It is important to mention that, while there was much ambiguity by delay (between 1939 and 1948), the 1948 policy itself appeared to be clear on the true intentions of the major policy actors. Exploitation, which was their main intention, was clearly stated. Off reserve “maximum utilisation” was justified by the assumption that cocoa farmers would inevitably destroy the trees, hence the need to harvest them as soon as possible (see Kotey *et al.*, 1998). The actual intentions of the policy makers were declared here because exploitation satisfied the interests of both traditional rulers and colonial administration, who constituted the most powerful actors in the policy community and as such there was nobody to hide from.

6.3.3.1 Policy Network Changes in 1951

In 1951, the colonial administration sought to reconfigure its network relationships with traditional rulers. This was achieved through the passage of a Local Government Ordinance in 1951 (see Chapter 5). Since policy network relationships are based on dependencies (Smith, 1993; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000; John, 2001), they usually change in response to economic, political and social changes (Mills, 1992; Smith 1993; Richardson *et al.*, 1992), which result in changes in interests and relative powers of various policy participants. Changes in the interests of the colonial officials as well as changes in the relative endowments and potential powers of both traditional rulers and the colonial administration necessitated the 1951 policy network changes. First, in view of the booming timber trade, the colonial administration wanted to have more control over timber revenue. This led to passage, in 1949, of new property marks and concessions legislation. Allowing chiefs to dominate the granting of concessions and property marks was no longer in the interests of the colonial executive.

In addition to changes in the interests of policy actors, changes in the distribution of “endowments” were necessary for network changes (see Chapter 4). Firstly, the colonial administration had by this time gained direct control over much of the territory. After about 80 years of colonial rule, improvements in infrastructure and an increase in the number of British officials implied that they could govern directly. They also probably hoped to rely on educated Ghanaian elites rather than traditional rulers who were difficult to control entirely. Traditional authorities also saw their powers being undermined by urbanisation and modern security and law-enforcing institutions such as the police, military, courts etc. These network changes, therefore, corresponded to changes in the interests and distribution of endowments. Yet, while the colonial administration felt it had control over the entire territory, traditional rulers still had tremendous power. Consequently, the network changes had negative effects on forest policy implementation, due to clashes of traditional and executive powers (see Chapter 7).

6.4 Forest Policy in the Early Post Colonial Era (1957-1994)

Even though one of the reasons given by local politicians to justify struggles for independence in the then Gold Coast was mismanagement of natural resources by “foreigners”, forest exploitation even worsened in the postcolonial period. This mimics George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* story in which management of the farm got even worst after the common enemy, “man”, was overthrown. The era witnessed increased marginalisation of local people from forest management, in view of attempts to extend central government’s control over off-reserve forests. At the same time, a high level of exploitation was shaped by informal networks in the neo-patrimonial state.

6.4.1 Indigenisation, Industrialisation and Reconfiguration of Policy Networks

The economic and political interests of the first president of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, had significant effects on forest exploitation in the early post-colonial era. In his desire to build a strong socialist state, which would not economically depend so much on the western world, Nkrumah sought to expand exports of Ghanaian goods and reduce imports through rapid industrialisation. Many new processing firms, including saw mills, were established under a Ten Year Development Plan that sought to turn Ghana into a socialist industrial state. A parallel indigenisation policy led to the

emergence of numerous local timber firms (Aggrey, 1976), which were subsidised. Apart from direct timber exploitation to feed these industries, large areas of forest lands were also destroyed to establish state plantations for producing agricultural products for export and feeding local industries (RoG, 1963). The effects of these economic policies on actual forest policy in Ghana supports Miller's (1994) assertion that, in many developing countries, forest policy is shaped significantly by policies of other sectors of the economy.

The indigenisation policy resulted in a reorganisation of policy network relationships. While the influence of chiefs and local councils declined, an indigenous elite timber business group, which emerged as a result of indigenisation policy, gained better access to the policy community. Many concessions that were previously allocated by the colonial administration to foreign firms were taken from them, and given to Ghanaian big timber contractors (Blay *et al.*, 1968; DeGrassi, 2003). However, only people with close links with the executive benefited (Blay *et al.*, 1968).

As in any neo-patrimonial state in which the executive distributes favours to private business men (clients) in return for loyalty (Grainger and Konteh, 2007), the Nkrumah government and subsequent rulers used timber and other natural resources to maintain their networks. Bratton and van de Walle (1997:61) summarised the features of the neo-patrimonial state as follows:

“Authority is entirely personalised, shaped by ruler's preferences, rather than any codified system of laws. The ruler ensures the political stability of the regime and personal political survival by selectively distributing favours and material benefits to loyal followers”.

Neo-patrimonialism is a situation whereby “rulers stay in power by maintaining patronage networks” (Gibson and Hoffman, 2002: 3). It usually involves the exploitation of state resources to benefit a few people with ties to government leaders (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). The Ghanaian situation fits these descriptions of a neo-patrimonial state. The pervasiveness of neo-patrimonial networks related to attempts by President Nkrumah to consolidate his power through both coercive and persuasive tactics. Coercive tactics involved attempts to undermine the authority of traditional rulers, by threatening to depose those hostile to him (Rathbone, 2000).

Traditional rulers had consolidated their power through control over timber revenue, which enabled them to maintain their own neo-patrimonial networks with the logging companies. Nkrumah's first step was to usurp this authority. He appointed a commission to look into issues concerning the issuing of concessions by chiefs. The commission alleged that some concessions overlapped and covered farms. This was used as a sign of incompetence of chiefs, and their responsibility was taken from them (Boateng *et al.*, 1961).

The Administration of Lands Act (1962) and the Concessions Ordinance (1962) were passed to support this change. While the former vested the management of all stool lands (i.e. lands owned by traditional communities) in the central government, the latter vested the right to grant timber concessions and management of all timber resources in the central government. It is obvious that these policies were passed as a result of the desire of the government to control the award of timber concessions and the collection of timber revenue. Such centralisation processes are often employed by post-colonial African governments to maintain control over their neo-patrimonial networks (Gabriel, 1999; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002).

Local councils were also initially dissolved, apparently to depose unfriendly officials. When they were reorganised later, most appointed officials were those with close ties with the executive (Ayee, 1994; Rathbone, 2000). In his desire to control timber revenue and ensure that loans and inputs were given to actors in his neo-patrimonial network, Nkrumah established a Timber Marketing Board. Most of the executive members belonged to his ruling party (Blay *et al.*, 1968). He also co-opted leaders of powerful informal associations like the Asafo Company (formed by wealthy cocoa farmers) that helped in the struggle for independence (Beckman, 1975). Reliance on neo-patrimonial networks to govern was continued by successive governments and is still pervasive in Ghana. This is consistent with the assertion by Grainger and Konteh (2007:53) that "constructing the neo-patrimonial state was an African parallel to the equally pragmatic development of network forms of governance in developed countries".

6.4.2 Military Rule, Growth of Neo-Patrimonial Networks and Instability

After the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966, Ghana was ruled by a succession of military regimes (see Chapter 2), each blaming previous leaders for looting state resources (Pobee, 1992). None of these regimes made any significant positive changes in forest policy. Instead, they all continued with exploitation and the passage of legislative instruments that aimed at limiting local community user rights. The policy community was dominated by military generals. There was no Parliament for much of the time, and so legislative instruments were mainly military decrees. For instance, the Forest Protection Decree, 1974 (NRCD 243) and Trees and Timber Decree, 1974 (NRCD 273) were passed by the National Redemption Council, while the Provisional National Defence Council passed the Trees and Timber (Amendment) law, 1983 (PNDCL 70) and Forest Protection (Amendment) Law, 1986 (PNDCL 42). All these legislative instruments actually sought to restrict the use of forest resources by local communities (see Chapter 5). While big timber firms, which had close ties with the government, continued to exploit the forests, local people were treated as the cause of the problems in the forest sector.

Military rule weakened the state bureaucracy and further *“alienated local communities from forest management”* (Lugu, Forester, 11th May 2006). In the Rawlings regime, military officers were sent to directly manage some state institutions in view of the perceived corruption of administrators. Military men were also sent to patrol some forests to check the activities of chainsaw operators and farmers. They beat local people in some instances and these left bitter memories in the minds of local farmers about the security forces in general:

“During the time of President Rawlings, soldiers came to this community and beat us for cutting trees on our own lands to construct our houses... Since then, some of us have no interest in working with the forest people” (Akumatey, Focus Group Member, 21th May 2006).

Neo-patrimonial networks continued to shape actual policy outcomes, as successive rulers, who came to power through the “gun”, had to use revenue obtained from exploiting natural resources to enrich a few allies so as to remain in power. Though checking corruption and protecting public resources from over-exploitation by

incumbents and actors in their patronage networks was used as a justification for most coups, successive leaders did not have any choice than to continue to maintain such networks. When Rawlings returned to power in 1982, he initially sought to reduce corruption and neo-patrimonialism. The bank accounts of people who had reportedly acquired wealth through corruption were frozen and their properties seized. Interestingly, Rawlings himself eventually came to rely on the same neo-patrimonial networks to consolidate his power. But if Rawlings and his predecessors used neo-patrimonial networks to consolidate power, why was he more successful than them? The answer was that Rawlings expanded his network to all parts of the country, something that no leader had done.

He established PNDC offices in all the big towns to help maintain order. PNDC officials were accountable directly to him and sometimes even dealt with cases that should have been handled by the state security institutions. In rural communities too, there were Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs), who were carrying out his orders. He also had *mobisquads* in the towns and villages. CDRS and mobisquads illegally received funds from state coffers. In some areas, their leaders harvested timber for sale illegally while also seizing timber produced by chainsaw operators and local people. Yet local people could not challenge them in view of their close ties with the ruling government:

“Before Rawlings’ era, we could sometimes harvest trees on our farms [outside reserves] to renovate our houses but during his regime the CDR [Committee for the Defence of the Revolution] members often used force to seize any wood harvested by us... They cut timber for sale....We were treated like strangers on our own lands, but we could not challenge them because they had links with the government” (Siameh, Focus Group Member, 16th April 2006).

There were also associations such as the 31st December Women’s Movement, whose leader was the wife of President Rawlings. Although he initially blamed wealthy businessmen for the past woes of Ghana, Rawlings himself later enrolled some wealthy businessmen into his networks. Many of the grants and loans earmarked for export promotion under the Economic Recovery Programmes, for example, were disbursed irregularly to friendly businessmen and relatives of top state officials (Silviconsult, 1989). Traditional rulers were also brought into his networks, usually through the

National House of Chiefs. Development projects and appointments as members of the Council of State were often used to win the support of powerful chiefs. When Rawlings adopted decentralisation in 1988, as a result of international pressure, the District Assemblies were used as an extension of his neo-patrimonial networks in the sense that the District Chief Executive and other leaders of assemblies were all appointed by the President. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that although Ghana returned to constitutional rule in 1994, these neo-patrimonial networks are still pervasive. Members of the incumbent political party continue to receive favours from the ruling party (Nugent, 1995). Money and materials such as soap, machetes, sugar, and kerosene were freely distributed in election years by the incumbent to poor people, just to get their votes.

Some scholars have argued that neo-patrimonial networks can cause both political stability and instability (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Gabriel, 1999). Both features have been witnessed in Ghana's history. Instability was exemplified by the fact that misappropriation of natural resource revenue by incumbents and their networks was used as a justification of the many coups between 1966 and 1979, even though successive governments used the resource for the benefit of themselves and their own patronage networks. This situation fits into the Nigerian model where "petro-capitalism" led to "economies of violence" in the Niger Delta (Watts, 2003:15). In his commentary on Michael Watts' "Development and Governmentality", Reginald Cline-Cole (2003) demonstrated how similar "extractive politics" and neo-patrimonialism partly contributed to underdevelopment and the war in Sierra Leone. On the other hand, the stability achieved by Rawlings when he governed as a military ruler between 1982 and 1992 and as a civilian between 1992 and 2000 was only possible because of his extensive networks.

The conditions under which neo-patrimonial networks can lead to stability or instability are quite poorly understood (Gabriel, 1999; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). I argue, based on the Ghanaian experience, that the geographical distribution of the executive's networks determines its success for achieving stability. Stability can only be achieved when the neo-patrimonial networks are dense at every corner of the national space. However, resource constraints limit the ability of the executive to fund such extensive networks (Herbst, 2000). President Rawlings was able to maintain such stability because he overcame resource constraints by allowing actors within his networks to

directly control some revenue generation activities. Top state officials gained through irregularities in the handling donor grants and awarding of state contracts (Nugent, 1995), including timber concessions (Degrassi, 2003). At the community level, members of the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR) and the Mobisquads gained income from daily market taxes. They also “*exploited timber directly, imposed fines on illegal logging, and seized timber from chainsaw operators and local people*” (Ofori, Technical Officer, 13th April 2006). All these activities contributed to exploitation of the forest resource.

It is clear from the discussion so far that neo-patrimonial networks had an influence on both policy formulation and implementation. In view of links between the state executive and big timber men, policy was usually formulated to favour the latter’s interests. For instance, timber contractors pressured policy makers in 1970 to reduce the felling cycle from 25 years to 15 years, arguing that this would help prevent “over mature” trees from “going to waste”. This continued until 1990 before it was changed to 40 years (Prah, 1994). Again, royalty levels were often very low, because of the desire to help local timber firms. According to Gillis (1988), only 38% of total timber rent went to Ghana’s government in the form of royalties and taxes. In 1993, total forest revenue was \$5 per cubic meter of wood, even though the actual value of wood at that time was \$98 per cubic meter (Mayers and Kotey, 1996). The World Bank Mission, in 1986, noted that forest resources in Ghana could be considered a “free good” because of the exceptionally low royalty and fees levels (IBRD, 1986). The amount imposed as property marks and fines for illegal harvesting in 1974 was not revised until 1994 (see Chapter 5 for details of the Forest Protection and Trees and Timber Decrees) even though inflation was more than 1000% during this period (see ISSER, 1995).

It is evident that while local people were marginalised, actual policy favoured the exploitative interests of big timber firms, who were granted subsidies. Marginalisation of local people, while at the same time providing subsidies to friendly timber firms, is also in line with the operations of neo-patrimonial networks. Subsidies reflect the extent to which government supports certain sectors, and it can be used to measure the nature of neo-patrimonial networks (Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). According to van de Walle (2001), the basic structure of neo-patrimonial networks consists of the “ins”, the “outs” and the government. The government taxes the “outs” and get the money to provide patronage to the “ins”. Bates (1981) argued that rural areas usually suffer the “outs”

because they are poorly organised and have weak opposition. Resources are taken from them to support urban consumption where opposition is greater. Marketing boards are used to tax rural people (Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). Farmers, for instance, could be paid less than actual market values so that the difference is used to provide funds for maintaining neo-patrimonial networks. This is exactly what happened throughout the early postcolonial period. Local people were marginalised, yet at the same time the timber rent distribution only favoured big timber firms. State officials also got part of the booty in the form of “kickbacks” from “big timber men”. As discussed in Chapter 7, neo-patrimonial networks also led to poor implementation of forest policy, since stated rules were ignored to favour clients.

6.4.3 Structural Adjustment Programmes and Imposed Political Changes

Structural Adjustment Programmes adopted by the Rawlings government had a significant influence on forest policy. These programmes, which were funded by the World Bank and the IMF, led to over-investment in the forestry and mining sectors (Smith, 1996; Britwum *et al.*, 2001). This contributed to a significant rise in timber exploitation from the late 1980s onwards (see Chapter 5). As Cline-Cole and O’Keefe (2006:383) so eloquently stated, “the resource and environmental politics implied here can be both complex and contradictory”. The policy aimed at increasing the exploitation of natural resources but without adequate environmental safeguards. While the Structural Adjustment programmes helped to revive the economy, they also provided financial resources, or what Gibson and Hoffman (2002) terms “patronage resources”. Most of the loans and grants given to Ghana for timber export promotion went into the hands of private businessmen with close ties with state officials. For instance, \$58 million which was earmarked for sawmill development and \$70 million for machinery went to relatives and timber contractors who had links with top state officials (Silviconsult, 1989; Kotey *et al.*, 1998).

Political changes also occurred in the late 1980s. Democratic decentralisation was said to be adopted in 1988 and the forest department was among the state agencies decentralised. The forest decentralisation programmes were also heavily funded by international organisations, such as the World Bank and DFID. However, this did not positively affect the role of local communities in forest policy formulation and implementation. Consequently, while the policy community could be said to have

expanded in theory, in practice it was still dominated and controlled by interests of the executive and actors within its networks. Financial grants provided by international donors to promote decentralisation have only been used to maintain patronage networks with officials of the District Assemblies (see Chapter 7). So while financial aid can lead to democratic reforms (Nelson, 1990; Ake, 1993; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997) and formal policy changes (Gibson and Hoffman, 2002), it can also, when poorly coordinated, suppress local demands for political changes, as it allows the executive to finance neo-patrimonial networks and hold on to power (Grosh, 1994; Widner, 1994; Collier and Dollar, 1999).

6.5 Forest Policy Formulation in Contemporary Ghana (since 1994)

The contemporary era has witnessed increasing international pressure to adopt sustainable and decentralised forest management. As a way of making concessions to these powerful actors, stated policies with sustainable and participatory management goals are maintained but actual policy still remains largely exploitative, making the contemporary period an ambiguous phase. This is also shown by several contradictions between the 1994 Policy (the most recent comprehensive policy) and subsequent remedial policies. Informal networks still have a significant influence on actual policy. Exchanges and gifts characterise politics and the decentralisation policy is still being used as a platform to extend neo-patrimonial networks.

6.5.1 Endowments, Dependencies and Access to the Formal Policy Community

Access to the formal policy community has been modelled differently by different scholars. The Dutch school argues that, in many political interactions, the role of the executive is to coordinate the constitution of the network in such a way that all interests are represented (Kickert *et al.*, 1997; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). On the other hand, Smith (1993) has argued that access to the formal policy community is determined by historical, institutional and ideological factors. This implies that all interests are not fully represented. While Smith's position is useful, I argue that given that network relationships are based on dependencies, the endowments (resources and rights) of various actors are the strongest factors that determine access to the formal policy network. An analysis of the composition of the forest policy network in contemporary Ghana clearly supports this assertion.

The core policy community in Ghana is made up of the executive, the legislature and top directors of the Forestry Department. International donors, powerful traditional rulers and sometimes big timber firms also have some minimal level of access to the community. While parliaments in developed countries play an effective role in limiting abuse of power by the executive, this is not the case in Ghana. Here, parliament is often dominated by members from the ruling party and parliamentarians are never independent actors. Consequently, the parliament usually supports the policy preferences of the executive. Outsider groups with no access to the policy community include chainsaw operators and local farmers.

Whereas rights, institutional and historical factors may accord an actor access to the policy community (Smith, 1993), influence is only greater if the actor has enough resources which make it useful to the executive. Differences in access to the policy community are therefore largely due to differences in the distribution of endowments. For instance, based on their financial endowments, international actors like DFID, DANIDA and the World Bank have a significant influence on stated policy:

“As a developing country, there are times when our policies change because of demands from donors..... You know donors like the World Bank and the DFID sometimes ask us to make changes in our policies” (Sarpong, Forest Manager, 28th March 2006).

Among all these international donors, DFID has had the greatest influence on policy directions, simply because it is the major financier of Ghana forestry projects. Indeed the UK has been Ghana’s largest single overall donor for the past 50 years, contributing an average of £70 million annually through DFID to Ghana (Ghana News Agency, June 6, 2007). Bilateral trade between UK and Ghana is currently £340 million per annum. It is, therefore, not surprising that DFID is a major international pressure group whose preferences have a significant influence on policy directions in Ghana. As captured in the statement below, officials of the Forestry Department and the Ministry of Lands and Forestry lamented about how DFID’s decision to stop financing many aspects of forestry management has led to a refocus of the forest policy:

“DFID has been working with us for several years but [it] stopped funding some programmes this year and is now focusing on forest governance. We are also

working hard to design something that fits into this governance thing otherwise we will not get its support again... You know it provides the bulk of the money and the technical support that we need for our operations. This is why we always cannot reject what it proposes” (Ayim, a director at the Forestry Department, 28th March 2006).

This suggests that several incremental changes in policy are also due to attempts to redesign policy to meet the demands of donors who have access to the policy community. The current focus of policy is on the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan of the European Union. This is because the European Union is another important donor, providing about 70% of Ghana’s development budget and 40% of recurrent expenditure. Its member countries also buy more than 50% of Ghana’s timber (GoG, 2007; Ghana News Agency, 2008). Hence, its interests have a significant influence on policy directions in Ghana. This is captured in Ghana’s Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) Briefing Paper No 1:

“Since the EU accounts for over 50% of Ghana’s timber exports by volume and value, the country’s focus is on the European Union’s Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative” (GoG, 2007: 1).

Further, in a joint EU-Ghana press release on 2nd March 2007, the Ghana government noted how they expected the VPA to contribute to “already initiated Government of Ghana programmes on sustainable management, good governance and poverty reduction” (GoG, 2007). It is therefore safe to conclude that international actors such as the UK government, the World Bank, the European Union, and other powerful donor countries have access to the policy community by virtue of their financial endowments, which is the source of their power. On the other hand, access to the forest policy community by traditional authorities is based on the control they exercise over lands and local people. Yet not all chiefs get access. Only powerful paramount chiefs have been consulted, usually on issues that concern royalties:

“We cannot consult all local communities... [so] we usually consult those paramount chiefs who have tremendous control over local farmers and forest lands” (Wiafe, Forest Manager, 8th March 2006).

Thus, traditional authorities have access to the policy community because the executive depends on them to control local communities in view of their rights and control over lands. Chiefs enjoy this relationship because it offers them the chance to get control over royalties. Mutual dependency, which is essential for institutional power sharing (Boone, 2003), is therefore present in this situation. However, given that local chiefs were marginalised from the policy community (Smith, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998) until the early 1990s, when international pressure led to their renewed access to the community, one can also argue that their current access is due to attempts by the executive to please international groups who have, since the late 1980s, increased their demands for local community participation in policy-making. This means that some actors may have access to the policy community not so much because of their own potential power but as a concession to demands from a different powerful actor. The renewed power of chiefs has also been influenced by political changes in the emerging democracy. Voting is usually based on tribal lines and so the executive tries to enrol powerful chiefs into its political network. In 2006, a Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs was created in response to demands by powerful chiefs and as part of government's attempts to get chiefs into its political network.

Access to the policy community by timber companies could be explained in terms of economic dependency. Big timber men have the ability to finance political parties and pay "kick backs" into the pockets of some powerful policy makers (see Chapter 7). Their business interests also correspond with the interests of the executive in generating foreign exchange, employment and promoting industrialisation. Their access to policy makers is, therefore, in line with the widely held assertion that business groups may have access to the policy community due to expectation of financial benefits by the government (Truman, 1951; Lindblom, 1977; Smith, 1993).

While endowments enabled some groups to have access to the *formal* policy community, actors such as farmers, lower level forestry officials (e.g. guards) and chainsaw operators could not gain much access to the policy community because the executive does not depend on them *directly*. Some of these outsider groups, as shown in the model, belong to vertical chains and so policy makers are able to deceive international donors that all groups are represented (e.g. farmers are often said to be represented by paramount chiefs and guards are also said to be represented by forestry directors) although in reality their interests are largely different from those of their so-

called representatives. Since not all interest groups have access to the *formal* policy network, the network type observed here could be seen as a closed policy community (Rhodes, 1988; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a). Those excluded from formal policy-making are, however, able to realise their interests through their interpersonal networks with individual policy implementers (see Chapter 7).

6.5.2 Formulating the Forest and Wildlife Policy (1994)

A number of international and local factors influenced the formulation of the 1994 policy. The policy document itself clearly acknowledged the importance of these when it states that “the guiding principles for this policy are based on both national convictions and international guidelines and conventions” (Forest and Wildlife Policy, 1994, section 3.1). While international pressures were the major force behind policy revisions, there were also some local factors, which had to do with public outcry over deforestation and pressures from traditional rulers who wanted a better share of rent.

6.5.2.1 External Pressures

The Year 2000 Objective of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), of which Ghana is a member, played a significant role in shaping the new policy. Proposed by the ITTO in 1990 (and revised in 1991, 1994 and 1998), it declares that by the year 2000, member countries of the ITTO were to source timber from only sustainable managed forests (ITTO, 1992, 1998; MLF, 1994; Donkor and Vlosky, 2003). To achieve this aim, member countries were encouraged to make policy revisions and institutional changes for sustainable forest management. Specific principles emphasised include the use of harvesting limits to reduce pressure on forests and adding value to timber products (ITTO, 1998; Poore and Chiew, 2000; Donkor and Vlosky, 2003). These principles were just imported and reframed into the 1994 Policy and the subsequent Forest Sector Development Master Plan in 1996. The Agenda 21 document of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, which declares the need to formulate sustainable policies and to ensure community participation in resource management, also put significant pressure on the government of Ghana to make policy revisions.

The importance of both the ITTO agenda and the Rio declaration were stated clearly in the policy document:

“The past decade has witnessed increased attention of the world community to the issue of conservation and wise use of natural resources culminating in the 1992 Earth Summit organised by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In an effort to halt the deleterious effects of deforestation, global warming and climatic change, certain European countries have unilaterally moved to restrict importation of tropical timbers. In response, the International Tropical Timber Organisation, of which Ghana is an active member, has launched its Target 2000 aimed at ensuring that trade in tropical timber will be sourced from sustainably managed forests by the year 2000” (1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy, section 2.5).

Similarly, Section 3.0 of the policy captures these external factors when it states:

“Ghana has also endorsed certain international principles including those contained in the guidelines for Tropical Forest Management published by the International Tropical Timber Organisation, the Rio Declaration and Forest Principles, the African Convention on wildlife Conservation, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and others” (1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy, section 3.0).

Pressure from donors, such as the World Bank, FAO, European Union, and governments of developed countries, also played a significant role in the policy revisions. Most international donor grants to Ghana and developing countries in the late 1980s were tied to changes in policy and institutional restructuring (Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Amanor and Brown, 2003). Intense donor pressure for adoption of decentralisation and sustainable environmental protection as a condition for foreign aid in the late 1980s, therefore, also contributed to these policy revisions.

This suggests that the formulation of the new forest policy in 1994 was largely for the purpose of projecting Ghana as a country that was abiding by international agreements to which it was a signatory. This seems to have succeeded, as the country has often been cited by international organisations as one of the countries in Africa that adheres to international policy conventions. The ITTO, for instance, noted in a number of its reports that, in comparison with other African countries, Ghana has been outstanding in implementing policy agreements (see Donkor and Vlosky, 2003). The World Bank has

also praised the Ghana government for adopting participatory management policies (World Bank, 2003).

6.5.2.2 Local Factors

Local factors were also important. Firstly, the high levels of deforestation resulted in increasing complaints from environmental NGOs and academics. Chiefs were also *“putting increasing pressure on the government to design a new policy that would give them a better share of the forest revenue”* (Tete, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2nd February 2006). Policy revisions and restructuring of the Forestry Department were also in line with attempts to cut government spending (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Under Structural Adjustments Programmes, the government sought to cut expenditure through redeployment and decentralisation of certain sectors. The Forestry Department was among the state departments earmarked for decentralisation in 1988.

Redeployment was part of World Bank conditions attached to grants in 1988 that the government must make institutional changes within the civil service to cut expenditure. This led to a significant redeployment within many state agencies, including the Forestry Department. The Forestry Department *“became so weak that it needed to get support from local people to carry out such tasks as boundary clearing, chasing illegal loggers and establishing fire belts”* (Tete, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2nd February 2006). As the 1948 policy did not emphasise such community participation, it became necessary to revise it (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994). Thus, the need to design a policy that sought to win the support of local communities, even if it would not be implemented, was also realised. In effect, these local conditions also provided favourable conditions for the passage of a new policy whose main focus was on decentralised and sustainable forest management.

6.5.3 Continuity and Deviations from the 1994 Policy

There have since been minor amendments to 1994 policy. A number of the legislative instruments passed after 1994 either amended existing policies that were outdated or set strategies for implementing some particular aspect(s) of the 1994 policy. The former case is exemplified by the Trees and Timber Amendments in 1994, which revised fines set as far back as 1974, thus resolving the ambiguity by delay. Similarly, the Forest

Protection Amendment of 2002 also revised a 1974 version. In the case of statutes passed to set strategy for implementing aspects of the 1994 policy, the Plantation Development Legislative Instruments set the strategy for the reforestation programme mentioned in the 1994 policy. Similarly, the Timber Resource Management Regulations were proposed to help control logging within off-reserve forests by enhancing landowners rights (see Chapter 5 for details of these legislative instruments).

On the other hand, there have also been significant deviations. Two types of factors constitute deviations since 1994. First, some of the subsequent remedial legislative instruments and operational guides were inconsistent with provisions in the 1994 policy. For instance, while the 1994 policy mentions forest decentralisation, the 1998 Timber Utilisation Bill and the Forest Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002 tend to usurp the rights that farmers previously had over trees on their farms (see Chapter 5).

Other deviations emanated from the failure to implement fully some aspects of the 1994 policy. For instance, the allowable cut proposed to ensure sustainable management has not been effectively enforced. Though this has been blamed on illegal logging, even the legal component of logs produced for the past ten years exceeded the allowable cut (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2001; Birikorang, 2001). The difficulty here is that the government's interest in raising more funds through the sale of concessions contradicts the allowable cut policy brought in to comply with pressures from the ITTO and the donor community:

“We want to ensure that wood production does not destroy the remaining forests entirely but our hands are always tied by the need to raise revenue through sale of concessions” (Nketia, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 23rd February 2006).

Some forestry officials also argued that deviations are normal, as no policy is ever perfectly implemented. An official noted that some policies originated from international circles and as such some aspects of those policies will be difficult to implement in Ghana:

“It is not practicable to implement every aspect of any forest policy. Some policies are based on what our donors want but you must know that not all those policies can be implemented now. Policies are just stated intentions but you know that not all

intentions can be pursued” (Ayim, a director of the Forestry Department, 28th March 2006).

6.5.4 Conflicts of Interests, Network Mediation and Policy Ambiguities

Some researchers assert that conflicts in closed policy communities are always minimal (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith, 1993), yet several instances of conflicts of interest were stated by policy makers interviewed by this author. For instance, there were always conflicts on the issue of royalties. State officials noted that chiefs always demanded an upward adjustment to royalties but timber contractors did not like the idea. Chiefs had also, on several occasions, *“demanded to be given the power to independently issue timber contracts, but both timber companies and the government did not like this idea”* (Ayim, a director of the Forestry Department, 28th March 2006). Attempts by the executive, who acts a mediator or moderator of the formal policy community, to reconcile conflicting interests contributes to the various policy ambiguities and deviations. The perverseness of ambiguities in this contemporary era is a result of higher number of actors with conflicting interests in the formal community.

Conflicts of interest usually characterise forest management, as forests and forestry are often differently constructed by various competing groups (Cline-Cole and Madge, 2000). Hence, formulating a single policy that satisfies various interest groups is certainly not an easy task for the government. Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) talk about network mediation and reconciling conflicting interests based on constructive debates among actors and rational explanation by policy makers. Yet, in reality, policy makers in Ghana and elsewhere in the developing world rely on “ambiguity by deception” to resolve these conflicts. So whereas the network mode of governance helps to reconcile interests, it could also bring about several policy ambiguities. When there are conflicting demands, the executive may intentionally use ambiguous policy texts to handle demands from the different powerful actors (Grainger and Konteh, 2007). One aspect of forest policy where these contradictions have been very pervasive is decentralised forest management, which is the main focus of current stated policy.

6.5.4.1 Actual Intentions of the Executive towards Forest Decentralisation Policy

Ghana has been cited as a country that is adopting decentralised forest management (see Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004). However, its *actual* forest decentralisation programme does not conform to the tenets of the so called “democratic decentralisation” (see Chapter 3), which is the “complete” decentralisation that international donors believe they are promoting (World Bank, 2000; Ribot, 2001). The actual form of forest decentralisation in Ghana is merely a form of collaboration or a network form of governance between the executive and local elite. Disparities between stated policy and the actual intentions of the executive have, however, been masqueraded by ambiguities. To win the favour of international donors, the policy emphasised enhancing local community user forest resource rights and decentralisation of forest management:

“In enunciation this policy concerning the country’s forest and wildlife resources, the Government of Ghana recognises and confirms: the rights of people to have access to natural resources for maintaining a basic standard of living and their concomitant responsibility to ensure the suitable use of such resources;..... the need to incorporate traditional methods of resource management in national strategies where appropriate;... the need to develop a decentralised participatory democracy by involving local people in matters concerned with their welfare. In view of the importance of local people in pursuing these principles, the government proposes to place particular emphasis on the concept of participatory management and protection of forest and wildlife resources and will seek to develop appropriate strategies, modalities and programmes in consultation with relevant agencies, rural communities and individuals” (1994 Forest and Wildlife policy, sections 3.2 and 3.3).

International actors understood the above policy texts to mean that Ghana is adopting their ideas of democratic decentralisation. Yet, the policy was contradicted by a memo in 1995 which indicated that complete transfer of management power to local people was not in the interests of the government. One reason cited for this was that District Assemblies would over-exploit the resource:

“These forests provide intangible benefits to a wide section of the population (maintaining microclimate for agriculture and safeguarding the populations drinking

water supply to name but two)... we are committed to the spirit of decentralisation ..[but] it would be reckless to transfer the authority over forest management and protection to the District Assemblies....indeed they have a vested interest in exploitation as they derive a large portion of their income from royalties” (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1995: 5).

Other parts of the memo justified the government’s reluctance to decentralise forest management as follows:

“A resource of such strategic national importance cannot be coherently managed by numerous, independent local authorities whose jurisdiction does not extend beyond the borders of their districts” (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1995: 5).

The memo also suggested that complete decentralisation would generate conflicts:

“The forest reserves are by and large stool and skin lands [lands owned by local communities and controlled by traditional authorities]. Considerable local friction would be aroused if management control were transferred to the District authority” (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1995: 6)

It came out during interviews that some officials also believe that local communities do not have the capacity to manage forest resources on their own. This is how an official put it: “*How can they [local people] manage the forests on their own? They don’t go to school [so] the technology is not there*” (Nutsuga, a director at the Forestry Department, 15th March 2006). Another official also stated:

“I cannot imagine them [local people] doing these things. Dealing with timber firms is not easy. We sell contracts [concessions?] to them and monitor their activities. We have many professionals to do these but I am wondering who can do these things when local people are to manage the forests” (Wiafe, Forest Manager, 8th March 2006).

Unemployment was also cited by a number of officials to support their arguments against complete decentralisation of forest management:

“Imagine what will happen to us [forest officials] when this forest decentralisation thing is implemented. Rural people will be managing their forests so most of us will have to go home [redeployment]. This will be disastrous for us and our families because many of our people may not get jobs in other sectors” (Alimo, Forester, 30th June 2006).

In view of these objections to the complete transfer of management responsibilities, what the executive is actually interested in is “collaboration” with paramount chiefs, so as to make international donors believe that local communities are participating (see Chapter 7). Apart from this, it has also been hoped that minimal collaboration with traditional rulers will help to control illegal chainsaw operators:

“Talking about transferring everything to local people is not in the government’s mind now. What we are trying to achieve is to partner with the *chiefs* to see how best we can fight illegal logging which is threatening the resource. Since they have power over the communities, they can help to check the illegal chainsaw operators” (Tete, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2nd February 2006).

The focus on partnership with traditional rulers is consistent with the old system of governance under indirect rule. It also resonates with neo-patrimonialism which characterises political relationships in Africa. Indeed, an attempt to impose western ideas of decentralisation onto the African political landscape, which is characterised by exchanges and patronage networks, has led to confusion over the concept. Decentralisation programmes in many parts of Africa are often not well implemented because of lack of commitment on the part of the governments (Adamolekun, 1991; Diouf, 1998; Olowu, 2001). As some scholars have noted, much ambiguity and confusion, therefore, surrounds the concept of decentralisation (Turner and Hulme, 1997; Larson, 2002). Olowu’s (2001: 2) assertion that, in practice, programmes of decentralisation are a mixture of centralisation, deconcentration, privatisation and devolution is valid in the Ghanaian context, where the executive tries to fit decentralisation into its neo-patrimonial system.

The government has, nevertheless, presented “good” reports that portray Ghana as a model democracy in Africa (see, Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004; Amanor and Brown, 2003). This is an instance of a “hidden policy agenda” (Rees, 1990). The government

introduced the decentralisation aspects of the policy just to satisfy international donors, but had no actual intention of implementing it. As Grainger and Konteh (2007) noted, actual forest policy under such circumstances is “generally nested within a higher order discourse” yet the “legitimacy of policy texts that are, often quite, literally imported from overseas may, therefore, be questioned within the country if they are incompatible with the higher order discourse there”. Imported policy texts were not consistent with government’s own intentions and local realities in Ghana. Decentralisation as proposed by international actors was, for instance, inconsistent with traditional power structures and government’s interest in maintaining control over resource revenue and financing its patronage networks.

Some officials indicated that they were aware of these ambiguities and the fact that some of these policies could not be implemented, yet they had to incorporate them just to get the funds from international donors. For instance, one top official at the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, when asked about why the fine tuning of decentralisation policy has not been implemented answered:

“Hmmm my brother you know those things [policy statements] were written to please donors. It is difficult doing these things here [in Ghana] but you see if we do not present things the way donors want then we will not get any money from them. You understand ehh? [he smiles at me]. It’s like doing what your teacher likes just to pass an examination” (Nketia, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 23rd February 2006).

In such circumstances, where there is “ambiguity by delusion”, the executive does not make any clear provision for implementing the policy. The reality of Ghanaian decentralisation policy supports an assertion of Rees (1990: 417) that some resource policies can be “interpreted as a token gesture, designed to diffuse political conflict, without making any real change in the status quo”. Resource usage rights of farmers were said to be enhanced, only by stating that they shall have access to resources after application to District Forestry Offices. Yet there are no rules on how such applications are to be evaluated. There are also no rules on appeal procedures. The Timber Resource Management Act also proposes that Timber Utilisation Permits are to be issued to local communities, District Assemblies and Non-Governmental Organisations, where these groups need to harvest trees for non-commercial purposes. Yet, the policy does not specify application and operating procedures either. According to Forest Watch, a

coalition of some NGOs, the Timber Utilisation Permit system has been abused and used by forest officers and actors within their networks. Between 2001 and 2006 the Forestry Department illegally issued 125 Timber Utilisation Permits to commercial loggers who were mostly friends of top officials (Forest Watch, 2006).

6.5.4.2 Contesting International Pressures

It is clear from the preceding discussion that attempts by international actors to influence the environmental policies of developing countries, a phenomenon that has been termed “eco-imperialism” (Lal, 1990), is not achieving much in the Ghana forestry sector. The Ghanaian experience challenges the assertion by some scholars that national sovereignty and autonomy of governments of developing countries are being usurped (Leonard, 2001) due to “internationalisation” of the policy process (Howlett and Ramesh, 2002). By manipulating the language of international agreements and accords, the Ghanaian government has been able to outwit international donors. Statements on sustainable forest management, decentralisation and enhancement of local community resource user rights were all imported from international agreements and accords. This is a clear case of what Grainger and Konteh (2007:2) term “policy ambiguity by manipulating the language of the discourse of governments of developed countries” Even though the imported texts are not consistent with local political structures, political leaders of the developing countries are able to outwit their “international masters” because of the latter’s misunderstanding of political structures in developing countries.

The use of ambiguity resonates with the ideas of “symbolic politics” (Matten, 2003) in that the formal policy is just a “symbolic statement” (Smith, 1985: 135) that will never be implemented. Once donors change their focus, the local politicians also import the new overseas policy texts, recycle them, reconstruct them and reproduce them to meet the objectives and aspirations of the donors. This was clear in a statement made by a director of the Forestry Department about how they were trying to change forest programmes in Ghana to match DFID’s new focus on forest governance:

“[T]hey [DFID] are now focusing on forest governance. So to get their funds we are also repackaging our programmes to meet their goals. That is how we always do it.

We really need support” (Nutsuga, a director at the Forestry Department, 15th March, 2006).

In some instances, the political leaders outwit donors by acknowledging the problems faced during policy implementation. Excuses are given for such failures or to justify why policy was not implemented as stated. For instance, donors had proposed that competitive bidding should be adopted as a way of ensuring that neo-patrimonialism and corruption were eliminated in the issuing of timber contracts, yet after the government committed itself to adopting competitive bidding, it explained later that this would affect small scale timber firms (see Chapter 7). Again, as demonstrated by a number of quotations already, even though the 1994 Forest Policy emphasises decentralisation, a 1995 memo tried to justify the government’s reluctance to do exactly what was stated, on the grounds that total decentralisation would bring conflicts and over-exploitation of the resource.

Sometimes, acknowledging problems with current programmes is merely a ploy to get more funds from donors. Indeed, official statements by Ghanaian officials at international conferences continue to give good reports of decentralisation in their attempt to get more funds. An example of such statement is captured below in a report presented by a top state government official, E.K Smith, during an international conference organised by donors:

“Ghana is a resurgent African nation with a market oriented, people-centred, democratic agenda. This is reflected in our new Forest Policy. To implement all our policy reforms we require some financial and specialist technical assistance from the donor community. We have recently completed a Forestry Sector Development Master Plan to ensure all donor-supported activities in the sector are coordinated and supportive of our new forest and Wildlife Policy” (Smith, 1996: 22).

Statements like this enable the Ghanaian government to obtain more funds even though, as already discussed, these often benefit top state officials and their allies. For instance, under the Natural Resource Management Project Phase I alone (1999-2000) Ghana got a grant of \$ 25.7 million from the EU, DFID and DANIDA which was earmarked for the rehabilitation of degraded forest and community collaboration. Despite the fact that

there is nothing on the ground to suggest any collaboration (see Chapter 7), a report on the project in 2003 praised implementation as satisfactory (World Bank, 2003).

This observation buttresses a point made already, that the goals of international funding bodies are what shape *stated* policy, yet actual policy reflects a government's own interests. It can be said that while the executive has the capacity to reject proposals and demands by international actors, its dependence on those actors means that it is necessary to strategically govern them by manipulations. The power of international donor groups, therefore, influences stated policy but actual policies reflect the interests of local politicians.

6.6 Conclusions

The actual forest policy trend in Ghana is consistent with the integrated policy network model. Changes in actual forest policy were found to correspond with changing forest interests and policy networks among major policy actors. While the formal policy community formulates stated policy, actual policy was often determined by complex interactions among actors within formal and informal networks. These interactions were often shaped by multiple interests, dependencies and the distribution of endowments (rights and resources) at any given time.

In the pre-colonial era, the religious interests of traditional communities led to the formulation of community forest by-laws that ensured the protection of sacred groves. On the other hand, trading networks between and among traditional rulers and European merchants led to exploitation of forests outside sacred groves. Actual policy was, therefore, largely exploitative because it satisfied the interests of traditional rulers and European merchants.

Actual policy continued to be exploitative in the first three decades of the colonial era (1874-1900) because exploitation still satisfied the interests of the dominant policy actors namely traditional rulers and the colonial executive. By 1900, colonial environmental discourse shifted the interests of the colonial administration from exploitation to sustainable forest management. However, in view of local resistance, it was not possible to successfully pass any formal conservation policy until 1927 when traditional rulers agreed to support the reservation policy. Actual forest policy shifted

again from sustainable management to exploitation in the early 1940s since World War II made the timber trade very lucrative and made exploitation a priority for the dominant policy actors. These policy changes were accompanied by policy network changes. In order to exercise more control over forest revenue, the colonial executive ejected chiefs from the formal policy community and replaced them with local councils in 1951.

Exploitation of timber continued to be the main focus of both stated and actual policy in the first part of the post-colonial era (1957-1994), due to the fact that it satisfied the political and economic interests of successive post-colonial political leaders. They continued to exploit natural resources to fund their neo-patrimonial networks so as to consolidate and hold on to power. The desire of various military men to get a share of the natural resource cake through neo-patrimonial networks contributed to instability between 1966 and 1982. Stability has been restored since 1982 but also largely through the operation of neo-patrimonial networks. So the Ghanaian experience exemplifies the argument that neo-patrimonial networks can cause both political stability and instability (Brattan and van de Walle, 1997; Gabriel, 1999).

The forest exploitation interests of the executive have not shifted significantly in the contemporary era (i.e. since the mid 1990s). However, increasing international pressure on the executive and renewed local pressure means that the actual interests of the executive conflict with the interests of overseas actors and traditional authorities with whom the executive shares policy network relationships based on economic and political dependencies. As a way of making concessions to these powerful actors, stated policies with sustainable and participatory management goals are maintained, but actual policy still remains largely exploitative, making the contemporary period an ambiguous phase. The findings here contradict early assertions which suggest that conflicts are minimal, since only a few actors have access to the formal policy community (Marsh and Rhodes 1992b; Smith 1993; Rhodes 1988). Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) recognised that there may be a number of conflicts, but they also argued that such conflicts are often reconciled through healthy discussions and explanations by the executive, whom they accorded the role of network mediator. My findings, however, suggest that policy makers in Ghana rely on ambiguities to resolve these conflicting interests.

The use of ambiguity to outwit demands of powerful actors means that attempts by international actors to influence environmental policies of developing countries, a

phenomenon termed “eco–imperialism” (Lal, 1990), is not achieving much. My conclusion is that there is no doubt that the *stated* policies of developing countries have been influenced by international donor groups. Yet assertions that the sovereignty and autonomy of developing countries are being usurped by international donor groups (Hinsley, 1986; Biersteker and Weber, 1996; Hyden *et al.*, 2000; Leonard, 2001), due to “internationalisation” of the policy process (Howlett and Ramesh, 2002), are not supported by a critical analysis of the *actual* policies of these countries.

My analysis is consistent with that of Grainger and Konteh (2007) on forest policy in Sierra Leone. Policy makers in African countries can contest international pressure and maintain autonomy by “manipulating the language of the discourse of governments of developed countries” (ibid 2007:2) and the policy agenda from international accords. Even though the imported policy texts are not consistent with local political structures, political leaders of the developing countries are able to outwit their “international masters” because of the latter’s misunderstanding of the political structures in developing countries.

Some researchers have argued that international pressures, such as the conditions attached to financial aid to developing countries, have the capability to lead to democratic reforms (Nelson, 1990; Ake, 1993; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997) and other policy changes (Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). Other scholars are sceptical about the ability of international pressures to lead to any significant policy changes (Grosh, 1994; Widner, 1994). My findings support the latter thesis. International pressures in recent times have taken the form of “financial aid conditionalities”. Yet, African leaders understand the difficulties in monitoring such aid. They therefore exploit the system to fund their patronage networks (Collier and Doller, 1999). External pressures can only achieve policy changes when supported by strong local pressures, since local people have a better ability to monitor what goes on in their countries.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST POLICY IN GHANA

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines forest policy implementation in Ghana, within the framework of the integrated policy network model. The model predicts that forest policy implementation is influenced by the interaction of formal organisational procedures with complex relations of power, which comprise the myriad social, economic, cultural and political networks between and among various actors (Sharp *et al.*, 2000:21). While the chapter discusses the combined effects of both formal organisational factors and informal networks on policy outcomes, the latter form the central theme of the analysis. This is based on the observation that the effects of informal networks on actual policy outcomes have been relatively unexplored.

7.2 Pre-Colonial era

This section examines the implementation of by-laws on sacred groves (i.e. traditional forest reserves) in pre-colonial Ghana. It also establishes the foundations of traditional policy networks and discusses their impacts on exploitation of timber resources outside sacred groves.

7.2.1 Enforcement of By-Laws on “Traditional Forest Reserves”

Although there is little documentary evidence on the implementation of by-laws on traditional forest reserves, it is widely acknowledged that these laws were quite effectively enforced within the various chiefdoms (Norton, 1991; Hawthorne and Abu Juam, 1995; Mayers and Kotey, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). As discussed in Chapter 6, shared religious beliefs, which united traditional rulers and ordinary citizens into “moral communities” (Fortes, 1940; Radcliffe and Brown, 1952; Leach *et al.*, 1999), played a significant role in the enforcement of these by-laws. The power of the traditional ruler was enhanced by the fact that he was seen as a representative of the ancestors (Nukunya, 2003). In some societies, such as the Akans who constitute the largest ethnic group in Ghana, the ruler was even seen as an incarnation of the god of the land - a

notion referred to as “divine kingship” (Meyerowitz, 1960). The relationships between traditional rulers and the subjects were characterised by patronage exchanges. The rulers protected the subjects against external aggression, and also provided for those who did not have anything. In return, the subjects had to be loyal to him (Arhin, 1979). Consequently, rules imposed by traditional rulers were respected. This involved the operations of power based on “authority” (Ledyae, 1997). The subjects complied because of the conviction that the power holder (i.e. the traditional ruler) had the legitimacy to command.

Apart from compliance based on respect for the ruler, there were various forms of sanctions against people who broke community rules. In fact, breaking laws that concerned the supernatural, in particular, was considered as one of immediate or ultimate danger not only to the individual, but also to society as a whole. An obligation, therefore, rested upon the community to ensure that people obeyed rules (Radcliffe Brown, 1952). According to Fortes (1940) any person who violated traditional rules in such societies could be subjected to one or more of the following three types of sanctions. First, *moral sanction*, in which the person who broke the rules was subjected to reprobation of other members of the community. Second, *ritual sanction*, which required the guilty person to undergo ritual purification. Third, *penal sanction*, whereby the rule breaker was punished by the community. These sanctions also made it inconceivable for any member to deliberately break by-laws (Radcliffe Brown, 1952; Nukunya, 2003). This implies that by-laws had a “moral force”, which was rationalised by the common societal ends (Cohen, 2000: 82).

It was such an “elaborate network of ritual collaboration” (i.e. joint mystical benefits and responsibility) (Fortes, 1940: 244) that ensured an effective enforcement of by-laws on the conservation of sacred groves. As a contribution to an ongoing theoretical debate that centres on whether social action is “motivated by individual self-interests or by communal obligations” (Cohen, 2000:73), rational choice theory posits that individuals choose actions that satisfy their best interests (Turner, 2000; Dowding, 2001). Here, both self-interests and communal obligations were compatible, since the cultural socialisation process shaped the very interests of the individual and made them “congruent” with the laws on sacred groves. Local communities were not entirely homogenous (Reynolds, 1974; Leach *et al.*, 1999). However, as far as the management of sacred groves was concerned, both rulers and ordinary citizens shared the belief that

protecting sacred groves was essential for the survival of the community. As some cultural theorists have pointed out, such informal traditional networks are effective and sustainable because members often share similar interests and beliefs which make rule enforcement and internal monitoring possible (Landa, 1981; Bernstein, 1992; Fearon and Latin, 1996).

Early theoretical perspectives on local community resource management were based on an assumed rational economic behaviour of individuals within the local community. Hardin's (1968) influential thesis, *The Tragedy of the Commons*, for instance, posited that due to personal cost-benefit calculations, it would be irrational for members of a local community to obey rules on the protection of common-pool resources (see Chapter 3). Similar arguments have been used to justify state management of natural resources (see, Carruthers and Stoner, 1981; Lutz and Caldecott, 1996; Larson, 2002).

Critics, however, argued that Hardin and his followers failed to make an appropriate distinction between "open access property" and "common property" (Wade 1988; McKean, 2000; Ostrom, 2003). This later perspective posits that common property resources are usually open only to those within specific communities, governed by strict rules of social conduct and collective responsibility. It is only when such traditional control mechanisms break down that resource degradation may set in (Perrings, 1987; Rees 1990; Banana and Gombya-Ssembajjwe, 2000; Ostrom, 2003). One cannot make any generalised claim about the effectiveness of any particular management system (McKean, 2000; Ostrom, 2003, 2005; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Indeed, there are a number of cases where local community resource management systems were effective (Wade 1988; Becker and Leon, 2000). Yet, a number of cases also exist where such systems were not effective (Gibson and Marks, 1995; Wainwright and Wehmeyer, 1998) (see Chapter 3 for details of some of these cases).

It has been pointed out that a number of factors, including the type of property rights and attributes of the common-pool good/resource, determine the efficacy of different management systems (Wade, 1988; McKean, 2000; Ostrom, 2003; Agrawal, 2007). A number of empirical studies on the subject also suggest that, when given adequate powers and appropriate rights, local people are able to manage common-pool resources more effectively than presumed in the earlier theoretical literature (Ostrom, 2003; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008).

The management of sacred groves in pre-colonial Ghana seems to be consistent with these latter perspectives. It is also evident that the efficacy of by-laws was shaped by the religious beliefs. Traditional policy networks, which ensured the management of these forests, were sustained because of cultural norms and religious beliefs that shaped peoples interests through the socialisation process (Cooter, 1996). As Greif's (1997:89) noted, such "cultural beliefs, social structures and organisations impact the development of values and enforcement mechanisms". Despite social change, these sacred groves are still protected in many traditional communities in contemporary Ghana (see Kotey *at al.*, 1998) because of fears that a failure to preserve them will bring calamity upon the entire community. Woodcock (2002) made similar observations in Tanzania, demonstrating that during the local customary era in Tanzania, the relationship between local people and forests was "ambivalent". Forests were respected, feared and protected, since it was believed that they have power to heal and harm.

These findings suggest that the efficacy of local community resource management systems partly depend on religious motives and traditional norms. The thesis of Hardin (1968) and his followers may only apply in situations where the resource is being managed for direct economic benefits. However, in some cases, resources were and are protected for religious interests. Consequently, employing rational economic principles in the analysis of rule enforcement in such contexts is inappropriate, since such explanations ignore what Cohen (2000: 82) terms the "moral force" of religious beliefs. As Ostrom (2005) noted, perfect cost-benefit analysis does not always determine political actions and networking. The cultural context and societal norms also influence the behaviour of various actors.

7.2.2 Patronage Networks in the Traditional State and Timber Exploitation

As discussed in Chapter 6, while sacred groves were protected, exchange relationships between traditional rulers and European merchants led to some exploitation outside the traditional reserves. The trading networks were shaped by politico-economic dependencies between traditional rulers and merchants. Gold, slaves, ivory, wood products and palm oil were exchanged for the so called "East Indian and Manchester goods", which included: guns, gun powder, sugar, spirits, lead, iron, wines, jewels, soap and candles (Daaku, 1970; Reynolds, 1974: 53). Given that traditional rulers were the most powerful policy actors at that time, these trading networks were embedded within

policy networks, which I defined as sustainable mutual associations between state and societal actors (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993). The exchanges also constituted patronage systems, which involve:

“Patrons - individuals, groups of individuals, or organisations that dispense such things as favours, protection, money, employment, or goods to clients, or people who usually look to the patrons for these benefits and in return give them loyalty, political support, or service” (Heidenheimer *et al.*, 1989: 305).

Historical accounts suggest that these patronage relationships developed from a “reciprocal gift culture”, which existed before the arrival of the European merchants (Sundstrom, 1974; Arhin, 1979). According to Sundstrom (1974:1), reciprocal gifts constituted “the origin of exchange and trade” in the entire West Africa. The initial motive for such exchanges was social, rather economic. If a gift was refused, the donor assumed hostile intentions. Actors who accepted gifts were obliged to present a “return gift”, which must be of at least equal magnitude to the initial gift.

Before Europeans arrived, the Gold Coast already had trading connections with other parts of Africa. For instance, there were Mande traders from Western Sudan at Elmina before the Portuguese arrived in 1482 (Reynolds, 1974). These visitors also observed the rules on exchanges. This was in line with an ancient Africa custom, which dictates that the visitor receives food and shelter for the night. In return, he/she is bound to show appreciation by offering a return gift. Custom demands that the return gift must be commensurate with the social status of the giver. European merchants, traditionally accorded high status by Africans, were therefore obliged to follow this exchange system. Such host-visitor gift exchanges eventually contributed to the development of trading and patronage networks between traditional rulers and Europeans in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa (Sundstrom, 1974).

Apart from the existing gift culture, the need for protection also contributed to the development of these patronage networks. Visiting traders needed protection and that could be secured only through the political power. Chiefs granted such protections and accepted payments in return. In the northern territories, for instance, traders had to make payments to the Asante chiefs before they could be allowed to trade (Arhin, 1979). Campbell (1989) asserted that such patronage networks exist when there is no formal

organisation to perform the functions needed or when there is a malfunctioning of the formal organisation. Similarly, some researchers argued that such informal networks are often relied upon for transactions in societies without well developed organisations (Landa, 1981; Winn, 1994). This was the situation in pre-colonial Ghana. There were no formal security organisations and so maintaining patronage relationships with traditional rulers was the only option for foreign merchants who needed protection. Prevailing socio-political structures, therefore, conditioned such patronage networks, and this is in line with the thesis of Giddens (1984) on structure-agency relationships.

Through these networks, traditional rulers also later came to act as “middle men”. Reynolds (1974) documented how chiefs at Asin, Denkyra, Fante and Assin acted as middlemen within their respective chiefdoms. In some cases, the chiefs maintained a monopoly over trade in their “governable spaces”. They held a virtual monopoly over trade in slaves, guns and ivory (Sundstrom, 1974; Reynolds, 1974). They also later imposed taxes on outside traders. Towards the end of the pre-colonial era, some notables, who had close links with traditional rulers, became important brokers and middlemen. This led to the emergence of a new class of “traditional business men”, who maintained patronage networks with the rulers (Daaku, 1970). Thus, the foundations of patronage networks were established during the pre-colonial era.

Given these reciprocal relationships between traditional rulers and European merchants, it is not surprising that timber and other resources were exploited to satisfy the demands of European merchants. As Hoffman *et al.* (1998: 338) noted, reciprocity “leads naturally to *property rights*” (emphasis in original). While such exploitation benefited traditional rulers and merchants more than ordinary citizens, they appeared to be consistent with the political organisation of traditional societies at the time. As noted already, the relationship between the rulers and their subjects also actually constituted a patronage system. The ruler had responsibility for protecting his subjects against external aggression. In some societies, he had to provide for people who had nothing. Subjects in return must be loyal to him (Arhin, 1979). Similar patronage systems, comprising networks of feudal ties, existed in medieval Europe (Bloch, 1961; Ganshof, 1964). Vassals pledged military support and royalty to lords, who in return granted land and protection (Montgomery, 2005). The subjects also promised royalty to the King in return for protection (Ganshof, 1964).

Given such patronage relationships, exploitation of timber and other resources would have been justified by the need to raise money for the entire traditional state. In fact, some of the goods exchanged with European traders were used for the benefit of the entire state. For instance, guns and gun powder, besides their use in wars, were also used during celebrations (Reynolds, 1974). It is therefore safe to state that prevailing politico-religious structures rationalised both protection of sacred groves and exploitation outside them. Protection of sacred groves was in line with religious interests, while exploitation might have been justified by the need to create wealth, which could be relied upon for the protection of the traditional state.

7.3 Forest Policy Implementation in Colonial Ghana

As shown in Chapter 6, policy network relationships in the colonial era went through several changes in response to changes in the forest interests of the main policy actors. These changes had a significant impact on forest policy implementation.

7.3.1 The Early Colonial era: Cooperative Networks Characterised by Tensions (1874-1951)

Significant policy network changes occurred during the early colonial era. As a result of the adoption of a power-sharing strategy, existing traditional policy networks were now combined with a more formal political network, made up of colonial politicians and bureaucrats. This generated a “complex heterogeneous system” (Machado and Burns, 1998), in which both formal and informal rules were combined. It could be stated that the era was characterised by a combination of traditional patronage and colonial patronage networks. The resultant policy community also had the features of a typical patronage system. The colonial administration employed the network to resolve legitimacy and personnel shortage problems (Lugard, 1922; Boone, 2003; Oppon, 2004), while traditional rulers also benefited financially from royalties, fines and concessions (Amanor, 1996, 1999; Danso, 2000). Ito (2007) demonstrated that state formation in Indonesia proceeded historically on similar patronage relationships between the executive and rural elite.

While such political patronage systems are often characterised by reciprocal and asymmetrical relationships between the patron (ruler) and the clients, the actual

operations of these systems vary geographically (Boissevain, 1989). In this regard, some researchers have examined the nature of such political patronage systems within different societies (see Heidenheimer *et al.*, 1989; Campbell, 1989). Unlike these previous studies, the Ghanaian experience throws more light on historical changes in the pattern of patronage relationships. It specifically shows that, even within the same society, changes in the patronage system may occur in response to changes in the distribution of endowments among the major policy actors.

In the pre-colonial era, traditional rulers were the main patrons within their respective chiefdoms, while merchants and citizens were the clients. The authority of the rulers was never challenged, and this enabled them to enforce by-laws (see sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2). In the early colonial era, however, power relations were more complex, due to the combination of traditional and formal institutions to govern the modern state. The colonial administration was more or less the “chief patron”, since it was governing the entire state. On the other hand, traditional rulers, who were the *de facto* rulers within their chiefdoms (Guri, 2006), were still “patrons” within their respective chiefdoms. Yet, they were also, *in principle*, clients to the colonial administration. Thus, although indirect rule helped to institutionalise the position of traditional rulers within the modern state, it also limited their autonomy. This is because the colonial administration sought to limit their authority (Arhin, 1979), and to transform traditional practices that were seen as threatening British political and economic interests. Deflem (1994) captures this in the following:

The acceptance of native political authority always implied a British redefinition and limitation of the role of African political powers and radical mutation of traditional practices whenever they were considered repugnant in light of European conceptions... Political paternalism replaced indirect rule when local politics did not resemble appropriate government in the eyes of the British authorities and when it conflicted with Company Rule which sought to make colonial conquest a commercially viable enterprise (Deflem, 1994: 46).

In practice, however, the power of the colonial administration was not total. Its legitimacy was often challenged, especially when its interests conflicted with those of the traditional rulers (Arhin, 1979). This often created tensions, which affected forest policy implementation. Any attempt by the colonial administration to exercise total

control over forests and other resources was challenged. For instance, attempts to implement the Lands Ordinance (1894), which sought to empower the governor to control forest lands and minerals, was resisted by traditional rulers and their subjects. Similarly, attempts to implement the Forest Ordinance of 1910 (revised in 1911) that empowered the Governor to constitute as reserves any “wastelands” was not successful because of local resistance (see Chapter 5). Thus, the colonial administration was practically powerless whenever its policies were not supported by the traditional rulers.

As Sharp *et al.* (2000: 10) noted: “through resistance by non-consenting and non-cooperation leading to disobedience, subjects decline to supply power-holders with their sources of power”. This scenario also resonates with the conceptualisation of power as a “potential or a capacity” (see Chapter 4). Inability to implement these early forest reservation ordinances was also a result of “incongruences” between the traditional and formal organising modes. According to Machado and Burns, such “incongruences” or tensions usually characterise any complex heterogeneous system, in which formal and informal organising modes are combined. In fact, the proposed creation of Crown lands and forest reserves was “incongruent” with traditional rules on inherited property and landownership. The traditional authorities argued that because lands were inherited, ownership rights could not be transferred to the state. These initial tensions were somewhat resolved in 1927 after the colonial administration agreed that traditional authorities should establish reserves under their own by-laws. The administration also agreed that the constitution of an area as a forest reserve would not transfer the title to that land or the forest to the state (see 1927 Forest Ordinance). Thus, traditional laws on resource ownership and land use decisions were maintained to win the support of the traditional rulers. The strategy adopted here resonates with Rose’s (1999: 21) assertion that “governmentality” involves:

“[The] studies of stratum of knowing and acting. Of the emergence of particular regimes of truth concerning the conduct of conduct, ways of speaking the truth, persons authorised to speak the truth”.

Indeed the actions of the traditional rulers were shaped by working through their “desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs for definite and shifting ends” (Dean, 1999: 16). Although these concessions brought about some policy ambiguities (see Chapter 6), they generally helped to implement the reservation policy. Most of the forest reserves in

Ghana were directly established by traditional rulers, based on the Native Authority Ordinance of 1927 (see Chapter 5). The management of these forest reserves also involved cooperation between local communities and the Colonial Forest Service. Local communities provided free labour, while the Forest Service provided expert knowledge. Traditional rulers awarded timber concessions and collected revenue. In some communities, state forest laws were operating alongside the community by-laws. For instance, state forest reserves that contained sacred groves were managed based on a combination of state forest laws and community by-laws (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). It is evident that the colonial administration adopted persuasive tactics because it realised that the use of authority would not achieve desired results:

“The keynote to successful prosecution of intensive agriculture and of protection and improvement of forest is education. Enforcing authority on a not understanding people is difficult and costly, and rarely productive of the results desired” (Chipp 1923: 75)

The adoption of such subtle forms of power is in line with the argument that governance involves not only formal policy making (Culpitt, 1999), but also the construction of formal and informal networks (Jessop, 1998; Jonas and While, 2005). Indeed governance is a strategic game that requires craft, imagination, shrewd fashioning and the use of tacit skills (Foucault, 1988, 1991).

A feature of indirect rule was that revenue obtained from the exploitation of natural resources, including timber, exclusively benefited traditional rulers and the colonial administration. It is in this regard that some scholars concluded that indirect rule only served the interests of traditional rulers (Amanor, 1996 and 1999; Danso, 2000), who behaved like a benevolent oligarchy (Ayee, 1994). DeGrassi (2003) wondered why local farmers cooperated with the Colonial Forest Service even though they did not benefit directly. The explanation is that the politico-religious beliefs and practices, which helped to enforce by-laws in the pre-colonial era (see section 7.2), were still strong. As Boone (2003) noted, such “decentralised despotisms” are effective when traditional rulers have “nonstate forms of power”, which enable them to control the local citizens.

7.3.2 Influence of the 1951 Policy Network Changes on Forest Policy Implementation

Policy network reconfigurations in 1951, as a result of the passage of the Local Government Ordinance, negatively affected forest policy implementation. Local councils, which replaced traditional authorities in the policy community, were unable to effectively assist in policy implementation. Although the exploitation of timber (in line with the goals of the 1948 policy) continued, the forest reservation programme was retarded by these network changes, since traditional rulers were no longer effectively cooperating with the Forestry Department. Further, traditional authorities still maintained control over the award of timber concessions outside reserves. They also did not totally give up their control over timber revenue. This created several areas of confusion in the management of forests (Smith, 1996; Kotey *et al.*, 1998). No one has described these negative impacts better than Kotey *et al.* (1998: 70) when they wrote:

“[W]hile this legislation [1951 Local Government Ordinance] was meant to be politically progressive, it separated local governance from land use decisions. This further complicated relationships between the Forestry Department, chiefs and local people and worsened problems encountered with the management of reserves constituted under by-laws. It confused sanctions and control, legal backing, concessions and financial agreements”.

The changes adopted here could be seen as a policy network management strategy. The literature distinguishes two distinct network management strategies, namely *process management* and *network constitution* (Kickert *et al.*, 1997; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). Process management entails steering strategies that seek to unite perceptions and interests of the various actors. Network constitution, is concerned with bringing about changes in the institutional characteristics of networks. This may involve bringing new actors into the network (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). Both types of network management strategies were used by the colonial government on different occasions. Strategies adopted to win the support of the traditional rulers during the initial reservation period, for instance, constitute *process management*. The adoption of the Local Government Ordinance in 1951 represented a *network constitution*. It is evident that the management strategy adopted at any given time depended on the colonial

administration's interests and perceptions about the power of traditional rulers (see Chapter 6).

The 1951 policy network changes also constituted what Boone (2003) terms a usurpation strategy that aimed at destroying the foundations of neo-traditional authority. However, the administration was unable to completely usurp the powers of the traditional authorities. In fact, traditional rulers still had tremendous control over land-use decision-making. Consequently, local government councils could not control land and forest issues without the consent of traditional rulers (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). The executive power, which was *supposedly* transferred to the local councils, succumbed to the neo-traditional authority, since traditional rules constructed the chief as the overall power-holder within the chiefdom.

7.4 The Early Post-Colonial Era (1957-1994)

As already hinted in Chapter 6, there were significant policy network changes in the early post-colonial era. The relationship between the executive and the Forestry Department, on one hand, and traditional rulers and local farmers, on the other hand, generally worsened further after independence. This was due to attempts by President Kwame Nkrumah to consolidate his power through the use of a strict centralised administration, and the adoption of strategies aimed at undermining the authority of hostile traditional rulers (Rathbone, 2000). The passage of the Administration of Lands Act (1962) and Concessions Act (1962) were all part of this broad scheme (see Chapter 6). Local councils, established by the British colonial administration, were also weakened. According to Olowu (2001), instead of strengthening the local government structures put in place by the colonial masters, the new crop of indigenous African leaders destroyed this legacy, mainly due to their desire to consolidate the nation-state through a single party mechanism. This was the case in Ghana. Arguing that decentralisation would bring about divisiveness, President Nkrumah initially dissolved the existing local councils. When they were reorganised later, most appointed officials were those with close ties with the executive (Ayee, 1994; Rathbone, 2000).

Further, in order to maintain a direct control over state organisations, President Nkrumah appointed his own men to manage state organisations, including the Forestry Department (DeGrassi, 2003). Here, the autonomy of the Forestry Department was

restricted simply because of attempts to make it more responsive to the interests of timber contractors within the political patronage networks. Meanwhile, “big timber men”, who emerged as a result of a new indigenisation policy, became important actors in the neo-patrimonial networks. As they were mainly members of the ruling party, they had close links with top state officials. Successive governments, after the overthrow of President Nkrumah, maintained these network relationships (see Chapter 6).

These patronage networks affected all aspects of forest management (i.e forest protection, the award of concessions, revenue collection and controlling logging) in the early colonial period. The literature on corruption and natural resource management distinguishes the circumstances and levels at which corrupt patronage relationships can affect natural resource management, and such a classification scheme is useful here. The typology entails three levels of corruption, namely *grand corruption*, *mid-level corruption* and *petty corruption* (Callister, 1999; Winbourne, 2005; Soreide, 2007). Grand corruption involves large illegal transactions between high-level public officials and private individuals or firms. This is sometimes “described as *crony capitalism*, in which political networks dominate important private assets, or *state capture*, in which private firms are able to influence public power to their own benefit” (Soreide, 2007: 9). *State capture*, which is very pervasive in environmental /resource management sector involves:

“[T]he actions of top state and private actors to influence the formation of laws, regulations and other government policies to their own advantage as a result of the illicit and non transparent benefits to the public officials” (Winbourne, 2005:102).

This high-level corruption has been blamed for the widespread illegal logging in many parts of the developing world (Brack *et al.*, 2002; Transparency International, 2008; Soreide, 2007). On the other hand, mid-level corruption, which is also widespread in the forestry sector in many developing countries, is:

“[M]anifested in many ways as bribes, gifts, influences peddling, favouritism, nepotism, speed money, kickbacks and embezzlement.... [this is common] in the forestry sector where significant amounts of money are often paid to obtain timber concessions or such concessions are handed out as political patronage to key supporters” (Winbourne, 2005: 104).

Petty corruption (also known as survival corruption) usually involves small payments to officials at the lower level of an organisation, such as tax collectors and policing officials who are grossly underpaid or depend on small payments from the public to feed their families (Callister, 1999). It also involves the so called *facilitation payments*, which are made to secure or expedite the performance of a necessary action to which the payer has legal or other entitlement (Soreide, 2007: 9). It must be stressed that these levels of exchanges often overlap one another. In fact, some researchers even combine grand-level and mid-level corruption in their analysis (see Callister, 1999; Soreide, 2007).

Although corruption and patronage systems are not strictly the same, this typology can be applied in the analysis of exchanges between state and societal actors within the Ghana forestry sector, since political and economic relationships in post-colonial Ghana has been characterised by both corrupt and non-corrupt exchange relationships (see Blay *et al.*, 1968; Le Vine, 1975; Nugent, 1995). The situation here exemplifies Heidenheimer's (1989:305) assertion that patronage networks can "engender corrupt exchange relationships", when they are outside "the law or the normative margins of the society". Given that not all such exchanges are necessarily corrupt, I will mostly be referring to "grand-level exchanges", "mid-level exchanges" and "petty exchanges" to correspond with the categories defined above.

All these categories of exchange relationships affected forest management in the post-colonial era. At the grand-level, forest policy throughout the era was formulated to favour industry, at the expense the state. As discussed in Chapter 6, the indigenisation policy, for instance, served the interests of Nkrumah's government and timber firms that supported the regime (Blay *et al.*, 1968). Concessions and financial grants were often awarded to friendly timber firms (Blay *et al.*, 1968; DeGrassi, 2002). Local communities were marginalised (see for instance, the forest protection legislative instrument), yet royalty levels were exceptionally low, and often poorly collected because of patronage relationships between the executive and big timber men.

Timber harvesting rules were also not strictly enforced because of the desire to help these friendly indigenous timber firms (Peprah, 1982; DeGrassi, 2002). They defaulted in paying stumpage and taxes, yet were allowed to continue operating. Rent levels were not adjusted regularly (see Chapter 5). A combination of grand-level and mid-level

corruption further led to tax evasion, fraud and other irregularities in the timber industry. These practices continued throughout the post-colonial era. In the late 1980s, the National Investigation Committee investigated a number of timber firms on widespread complains about irregularities. The exercise revealed several irregularities, such as tax evasion, smuggling, fraudulent invoicing and non payment of royalties. Explaining that such checks were negatively affecting their businesses, timber contractors put pressure on the government to stop such investigations. Government listened to them and suspended the exercise (Mayers and Kontey, 1996).

The adoption of Structural Adjustment Programmes in the 1980s provided more “patronage resources” for these exchange relationships. Huge amounts of foreign capital were distributed as loans and grants to timber contractors that supported the military regime (Silviconsult, 1989). This observation is line with the argument that foreign aid is sometimes used as patronage resources to fund neo-patrimonial networks (Collier and Dollar, 1999; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). The “big timber men” also used these grants to expand their logging activities. Most of them operated without valid permits because of their close ties with the government (Dano, Forest Manager, 28th March 2006).

Thus, regulations set out in the Trees and Timber Decree (1974) and the Trees and Timber (Amendment) Law (1983) (see Chapter 5 for details of these laws), were not strictly enforced because of the close ties between “big timber men” and top state officials. This produced marked disparities between stated policy and actual policy outcomes. Meanwhile, in view of the high demand for timber, “wayside” contractors and chainsaw operators also started harvesting timber indiscriminately. The Forestry Department could not regulate them because of the combined effects of lack of resources and petty exchanges between forest guards and these illegal loggers (Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004). No one has described the policy implementation failures during the period better than Kofi Smith, a Technical Director at the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, when he wrote:

Much of the felling was illegal and speculative; undertaken by unauthorised “wayside” contractions whenever there was rumour of a ship coming to port. All too often the logs went to waste, huge sums of revenue were being lost and the resource was heading for oblivion with little gain (Smith, 1996: 10).

7.4.1 Local Community Resistances

While patronage networks between and among politicians, top forestry officials and timber contractors affected the implementation of policies on timber concessions and revenue collection, local community resistances to attempts by the Forestry Department to further usurp their rights over trees in off-reserve forests, also affected forest protection. Traditional authorities, who became an “outsider group”, mobilised local farmers to resist any attempt to usurp their rights over trees, particularly outside reserves. One policy, whose implementation was characterised by such violent clashes, was the Protected Timber Lands Policy of 1959. The policy could not be implemented because farmers expanded their farms to areas designated as “protected lands”. In some areas, farmers physically fought with forest guards who attempted to protect these lands (Boateng *et al.*, 1961).

As the power model posits (see Chapter 4), in assessing why an actor’s power may prevail or fail within a particular context, there is a need to examine the *opportunities and constraints* to the capacities of the various actors (Hussein and Ketz, 1991). Here, the Forestry Department was constrained by a shortage of resources and personnel. It initially relied on soldiers to suppress local farmers but this strategy could not be sustained because of the high cost of maintaining soldiers in rural areas (Boateng *et al.*, 1961). As some writers have noted, the application of force is sometimes hindered by cost (Harsanyi, 1962; Goldman, 1972).

These clashes constitute what Ribot (2008: 2) terms “a struggle between two politico-legal institutions with different bases of legitimacy”. The executive relied on its assumed sovereignty and autonomy to pass the policy. Traditional rulers, on the other hand, relied on their ability to mobilise rural farmers for common action. There was therefore a clash between executive power, which was supposed to govern the entire national space, and traditional power, which assumed a *de facto* authority over local spaces. As Baviskar (2003) noted, the ordering processes, suggested by Foucault’s notion of governmental rationality, collapses when multiple spatialities collide. This scenario also had to do with the *issue scope* and the *context-bound* aspects of power (see Chapter 4). The executive was able to pass legislative instruments to restrict local community rights over trees, but it did not have power to enforce those rules in the rural areas.

Apart from these direct struggles, some farmers also employed more subtle forms of power to resist marginalisation. They connived with chainsaw operators to harvest wood illegally (Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004). Further, due to anger towards timber contractors, who were destroying the crops of farmers without paying any compensation to them, some farmers resorted to the destruction of young trees on their farms. Asare captured this scenario when he wrote:

“The cocoa farmer who has developed a more implacable hatred towards the timber contractor than the beasts that thrive on his cocoa... now makes sure that during the clearing of the forest, every good quality timber tree is destroyed before the contractor menacingly invades his cocoa farm with the caterpillar” (Asare, 1970: cited by Smith, 1996: 9).

Poor farmers, who were not getting any share of the “forest cake”, also capitalised on rampant bush fires in the early 1980s to extend their farms into the forest reserves. This led to further degradation. Poor monitoring of forest cover changes made it difficult to estimate the exact forest loss within the period but anecdotal evidence suggests that many forest reserves were degraded during the period. It is therefore evident that marginalisation of local communities also made forest protection difficult, since farmers were pushed to destroy forest lands for survival and to resist domination. As Cresswell (2000) noted, dominating power and resisting power form a dyad which cannot be disentangled.

7.5 Forest Policy Implementation in the Contemporary Era (1994-Present)

In view of the negative effects of patronage networks on forest management in the early post-colonial era, international donors, notably the World Bank and the DFID, have put pressure on the Ghana government to make policy changes (see Chapter 6). As far as forest policy implementation is concerned, official government statements claim that the following changes have been made: reorganisation of the Forestry Department to make it more autonomous; collaboration with local communities; transparency and efficiency in the award of timber concessions; enhanced timber revenue collection; sustainable forest management through the adoption of an annual allowable cut policy and controlling illegal harvesting of forest resources (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1994; Smith, 1996; Donkor and Vlosky, 2003).

This section examines the extent to which each of these stated claims have actually been implemented. The study shows that forest policy implementation in contemporary Ghana is still very poor and influenced by several exchange relationships between state officials and private loggers. Resource exploitation still benefits selected interests-political elite, high ranking officials of the Forestry Department and “big timber men”. Young (2005:4) made similar observations when he wrote that: “state capture, where policy formulation and implementation is subverted to the requirements of unaccountable elite, is apparent in the sector”.

7.5.1 Realities of Institutional Changes and the Autonomy of the Forestry Department

In line with international donor recommendations, reorganisation of the Forestry Department started in 1993. It was moved from the Civil Service and became a semi-autonomous department of a newly created Forestry Commission in 1999 (Donkor and Vlosky, 2003). International donors had argued that such changes would make the Forestry Department more autonomous. Some officials at the Ministry of Lands and Forestry pointed out to this author that although such institutional changes were suggested by international organisations, the government of Ghana adopted them because of the financial benefits. Thus, these international organisations relied on their financial endowments to push for institutional changes. The Government of Ghana was made to understand that, if it adopted the proposed changes, it would be required to provide only 30% of salaries of workers of the Forestry Department, while international donors would provide the rest. In addition, international donors would provide more technical and financial aid to support specific programmes. It was expected that this support would continue for at least five years, by which time the Forestry Department would be self-sufficient. These conditions were attractive to a government that was struggling to control its expenditure.

Given that these institutional changes were imposed by donors, they have largely remained mere “paper changes”. Despite the huge financial support, the Forestry Department is still weak and not autonomous. About 81% of forestry officials interviewed stated that the department is not independent, while 19% stated that it is *slightly* independent. State politicians usually control the organisation, especially when

it comes to awarding timber concessions and collecting rent (see sections 7.5.3 and 7.5.4). Grants from international organisations are also controlled by state politicians:

“[T]he government does not provide us with adequate resources.... Even funds donated to us are sometimes not given to us. They [funds] pass through the Ministry.... and we have to wait for several months before we receive even a small portion of whatever has been donated” (Asamoah, Forester, 22nd March 2006).

Again, top executives of the state forestry agencies are usually appointed by the government. In order to protect their jobs, these people usually follow the government’s orders strictly. This further enables the government to control the activities of the Forestry Department:

“In this country where ministers put state departments under their armpits, you don’t dream of being allowed to do things on your own. We make all the plans but ...there is no change because ministers give various orders. You don’t blame us because nobody wants to lose his job... our leaders are here because of their connections with the government so they cannot do things independently” (Wiafe, Forest Manager, 8th March 2006).

Maintaining tight control over state agencies, such as the Forestry Department, is consistent with the operations of neo-patrimonial networks. Since the operation of neo-patrimonialism practically involves the distribution of state resources to friends, tribesmen and party supporters, the executive often wants to control revenue generating sectors (Gabriel, 1999; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). Granting state agencies significant autonomy is not in the interest of the executive, since such a change will undermine its ability to maintain control over the neo-patrimonial networks, which are often relied upon by many African governments to hold on to power (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). These findings also support my argument that international pressure alone cannot ensure any significant institutional reforms in the developing world. Politicians in developing countries just employ such “paper changes” to get more funds from international donors (Collier and Dollar, 1999).

7.5.2 Implementation of Decentralised/Collaborative Forest Management Policy

A major institutional change imposed by donors was the forest decentralisation programme. As discussed in Chapter 6, although formal government statements at international conferences often create the impression that Ghana has adopted the so called “democratic decentralisation” programme (Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004), a critical analysis of a government special paper on decentralised forest management (see MLF, 1995) and interviews with top officials of the Forestry Department revealed that the actual forest decentralisation programme is a form of collaboration, which is consistent with a network form of governance (Carlsson and Berkes, 2005; Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008).

Against this background, the bulk of this section will focus on the nature of the collaboration between the Forestry Department and local communities. Since the main feature of such collaborative forest management is the sharing of *responsibilities and rights* between the state agency and the Forestry Department (Dubois; 1997; Woodcock, 2002; Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008), this analysis examines the rights and responsibilities assigned to local communities, and how they are actually performing those responsibilities.

7.5.2.1 Empty Rights

In principle, collaborative natural resource management (also known as participatory management or co-management) provides institutional and legal frameworks for relevant stakeholders to participate in resource management (Woodcock, 2002: 7). As Carlsson and Sanstrom noted, although attempts to incorporate network analysis into studies in collaborative management are few, “co-management could best be understood as network governance systems, in which a variety of different actors, structured by different institutional arrangements, participate” (Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008:36). In the forestry sector, co-management practically entails the sharing of responsibilities and rights between state and local communities (Shepherd, 1991; Dubois, 1997; Woodcock, 2002; Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002).

If the integrated network model is applied here, then “rights” must enable local communities to realise their “positional interests” (Archer, 1998). Interests include the

desire of local communities to have access to forest resources for maintaining a basic standard of living. There must also be incentive packages to reward them for their participation (Larson, 2002; Woodcock, 2002). Responsibilities are the “roles” assigned to various actors. Roles are “clearly articulated bundles of rights, duties, obligations and expectations” (Knoke, 1990:7), yet while institutional roles are defined, individuals are also able to analyse, recreate and make choices about institutional roles (Giddens, 1984; Smith, 1993).

It is assumed that, since interactions within networks are often driven by the interests of various actors (see Chapter 4), imbalances in stakeholders’ roles (i.e. when roles are not commensurate with rights) can lead to ineffective collaboration (Dubois, 1997; Woodcock, 2002). Thus, collaborative forest management will only be effective if roles assigned to local communities commensurate with the benefits that they get from participating. Dubois (1997) argues, in this regard, that stakeholders’ roles must be defined via their respective rights, responsibilities, relationships and returns from the forest resources. Carefully formulated to satisfy international donors, the 1994 Forest and Wildlife policy emphasised the rights and responsibilities of local communities:

“[T]he Government of Ghana recognises and confirms: the *rights of people* to have access to natural resources for maintaining a basic standard of living and their concomitant *responsibility* to ensure the suitable use of such resources;.... In view of the importance of local people in pursuing these principles, the government proposes to place particular emphasis on the concept of *participatory management* and protection of forest and wildlife resources” (1994 Forest and Wildlife policy, section 3.2, emphasis added).

However, my study revealed that local communities still practically do not have any user rights. The Forestry Department still maintains control over both lucrative timber resources and non-timber resources. Local people in forest communities still, in principle, need written permissions before they can extract resources needed on a daily basis for their livelihoods (see Forest Protection Act, 2002). Women who need to harvest even “dead trees” for fuel wood, which is the main source of energy in rural Ghana, are required to obtain written permission from the District Forest Office before entering the forest reserves. Forest guards, who live in rural communities, are not legally allowed to grant such permits.

This is odd because, apart from the fact that most rural women cannot write, district offices are usually located very far from these villages. For example, Ahinkwa, one of the study communities, is about 40 kilometres from the District Forest Office at Bonsosu. There is no direct road network linking these two places. Consequently, people who need to go to the office for permits must walk about 11 kilometres to a nearby village before taking a commercial vehicle to Bonsosu. Similarly, Saponso is about 60 kilometres from the district forest office at Daboase. It is therefore difficult for people in this village to travel all the way to the district office for a permit. The focus group discussions provided a natural setting for women at Saponso to describe the situation (Box 7.1).

Box 7.1 Statements by local women on their rights over forest resources

Aku: “We need fuelwood everyday before we can cook. Now we almost don’t have any wood left on the “plope” (off-reserve farm lands). There are a lot of “dead trees” in the forest reserve. Some are even rotting on the ground, and yet we are required to travel to the forest office to obtain permission before cutting even the dead tree. Is this ...” [interrupted by Namu]

Namu: “We cannot write and they say we must put the applications in writing. How can we do this everyday? They are using stoves to cook in the city. We can only use wood here...”

Similarly, while timber contractors continue to harvest wood without following stated regulations (section 7.5.6), the Forestry Department requires local farmers to obtain permission from the District Forest Office before they can harvest wood on their own farms (even outside reserves) for personal use. Farmers interviewed at both Saponso and Ahinkwa stated that getting such permits is very difficult. Although the Timber Resource Management Act proposes that Timber Utilisation Permits (TUPs) are to be issued to local communities, District Assemblies and Non Governmental Organisations, where these groups need to harvest trees for non-commercial purposes, the policy does not specify rules on how applications are to be evaluated. It also fails to outline appeal procedures (Forest Watch, 2006). Consequently, people can only get such permits when they are able to make unofficial payments to the relevant forestry officials. As Ribot (2008: 18) noted, “rights are empty when the claims are not enforceable”.

Farmers at Saponso mentioned that if one wants to get such permits to extract any resource, he must go to the District Office with the guard. The guard usually charges some money before going there with the applicant. In addition, the poor farmer will have to carry along some gifts, such as foodstuffs, money, farm animals etc. to be presented to the district managers before submitting the application. Thus, as far as local people are concerned, these rights cannot be claimed unless one has the endowments to maintain good relationships with Forestry Officials.

While most poor farmers cannot obtain Timber Utilisation Permits because they lack the necessary resources to influence district forest managers, some commercial timber contractors, who have close ties with forestry officials, are illegally issued with these non-commercial permits (TUPs) (Forest Watch, 2006; Ghana News Agency, 16th April, 2008). These commercial loggers use the non-commercial permits (TUPs), instead of Timber Utilisation Contracts (TUCs), to harvest timber on farms. In most cases, these loggers do not even seek the consent of the farmers. The farmers are also not given any compensation, even when their crops have been destroyed by loggers. Miss Rebecca Teiko Dottey, National Coordinator of Forest Watch Ghana, a coalition of 30 Non Governmental Organisations, captured this perfectly in the following statements:

“Farmers are cheated because they do not have the right to information and are therefore not aware of existing laws. Farmers are supposed to give consent before any tree is felled on their farms but this seldom happens because timber companies are not using TUCs” (Ghana News Agency, 16th April 2008).

As clearly captured in the statement above, one factor which makes it impossible for the local people to demand their rights is lack of information on the current forest laws. As a result of the long period of marginalisation, most local people are not aware of these “new rights”, which the government has inserted into the formal policy to please international donors. According to Winbourne (2005), in order to force local people to make unofficial payments, state environmental managers may deliberately not explain the laws to them. They may also apply laws that are not practicable. This appeared to be the situation in Ghana. Local people cannot read, and so they depend on forest guards for information on forest laws. Yet, interviews show that even the forest guards, who are mostly illiterates, do not have any in-depth knowledge about these new policies. The forest managers know about these laws but they do not educate local people about them.

Consequently, local people cannot challenge the Forestry Department about their rights. These findings support the argument that some “participatory initiatives do not necessarily result in transfer of access controls to local communities” (Cline-Cole, 1997: 528).

Local communities also practically do not get any share of the timber revenue, even though they nurture trees on their farms. The Forestry Department argues that, based on a formula provided by the 1992 constitution, local communities’ share of timber revenue is paid to the traditional authorities (usually the paramount chiefs) and the District Assemblies. Agrawal and Ribot (1999) argued that forest decentralisation programmes are only effective when local representatives are downwardly accountable to the citizens. Paramount chiefs are not downwardly accountable to local people, since their positions are inherited. District Chief Executives and other leaders of the district assemblies are appointed by the president and so they are also not representing the interests of local people (Amanor 1999; Danso, 2000). Yet they are still wrongly treated as representatives. District assemblies, for instance, often use funds provided to them to run political activities of the ruling government (Crook and Manor, 1998; Ayee and Tay, 1998; Guri, 2006). As Ito (2007) pointed out in his analysis on Indonesia, decentralisation programmes in many parts of the developing world are actually patronage networks between the executive and local elite. It must also be stressed that District Assemblies in Ghana are not under any obligation to spend the amount received to develop the specific community in which forests are located. So even where such funds are used for development projects, local people in forest communities do not get any benefit, since projects are often undertaken in towns. This was captured in the following statement by a farmer at Saponso.

“They tell us that our share of forest money [royalty] is given to the council for development but see there has never been any new thing in this village” (Togbe, Focus Group Member, 21st May 2006).

Another farmer made similar comments:

“We are here in the dark. What benefit do we get if they use the forest money to fix street lights at Twifo [a town]? ...The forest people are just cheating us” (Dika, 5th June 2006).

Further, Social Responsibility Agreements (SRAs), which require that timber contractors provide social amenities for the communities in which they operate, have often been ignored (Young, 2005). In a few cases when such amenities were provided, decisions on what to provide were taken by the contractors, and not the community. At Saponso, for instance, local people unanimously stated during focus group discussions that they would have preferred a bore hole or corn mill, but the only contractor to provide something to the community gave them some iron sheets. Here again, local communities do not even know of this policy. They thought that the iron sheets were generous donation from the contractor.

The preceding discussion demonstrates that, although the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy suggests that local people have been given some rights, there is nothing like that on the ground. Such empty claims are not peculiar to the forestry sector. Ghana's entire decentralisation programme has been described as a myth because it ensures popular participation in neither policy making nor policy implementation (Ayee, 1994; Crook and Manor, 1998; Guri, 2006). The scenario here is similar to what Ribot (2008) observed in Senegal, where the country's 1998 Forest Code transferred powers to local councils but, in practice, power is still controlled by the line ministry. The statement below on the situation in Senegal, therefore, also applies to Ghana:

“The Forest Service and their merchant allies retain control over the forest resource via a small repertoire of well trodden methods... They disable forest dwellers and enable urban-based patrons to benefit from the forests via misrepresentation of the law; selective application of the law and enforcement of abrogated laws. They exclude..... rural people from benefits by creating an uneven playing field of entry barriers that privilege their allies justified by discourses of national good and arguments of lack of local capacity. They use bribes and threats while taking advantage of the inability of rural populations to access and influence courts and actors higher up in government” (Ribot, 2008:1).

Bazaara also documented similar instances of limited “decentralisation and re-centralisation” programmes in the forestry sector in Uganda. The government employed the limited decentralisation programmes to resolve legitimacy and financial problems. Local people can make by-laws that enhance the environment (e.g. laws on tree planting, prevention of bush fires etc) but the government retains law-making powers,

when it comes to decisions regarding harvesting of commercially lucrative resources (Bazaara, 2003). Similarly, state agencies in Cameroon, Mali and Zimbabwe have retained user and management rights over lucrative forest resources, while transferring rights over non valuable forest resources to local people (Ribot, 2001; Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). Thus, one reason for the poor implementation of decentralisation programmes in Africa is the fact that the state does not want to lose its control over lucrative forest resources.

7.5.2.2 Performing Responsibilities without Incentives? Employing the Community Forestry Committees to Enhance Networks with Guards

While local communities in Ghana do not have any rights over forest resources, they are required to provide free labour to implement policies that have been formulated without their input. This is to be achieved through Community Forestry Committees (CFCs). These are supposed to help monitor the forests, check illegal activities of chainsaw operators and facilitate Social Responsibility Agreements (Asare, 2000). In practice, CFCs have not been established in some communities. Even in communities where they exist, they do not have any power and their actual roles have been limited to providing free labour for such activities as boundary clearing and controlling bush fires. They also occasionally support NGOs in their tree planting activities. This can be seen as *passive participation* (Pretty, 1994).

The CFCs are not well organised because the government just wants to use them to promote its own interests, not the interests of local people. Specifically, the formation of the CFCs was mainly driven by the desire to use them to get funds from donors (see Chapter 6), and to provide free labour to the Forestry Department, which was facing a serious shortage of personnel, as a result of the Structural Adjustment Programmes, which led to a reduction of the labour force of the Department from over 3,600 employees in the mid-1980s to 2,237 in June 2006. It was also thought that CFC members would help the Forestry Department to chase illegal chainsaw operators (see Box 7.2). Given the fact that the government is not really committed to ensuring that local people benefit from participation, CFC members have not been receiving any meaningful rewards. This is odd given the fact that huge sums of money have been provided by international donors to support the Community Forestry Programme (see World Bank, 2003, FC, 2005b).

Box 7.2 Statements by forestry officials on community forestry committees

“If we want to control the activities of illegal chainsaw operators without local community cooperation then we have to post many guards to such communities but this will be costly. That is why we formed community forestry committees in those communities where there are a lot of valuable trees” (Abu, Forest Manager, 1st March 2006).

“ You know because of the redeployment, we do not have many guards these days so we feel the community forestry committees can help the few guards to do things better” (Mensah, Forester, 26th February 2006).

Even though the forest decentralisation programme in Uganda is also not well implemented (Bazaara, 2003), the situation there is even far better than Ghana, since local people who are employed as guards receive some resources and remuneration (Banana and Gombya-Ssembajjwe, 2000). In Ghana, farmers are being asked to provide free labour without any remuneration. As a result of this, some farmers have stopped taking part in CFC activities (see Box 7.3).

Box 7.3 Complaints by CFC members

“I was first a member of the [community forestry] committee but I don't work with them again..... we spend all the time chasing chainsaw people and doing all the labour work but they have never given us any thing ...” (Wayo, 9th May 2006).

“Our colleagues are working on their farms and we are moving up and down with the guard all because we want to protect the forests. He is getting paid but we are not getting anything. I do not think I can continue to work with them” (Tekper, 2nd May 2006).

A few farmers, however, stated that they still support the guards through the CFC programmes. Collaboration involves the exchange of resources (Dubois, 1997; Carlsson and Berkes, 2005). Carlsson and Sanstrom (2008:37), in this regard, noted that it is “a web of resource dependencies”. So why is it that a few farmers are still collaborating with the guards when the state has not been rewarding them? Further interviews showed that this group of farmers are still active members of the CFC only because it enables

them to maintain good networks with the guards. Such friendship ties enhance their abilities to get “illegal permission” from the guard to harvest forest resources:

“We do not get anything but I still like being a member of the committee since that enables me to get permission from the surveyor [guard] each time I want something from the forest” (Angmor, CFC member, 2nd May 2006).

This observation supports the argument that co-management systems must be analysed as networks. As Carlsson and Sanstrom (2008) noted, treating collaborative resource management systems as networks allows for an examination of the complex nature of interactions between the state and the local community. Interactions between policy makers and top traditional rulers are different from interactions between guards and local farmers. Interviews showed that top paramount chiefs had assured the policy makers of the local communities support when the CFC program was being launched. The hierarchy of the Forestry Department had then hoped that such collaborations would enable it to get free labour and also chase illegal chainsaw operators. However, the actual players in the network at the community level (i.e. guards and local people) are interacting based on their own “positional” needs and dependencies.

Although, the state has not provided any benefits commensurate with the roles being assigned to CFC members, guards and CFC members have been able to negotiate their own rules of interaction. These informal rules enable guards to get gifts and free labour from the farmers. In return, they allow farmers to harvest forest resources. Thus, members of CFCs have used the programme to enhance their own mutual networks with the guards. Their actions must be understood as a product of the failure of the policy makers to provide any meaningful incentive package. Although their roles have been *formally* defined by policy makers, guards and CFC members have been able to analyse, recreate and make appropriate choices about these institutional roles (Giddens, 1984; Smith, 1993).

While these lower-level exchange relationships have enabled some guards to get support from the farmers, they have negative effects on the realisation of the main goals of the CFC. The network performance literature distinguishes between *external effectiveness* and *internal effectiveness*. External effectiveness refers to the extent at which the general goals of the formal policy are fulfilled. Internal effectiveness (also

known as network efficiency) refers to the internal processes of the networks (Abrahamsson, 1993; Vedung, 1997). According to Abrahamsson (1993: 108) “a certain degree of efficiency is necessary but not a sufficient condition for effectiveness”. So long as these informal exchanges ensure some degree of collaboration, one can say that the arrangement is relatively efficient or *internally* effective. However, the external effectiveness of the entire CFC programme can be questioned, given the fact that these interactions enable a few local farmers to extract resources “illegally”. An effective co-management program must ensure the participation of all local people and the distribution of benefits to all segments of the local community.

7.5.2.3 Employing the Decentralisation Programme to Enhance and Masquerade Neopatrimonial Networks

It is evident that the decentralised/collaborative forest management programme has been poorly implemented because both the executive and top officials of the Forestry Department are not truly committed to the programme. While this assertion is largely consistent with the findings of Ribot on Senegal’s forestry sector, he tends to put all the blame on forest service officials (bureaucrats). For instance, he argued that the state forestry code transfers powers to rural councils but “the forest service is unwilling to devolve powers in practice” (Ribot, 2008: iv). On the contrary, I argue that both the executive and top officials of the Forestry Department are unwilling to transfer powers to local communities in Ghana. Officials of the Forestry Department rely on their networks with “big timber men” to enrich themselves, while the executive also use natural resources to maintain its political patronage networks.

The executive has, however, managed to hide its true intentions from international donors by employing several ambiguities and “non-decision strategies”. As Rees (1990) noted, one way in which governments employ “non-decision”, in the field of resource management, is to intentionally formulate ambiguous policies. The government may then openly blame implementation agencies for policy failures. In such cases the formal resource policy statements have little more than symbolic value (ibid: 417). This is the situation in Ghana. After 20 years of adopting the decentralisation programme, there is no area where local people have been empowered (see also Crook and Manor, 1998; Guri, 2006). At the same time, no conscious efforts have been made by the executive to hold relevant state departments accountable. Rather, both executive statements and

statements by officials of the Forestry Department continue to present a good picture of the situation (see Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004; GoG, 2007). As the various presentations on various countries (such as India, Uganda, Bolivia, Cameroon and Indonesia) during the international “Conference on Decentralisation and the Environment” in Italy in 2002 demonstrate, forest decentralisation programmes in many parts of the developing world are poorly implemented because governments are not really committed to them (Latif, 2002).

While the decentralised/collaborative forest management policy has been poorly implemented in Ghana, it has been employed to enhance and masquerade the executive’s neo-patrimonial networks with traditional rulers and District Assembly officials. Although traditional rulers were marginalised during the early post-colonial era, they emerged again as important partners of the executive after 1992, when multi-party democracy was re-introduced. This is because securing the support of paramount chiefs is necessary for winning elections in Ghana. In the year 2006, a Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs was formed apparently to strengthen the executive’s networks with traditional authorities. The District Assemblies have also become avenues for enhancing neo-patrimonial networks. The District Chief Executive and other top members of the Assemblies are appointed by the President. These people use resources of the Assemblies to campaign for the ruling party (Ayee and Tay, 1998; Crook and Manor, 1998; Guri, 2006). The policy has also been employed to masquerade neo-patrimonial networks with these powerful local actors. For instance, in 1994 when donors were calling for the involvement of local people in policy formulation, farmers themselves were not involved, yet the involvement of a few paramount chiefs was used to outwit donors into believing that local people were actively involved (Kotey *et al.*, 1998). Thus, international donors have often been made to believe that patronage networks with some powerful paramount chiefs indicate that the interests of local communities are being catered for:

“Working with the chiefs enables us to meet donor conditions that local people must be involved in whatever we do....” (Kusi, forest manager, 4th July 2006).

Similarly, donor pressures for an equitable revenue distribution formula has been contained by designing a distribution formula that directs the local community share of revenue to traditional rulers and District Assemblies, even though these institutions do

not actually represent the interests of poor farmers (Amanor 1999; Danso 2000). Here, although what constitutes a *local community* is an important question that needs to be addressed in any collaborative/participatory programme (Cline-Cole, 1997; Leach *et al.*, 1999) this has not been adequately engaged in the formal policy. Based on the foregoing discussion, it is safe to conclude that there is a similarity between the current forest decentralisation programme and the “decentralised despotism” (Mamdani, 1996) which was adopted during the early colonial era. Both are characterised by patronage politics and therefore only benefit the executive and actors within its patronage networks.

7.5.3 Influence of Networks between “Big Timber Men” and Top State Officials on the Implementation of Concessions Policy

While discourses of the national good have been used to justify the centralised forest management system, forest resources in Ghana are actually being used to serve the economic and the political interests of the political elite, high ranking officials of the Forestry Department and private timber contractors. Consequently, stated rules on awarding Timber Utilisation Contracts have often not been followed. For instance, land-owning communities are still not involved in the evaluation of timber utilisation applications. This is a violation of the Timber Resource Management Act (1998).

Furthermore, instead of acquiring commercial Timber Utilisation Contracts (TUCs), most timber contractors have relied on their networks with top officials of the Forestry Department to illegally obtain non-commercial Timber Utilisation Permits (TUPs), which enable them to harvest timber without paying the appropriate rent (Forest Watch, 2006; Ghana News Agency, 16th April 2008). Between 2001 and 2006, for instance, the Forestry Department illegally issued 125 such permits to commercial loggers, who were mostly friends of top officials (Forest Watch, 2006). Political party affiliation largely determines a contractor’s ability to obtain a timber utilisation contract/permit. Indeed concessions are often awarded to active members of the ruling party. This is especially the case when very large timber lands are involved:

“It is like that always in this country. You don’t get anything if you are not a member of the ruling party.... In this business, things are even more complex because you have the machines [logging machinery?] but the government decides who must get a permit. When the NDC was in power, I was only working on a small land because all

my applications for a big area were not approved. Now I get any contract I apply for because I also donate to this party [ruling NPP].... (Sackey, Timber Contractor, 6th June 2006).

Thus, political loyalty is being exchanged for timber contracts. Indeed resources exchanged within networks can be both “material” and “immaterial” (Scharpf, 1978). Timber becomes what Lin (2001) terms a “transaction resource” or what Gibson and Hoffman (2002) terms “patronage resources”. Contractors who belong to such patronage networks with top state officials are also able to violate logging rules with relative impunity because they are often protected by their political allies:

“[J]ust seize the logs of a contractor for operating illegally and you will see the castle men [members of government] behind him. I am not blaming this government alone. It was the same in JJ’s [NDC’s era] time too.... (Tsekpo, Forest Manager, 8th March 2006).

The operations of these networks fit into Callister’s (1999) description of grand-level corrupt exchanges in the forest sector. Such high-level exchanges involve timber firms providing support to political parties or bribing politicians and high ranking bureaucrats: to obtain timber concessions; avoid payment of fines; negotiate favourable concession and tax, and avoid prosecution for transgressions. The implication of such exchange relationships is that the terms of timber concessions are usually not favourable to the state (Prah, 1994; Degrassi, 2003).

In the construction sector, where similar patronage systems are pervasive, anecdotal reports suggest that most contracts are over-priced because party contractors are obliged to pay 10% of the value of the contract as kickbacks into the coffers of the ruling party (CDD, 2000). Apart from violating logging rules with impunity, contractors who have such links with top state officials do not usually pay the appropriate rent (Forest Watch, 2006) (see section 7.5.4). The Ghanaian situation is consistent with the assertion of Brack *et al.* (2002: 12) that in many developing countries:

“The allocation of timber concessions has often been used as a means of rewarding allies and extending patronage. Protected by powerful patrons, timber companies may evade national regulations with relative impunity. State forestry institutions may

become in effect the clients of concession-holders in the ruling elite, exercising their powers as a form of private property rather than as a public service. Revenue....that would otherwise accrue to central and local government is appropriated by a small number of private individuals and enterprises”.

The Ghanaian scenario has parallels to what has been observed in Indonesia, especially during the era of President Suharto, where most of the licences for logging and mining were awarded to firms that supported the regime (Renner, 2002). Similar cases have also been cited in Cambodia (see Davis, 2004) and a number of countries, including Brazil, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Cameroon (see Transparency International, 2008; Soreide, 2007). Given the fact that party affiliation is an important endowment for getting logging permits, a contractor whose political party is no longer in power may not be able to get new permits due to “punishment” by the “new” ruling party (Box 7.4). This is especially so if he is a well known member of the previous regime.

Box 7.4 Dialogue with a timber contractor on timber utilisation contracts

Researcher and a contractor were talking about the latter's operations

Contractor: I used to employ more than 50 workers but this government is employing all possible strategies to destroy those of us in the opposition. I have been operating for 23 years. Now my permit expired last year and they are refusing to give me a new one just because they know I am a strong NDC [member].

Researcher: Really? How do you know that you are not getting the permit because you are an NDC member?

Contractor: I am not a child. I know what I am saying. Look I still have friends working there [forestry department?]. One of them told me that somebody from the government asked them to ignore my applications because I have been financing the NDC.

Researcher: Was the NDC also refusing to grant permit to NPP contractors when it was in power?

Contractor: No.... you see the NDC did everything openly. Even if we were treated better, it was not too much. Other contractors also got something, but now you don't get anything if you are not with the NPP. Some contractors have left the NDC for NPP just because of this but I will not do that.

This observation buttresses the assertion of Winbourne's (2002:7) that "resource royalties enable political leaders to maintain their stranglehold on power by funding a system of patronage that rewards followers and punishes opponents". How do "knowledgeable" timber contractors organise their political activities in such a neo-patrimonial environment? This study reveals that to overcome these problems, some timber contractors do not openly disclose their political affiliations. They then finance any political party that comes to power. Some timber firms also make sure that their main directors are in different parties. Each director can then use his links to win contracts when his party is in power:

"[W]e have the records of the NDC. Teachers became road contractors over night. Farmers became timber contractors and market women became managers. They are crying now because they are in opposition.Me and my brother have been wise on this. I am in the NPP and he is in the NDC. When NDC was in government [power] he used his connections to get us the contracts. Now we get contracts because of my connections with the NPP..." (Ahmed, Timber Contractor, 11th May 2006).

These kinds of strategies are also in line with Rose's (1999: 21) assertion that "governmentality" involves the "studies of stratum of knowing and acting". Indeed, in such a neo-patrimonial political system, "persons authorised to speak" matter so much for timber firms. Apart from party affiliations, some contractors also get such timber contracts through their informal exchange relationships with top forestry officials. Thus, contractors who are not actively involved in politics are also able to get some concessions if they manage to enrol powerful bureaucrats into their networks. Gifts, kickbacks and unofficial payments are still important endowments that cement the position of any contractor in such networks:

"Every [timber] contractor has his connection men at the office ... You don't just go there and leave your papers [application] You know that everything in Ghana is based on whom you know so if you don't get the right person, your application will never see the green light [be processed]" (Dzifa, Timber contractor, 1st June 2006).

Exchange relationships of this nature are sometimes initiated through previous unofficial payments by the contractor. Requests for unofficial payments are usually not

explicitly made. However, unnecessary delays and complex bureaucratic processes are relied upon to force such timber contractors to make payments:

“They [forest officers] asked me to go and come again. I went there almost every week for about one year and they told me that my application even got lost. I told an officer about it, and he advised me to find something for them. Once I paid, I got the permit shortly. That officer became my friend and he has been helping me each time I get into troubles” (Dzifa, Timber contractor, 1st June 2006).

Some researchers have argued that such informal networks are relied upon for economic transactions when there are no well developed formal organisations (Landa, 1981; Winn, 1994) or when formal rules do not exist (De Soto, 1989; Greif, 1993). Here, however, formal rules on how applications for permits must be assessed still exist in the formal policy document (see the 1998 Timber Resource Management Act) but they are not applied because their usage will affect the desire of the officials to amass private wealth through handling of timber permits. Consequently, while formal rules define the “normative system” or “blueprint” (Scott, 1981:82) for awarding concessions, yet contractors can only get permits when they are able to follow informal rules on unofficial payments and presentation of gifts and kickbacks. As Stevenson (1990) noted, the actual behaviours of participants around socio-economic issues are often determined not so much by formal rules, but by the norms, rules and routines that are generated within informal networks. Rules are remade through interactions and practices of participants (Giddens, 1984; Leach *et al.*, 1999).

7.5.3.1 Putting Aside the Competitive Bidding Policy in the Name of Helping Small Firms

Concerned about the effects of such patronage networks on the award of concessions, international donor organisations (notably the World Bank, DFID and the European Union) have been pressurising the government of Ghana to replace the administrative system of allocating concessions with a competitive bidding system. Although the government has accepted this policy, in principle, it argued later that implementing it strictly would adversely affect small companies. Such well formulated excuses have been used to set aside the competitive bidding policy (Young, 2005; Forest Watch, 2006) without incurring the anger of international donors. Here the executive employs

manipulation to avert potential conflicts that would have arisen between its interests and the “real interests” of international donors. Its interests in awarding contracts to members in its patronage networks have been maintained through employing subtle forms of power - manipulation and what Ramsay (2000) terms the “politics of deception”. As Lukes noted, the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent conflict in the first place (Lukes, 2005: 153). These findings also support my argument that international pressures often only lead to policy changes “on paper” but not in practice. Brack *et al.* (2002) suggested that the disbursement of development assistance must be made conditional on improvement in forest law governance. Such strategies are increasingly being adopted to influence resource/environmental management policies in developing countries (Kaimowitz *et al.*, 1998; World Bank, 2000). Yet, as discussed in Chapter 6, the ability of the executive to use manipulations to contest these pressures implies that the use of such “aid conditionalities” alone cannot eliminate the problems associated with neo-patrimonialism.

Davis (2004) reported similar scenarios in Cambodia where stated regulation for contracts were set aside because of pressure from the government to ensure that the political elite benefits. Observations elsewhere also suggest that, even where competitive bidding systems are used, the political elite can still award contracts to companies they prefer, since the criteria for selecting “best firms” may be adjusted to fit the qualifications of specific firms (Rose – Ackerman, 1999; Soreide, 2007). These are termed “hidden violations of the rules” (Soreide, 2007: 15). Such strategies work for the political elite and their business cronies because the rules on evaluating contracts are often not clear to competing firms. Again, there are scenarios where terms of contracts that had been awarded through competitive bidding were re-negotiated between the political elite and the winning firms (*ibid*). Top state officials can employ such re-negotiation strategies to remove or insert clauses that benefit themselves and their clients.

7.5.4 Revenue Collection

Revenue collection in the Ghana forestry sector is also adversely influenced by the same patronage networks that affect the award of timber concessions. Consequently, uncollected rent is still very high (Richards, 1995; Forest Watch, 2006). Awudi and Davies (2001) estimated that the state and landowning communities receive only 13%

of the actual value of timber (after logging costs were deducted). Total uncollected timber revenue is about \$100 million per annum (Young; 2005; Forest Watch, 2004 and 2006). This situation whereby only a small proportion of timber value goes into the state's coffers could be seen as a "gift from society to industry" (Mayers and Kotey 1996: 15). The Forestry Department currently collects less than 20% of actual annual stumpage (Forest Watch, 2006). It has been reported that stumpage fees arrears between 1997 and 2005 were \$3.3 million. However, Forest Watch argued that the Forestry Department under-calculated the actual arrears by failing to include inflation in its calculation of the arrears. Although the law imposes fines and interest on arrears, this was not applied. Furthermore, the Department invoiced only half of the accrued stumpage and then eventually collected only 50% of what it invoiced. After taking into consideration all these factors, Forest Watch estimates that a total of about \$33 million of stumpage was not collected between 1997 and 2005 (Forest Watch, 2006).

The only area where the organisation has been doing quite well is the collection of the export levy, of which about 70% of that expected is collected annually. Collection of income tax from timber companies is less encouraging. Many companies connive with forest officers to evade tax. Given these practices, total annual revenue collected by the state is just about \$5.8 million (FD/IIED, 1994; Forest Watch, 2006). Some private timber contractors who have close ties with top state officials often do not regularly pay stumpage tax and fines. Rules on payment do not mean anything to powerful contractors:

"Some contractors have huge [stumpage] bills to settle but they have not bothered to pay. Some claim they do not have money yet you see them donate huge sums of money to political parties ... They know that once they are connected to the castle, no body can stop them from operating" (Tsekpo, Forest Manager, 8th March 2006).

Stated regulations provide that contractors who have consistently refused to pay rent could be asked to stop operating and/or be prosecuted. However, the Forestry Department is often not able to apply these sanctions because of political interference. Such political interferences occur because of "revenues to a ruling party, or benefits to representatives of political elites" (Soreide, 2007: 16). Apart from such grand-level exchanges, multiple networks between timber contractors and forest officers lead to tax evasion and fraudulent invoicing (Box 7.5).

Box 7.5 Dialogue with a forestry official on revenue collection

Researcher and an official, who is a director, were talking about revenue collection.

Director: ...[t]here are many problems beyond our control.

Researcher: Could you tell me about these problems?

Director: Our greatest trouble is bribery there were many occasions when checks showed that some of our men took money from contractors and under invoiced them.

Researcher: Does this occur very often?

Director: Well we know it happens sometimes.... Some even connive with their supervisors. These practices are common in other departments too so don't think they happen here only

Researcher: I see. Is there any other problem?

Director: Oh yes. Some contractors do not pay stumpage promptly.

Researcher: Is it not possible to stop those with arrears from operating?

Director: That should be the case but what can we do when ministers themselves come to ask for a deferral of payment on behalf of defaulting contractors?

The national good is therefore sacrificed for the interests of state officials and private timber firms. The state loses so much revenue, and continues to beg for foreign support, while top state officials and politicians become richer. As Nugent (1995) puts it, once they get into such high level public offices, politicians in Ghana are transformed from “small boys” into “big men” due to such corrupt practices. Public office in Ghana has traditionally been seen as an opportunity to amass private wealth (Le Vine, 1975; Nugent, 1995). Such practices partly contribute to the weak financial position of the Forestry Department and Ghana as a whole. It is ironical that, while annual uncollected timber fees are about \$100 million (Forest Watch, 2004; Young, 2005), the Forestry Commission continues to depend on donors to meet its annual running costs of \$20 million (Young, 2005; Forestry Commission, 2005b).

7.5.5. Situating Exchanges in the Forestry Sector within the Neo-Patrimonial State

The above demonstrates that patronage networks negatively affect the implementation of concessions policy and revenue collection. These exchange relationships and interactions are shaped by the macro-economic environment within which they are situated (Sibeon, 2004). As Berger and Berger (1978:18) eloquently noted, the “micro-world and what goes on within it only makes full sense if it is understood against the

background of the macro-world that envelopes it". A gift culture, which has been in existence since the pre-colonial era (see section 7.2.), and a high tolerance level for corruption (CDD 2000), have worked together to condition these exchange networks. These exchange relationships are therefore actually not peculiar to the forestry sector.

The exchanges that govern the award of timber concessions are also pervasive in the real estate and transport sectors, where state contracts are often awarded to road and building contractors in the ruling party. The contracts are usually over-priced so that the "booty" is shared between the private contractors and the political elite (see CDD, 2000; Gyimah Boadi, 2002). As noted already, about 10% of the value of any contract is paid into the coffers of the ruling party as "kickbacks" (CDD, 2000). These exchanges are also common in the industrial sector where foreign firms, in particular, make huge payments to top state officials to secure permits and for trade favours. For instance, a recent investigation in Norway revealed that a Norwegian Company, Scancem, previous owners of the Ghana Cement Company, paid money running into millions of dollars to some ministers of the NDC government for operating permits and trade favours. When the story came out, some of those ministers openly argued that the money paid to them represents "consultation fees and gifts" (Statesman, 9th August, 2007). Here exchanges of gifts were being used to masquerade corrupt exchanges.

The effects of patronage exchanges on revenue collection are also not peculiar to the forestry sector. In 2007, for instance, the Serious Fraud Office found out that managers of Scancom Ghana, a Lebanese telecommunication company (now sold to MTN), connived with top officials of the Bank of Ghana, the Internal Revenue Service and a private auditing firm to operate what has been described as "the most sophisticated networks in international money laundering, tax evasion and balance sheet fraud" (Daily Graphic, 17th September, 2007). Through these networks, the company defrauded Ghana an amount of 8 trillion cedis between 1997 and 2005. This amount is equivalent to 17% of the country's annual budget for 2007 (ibid). It is important to emphasise that such grand level unofficial payments to secure operating contracts and tax favours are not uncommon even in the developed world (Heidenheimer *et al.*, 1989; TI, 2003). Until recently, payments made to foreign ministers to obtain contracts were not seen as illegal practices. In 1999, the OECD countries signed an accord to criminalise such unofficial payments (Gyimah Boadi, 2002). However, such practices still exist in both the developed and the developing world (Heidenheimer *et al.*, 1989; Transparency

International, 2003; Spector, 2005). There were instances where some foreign firms were prosecuted and fined for such unofficial payments (Transparency International, 2007). For instance, in October 2007, Germany's telecommunication giant, Siemens, was found guilty of making unofficial payments of 12 million euros to ministers in Nigeria, Russia and Libya to win business contracts. A Munich court fined the company an amount of 201 million euros (i.e \$ 291.3 million) for the offence (Crawford and Esterl, 2007). In some cases, however, no prosecution was made even when such unofficial payments were known (Transparency International, 2007).

Thus, given the pervasiveness of these exchanges, it is practically impossible for timber contractors or any other business to operate successfully in Ghana without forming alliances with relevant state officials. Even where grand-level exchanges are not involved, most state officials expect the so called "facilitation payments" before they process any business permit for private actors. Unnecessary delays are used to get business men and individuals to make such payments. Some business units in Ghana know in advance that they cannot secure operating permits and contracts without making such payments. Consequently, they make such payments voluntarily at the initial stages of their applications (CDD, 2000).

These exchanges are also common in personal transactions. For instance, if one wants a public utility (such as electricity or water) to be connected to a new house, he or she would have to pay "something" to officials of the public utility company. Again, whenever one applies for a personal bank loan, it is customary to present an envelope with "something" to an influential banking official otherwise things may not work well. Indeed about 66% of households in the working class spend 10% of their incomes on unofficial payments to public officials. Similarly, 44% of firms make unofficial payments, with 27% of them doing so always (CDD, 2000).

The line between corruption and non-corrupt patronage networks is not always clear (Heidenheimer, 1989), yet it is important not to confuse corruption with patronage networks. In the pre-colonial and early colonial era, exchanges between traditional rulers and merchants were not seen as corrupt practices, since they complied with norms of the society (see section 7.2). In the contemporary era as well, not all the exchanges are seen as corrupt practices. As will be demonstrated, for instance, some of the exchanges between forest guards and local people at the community level are not

necessarily with corrupt intentions. Despite this distinction it cannot be denied that corruption is widespread in Ghana (Le Vine, 1975; CDD 2000; Gyimah Boadi, 2002). Thus, Spector's (2005:1) statement on the pervasiveness of corruption in developing countries applies to Ghana as well:

“Higher level officials appear to use their influence for the benefit of their family and friends rather than for the public good. In the private sector, the only way to build a business seems to involve paying speedy money (bribe that facilitate faster processing of applications or documents) or giving kickbacks to bureaucrats” (Spector, 2005: 1).

Both corrupt and non-corrupt exchanges, therefore, operate together in Ghana. The latter is often employed to masquerade the former, since when officials are caught, they explain that it was a free gift. In its executive summary of a study sponsored by the World Bank, the CDD (2000:4) captures how serious corruption is as follows:

“A veritable culture of corruption prevails in Ghana: Most unofficial payments (46%) to public officials are initiated by firms and 31% are solicited by the officials themselves: and 50% of firms know in advance how much unofficial payment is required” (CDD, 2000:4).

Given the pervasiveness of these practices, most Ghanaians regard them as normal. Indeed about 90% of respondents who reported seeing instances of bribery and corruption very often said that they are always unconcerned when they see such things (CDD, 2000). The Ghanaian situation, therefore, probably justifies the controversial assertion by Kaufmann and Vicente (2005: 1) that there is the need to distinguish between legal and illegal forms of corruption, since some forms of corruption are ignored in many societies.

Based on the preceding discussion, one can state that poor forest policy implementation in Ghana is also related to the pervasiveness of exchange relationships. Once state actors are locked up in exchange relationships, their abilities to enforce stated rules on resource management become weak (Callister, 1999; World Bank, 1999; Winbourne, 2005; Morse, 2006; Transparency International, 2008), and this partly explains the high level of disparities between stated forest policy and actual policy outcomes. The

pervasiveness of both corrupt and non-corrupt exchanges also reinforces the fluidity of power because, even marginalised actors like rural farmers can realise some of their interests, if they are able to maintain exchange relationships with guards.

7.5.6 Controlling illegal logging

The level of illegal logging in Ghana is quite high. This is not surprising, given the pervasiveness of patronage networks between state officials and commercial loggers. Birikorang (2001) estimated that *at least* 60% of industrial wood produced annually is harvested through illegal procedures (Birikorang, 2001). A recent government report similarly estimated that about 70-80% of industrial wood produced annually is from illegal sources (Ghana News Agency, 2008). Thus, the percentage of wood produced illegally is close to levels in Brazil (80%), Indonesia (73%) and Cameroon (50%) (EU Forest Watch, 2001). Stated legislative instruments on timber management, such as the Trees and Timber (Amendment) Act (1994), the Timber Resource Management Act (1998) and the Forest Protection (Amendment) Act (2002) are all poorly implemented due to connivances between loggers and forest officers. Consequently, the Annual Allowable Cut has often been exceeded. More than 46% capacity of the forest has been exceeded during the period from 1990 and 2000 (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2001; Birikorang, 2001).

Both large scale timber firms and small scale chainsaw operators contribute to this high level of illegal logging (Birikorang 2001). Some logging firms have been using non-commercial timber utilisation permits to harvest wood for sale. These false permits are issued by the forest officers who are in the pockets of those timber contractors. It has been suggested elsewhere that forestry officials issue such false permits in return for kickbacks (Winbourne, 2002). This appears to be the case in Ghana because the use of such permits allows commercial loggers to avoid the payment of appropriate rent. In 1997, only 5 out of the 600 existing firms were operating with *valid* Timber Utilisation Contracts (Forest Watch, 2006). Some big timber firms also operate outside their designated areas. Others harvest trees whose sizes are sometimes less than the minimum diameter allowed (Young, 2005). Yet, the Forestry Department practically ignores illegal activities of big timber contractors because of their patronage networks with the top state officials.

As conceptualised in Chapter 4, actors in multiple networks sometimes face situations of conflicting interests and “multiple role involvements” (Archer, 1995, 1998). When these situations arise, an actor may abandon assigned roles in one network to fulfil role expectations in other networks (see Machado and Burns 1998). Top forest officials, who are supposed to check the illegal activities of timber contractors, have forgone such roles because they are inconsistent with their own patronage interests. Illegal logging is often only blamed on small scale chainsaw operators (see FC, 2005b), despite the fact that a significant proportion of illegally harvested wood is produced by commercial firms (Birikorang, 2001). By putting all the blame on small scale chainsaw operators, state politicians and top officials of the Forestry Department have covered how their own patronage relationships with “big timber men” also contribute to illegal logging. The situation in Ghana is consistent with the assertion of the Transparency International (2008: 1) that:

“Forestry officials and law enforcement officers who are in the pockets of corrupt logging firms often turn a blind eye to illegal activities that threaten the sustainable management of the forest’s biodiversity”.

It must be stated that not all forest officers are locked up in such high-level patronage networks with “big timber men”. In fact, a few professionals have complained about such illegal activities. However, they are practically powerless when it comes to dealing with “powerful contractors”:

“It shouldn’t have been so but it will be a big lie to deny the fact that some timber contractors are more powerful than we the foresters. They know they have the connection with some ministers so they flout the laws without any respect for us. Yet, we are often blamed when things are not done well” (Mussa, Forester, 30th June 2006).

Such powerful contractors are therefore likely to be pardoned whenever they violate rules on logging (Box 7.6). Thus, neo-patrimonial networks limit the autonomy of even “good foresters” that would wish to check the illegal activities of timber contractors. In the developed world, state regulatory agencies have the power to check the activities of all business entities and all individuals. In Ghana, certain “big men” are practically considered as being above the law. Institutional powers of state bureaucrats mean

nothing to them. This buttress the argument that power is not “stored” in specific institutions and positions/roles (Foucault, 1980; Valentine and Longstaff, 1998). It is also exercised through networks (Foucault, 1980; Murdoch and Marsden, 1995; Valentine and Longstaff, 1998; Sharp *et al.*, 2002).

Box 7.6 Dialogue with a timber contractor on patronage networks

Contractor: [J]ust last week my logs were seized because my boys mistakenly harvested some outside my area. It would have been a big issue but my friend at the Ministry assisted me get in touch with the officer who seized the wood. The officer only agreed to let us have the logs back when my friend told him that I am his brother...

Researcher: Did you have to pay anything before getting the logs back?

Contractor: Don't go there because I cannot answer that question.

Researcher: Do you say it was a minister?

Contractor: No I said he works at the ministry. But don't ask me the name because I will not tell you. I don't think you need the name of that person to write that your school work in... in oh I forgot do you say you study in England or US?

A large number of such big timber men harvest the resource without valid permits (See Forest Watch, 2006). Even those with permits are able to violate logging rules with relative impunity because of their linkages with top state politicians. The high level of illegal logging is therefore not only a product of lack of resources. It is also a result of political patronage. As Soreide (2007: 14) puts it:

“The [illegal] logging that occurs in spite of the presence of formal rules and the concession system has sometimes been allowed to continue fairly undisturbed. The forest authorities may not have had the capacity to prevent the logging physically, and firms may not have been prosecuted because they have ties to political levels” (Soreide, 2007: 14).

Such high-level patronage relationships have been identified as the main cause of illegal logging in other parts of the developing world (Callister, 1999; Winbourne, 2005; Soreide, 2007; World Bank, 2006; Transparency International, 2008). In Papua New Guinea, for instance, patronage networks between loggers and political elite make illegal logging possible. The rights of local land owners are often violated but they do not have power to fight the timber firms in the courts (Forest Trends, 2006). Similar

relationships are responsible for high illegal logging in Congo (Soreide, 2007) and Cambodia (World Resources Institute, 2000). The links between such patronage relationships and illegal logging have also been observed in Brazil, Indonesia, Pakistan and Cameroon (see Transparency International, 2007; Soreide, 2007). Globally, illegal logging constitutes 80% of wood harvested annually. It also leads to loss of \$10 billion annually (World Bank, 2006). The negative impacts of these networks on forest management have been well captured by the World Bank:

“Countries with tropical moist forest have continued to log on a massive scale, often illegally and unsustainably. In many countries, illegal logging is similar in size to legal production. In others, it exceeds legal logging by a substantial margin ... poor governance, corruption, and political alliances between parts of the private sector and ruling elites combined with minimal enforcement capacity at local and regional levels, all played a part” (World Bank, 1999: xii).

While the Forestry Department has practically ignored the illegal activities of big timber men, it has been strict on small-scale chainsaw operators. However, its attempts to totally stop the small-scale chainsaw operators from operating have never been successful (Birikorang, 2001; FC, 2005b). The power of the illegal chainsaw operators is demonstrated by the presence of large quantities of their produce on the timber markets in urban areas (see Figure 7.1).



Figure 7.1 Wood produced by illegal chainsaw operators

Murdoch and Marsden (1995:372) argued that to explain the operations of power, researchers must “examine how collective action comes about, or how actors come to be

associated, and how they work in unison". Here, "illegal" chainsaw operators are still able to harvest wood because they are able to establish networks with forest guards, street level security officers and farmers. It has been conceptualised, in Chapter 4, that "transaction resources" and terms of interaction within different networks may differ depending on specific context (Thrift 1985) and positions of the actors involved (Archer, 1998). Mouzelis (1991, 1995) used the concept "role/positional dimension" to refer to how positions and roles of different actors influence interactions.

Despite these variations in actual terms of interactions and the transaction resources, all policy networks are characterised by interdependencies among the actors (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993; Lin, 2001). Network relationships between illegal chainsaw operators, farmers and guards are also structured by such dependencies. The actors have similar interests which make cooperation a rational choice. Illegal chainsaw operators are officially banned from harvesting timber. Forest guards and street level security personnel are poorly paid. Farmers do not have any share of rent collected by the state, even though they are the custodians of trees outside reserves. All these actors, therefore, connive to harvest timber so as to survive.

These interactions must be seen as products of the macro politico-economic structures which banned the activities of chainsaw operators, and denied guards and farmers good reward packages for protecting trees. The political structures have created the condition whereby these lower-level state and societal actors cannot realise their interests, without such networks. Lindblom (1965) terms such cooperation "partisan mutual adjustment". There are well laid informal rules governing these interactions. First, the chainsaw operator negotiates with the guard and the farmer the reward and compensation packages before harvesting the tree. After producing the commercial wood, the operator has to transport them to the cities. This is where security personnel, such as the barrier police and custom officers, come into this illegal logging network.

Some operators are able to transport the illegally produced wood to the cities because they have the necessary links with some security personnel at the check points (barriers). These state officers receive some cash, while allowing illegally sawn lumber in transit to cross the barriers. Sometimes wealthy urban timber merchants, who have strong ties with police officers at the check points, transport the wood from the rural areas to the urban market. Thus, chainsaw operators have been banned, yet those who

are able to maintain networks with other useful actors (i.e. farmers, guards and security personnel) are still able to operate. A chainsaw operator talks about these networks when he was commenting on the high price of wood:

“I have to buy fuel, and also get something for the guards who have been nice to me always. Even the farmer is demanding about quarter of the wood ... If I have to take the wood to Somanya [a town] myself, then I have to pay some money to the guys at the barrier [police] otherwise they can seize the wood. So you see that the price of wood is going up because of the ban” (Doku, Chainsaw Operator, 7th June 2006).

It is evident that the formation of these networks is characterised by “bargaining games” (Coleman, 1990; Thatcher, 1998; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008) between individual illegal chainsaw operators and the other actors (i.e. guards, farmers and security personnel). Such bargaining games are often aimed at allocating resources within the policy networks (Thatcher, 1998). Certain actors may hold more bargaining strength (Cook, 1977; Ensminger and Knight, 1997), and may therefore be more successful in establishing interactions to their advantage (Carlssons and Sandstrom, 2008). The success of various actors in such networks therefore partly depends on the resources which they control (Coleman, 1990; Leach *et al.*, 1999).

Chainsaw operators who are still operating (i.e. despite the ban) are those who have adequate financial resources to maintain links with the guards, farmers and barrier security men. In fact, those chainsaw operators who could not do this have stopped operating:

“Some of our friends have stopped this job because we have to spend a lot of money. If you are not careful, your wood could just be seized one day. ... I am still in business because I always spend a lot to make sure all these people are happy” (Nyumu Ngua, Chainsaw Operator, 13th May 2006).

The above shows that, although they do not have much power to influence formal policy makers, some small scale chainsaw operators still have what it takes to achieve their exploitative interests. Their powers prevail in the countryside through their livelihood networks with guards and farmers. As Murdoch and Marsden (1995: 372) noted, “those who are powerful are not those who hold power but those who are able to

enrol convince and enlist others into associations”. Some officials of the Forestry Department seem to be aware of the power of chainsaw operators:

“These illegal chainsaw people are difficult to control. They have everything to buy our men [guards] they are able to turn farmers against us and they can bribe even police men at the barriers” (Jomo, Forest Manager, 21st March 2006).

These findings also reflect the *issue scope and context-bound* aspects of power (see Chapter 4). It is clear that the distribution of resources determines the geography of patronage networks within the timber harvesting sub-sector. Big timber men continue to harvest timber because of their grand-level exchange relationships with politicians and top forest officers. Similarly, small scale chainsaw operators also continue to harvest timber indiscriminately because of their networks with guards and farmers at the community level.

7.5.6.1 How Resource Constraints of the Forestry Department Creates Opportunities for Illegal Chainsaw Operators

I have already argued that, following Hussein and Ketz (1991), when assessing whose powers prevail within any context one has to examine the opportunities available to, and the constraints on the various actors within that context. Here, resource constraints and certain organisational weaknesses of the Forestry Department provide opportunities for the illegal chainsaw operators. Top officials of the Forestry Department cited lack of resources as the main factor that affects the ability of the Forestry Department to control the activities of the illegal chainsaw operators.

It appears that despite the huge donor support, resources are still woefully inadequate for such a quasi-military organisation. As shown in Table 7.1, only 1% of forest officers stated that the level of resource availability is high enough for the smooth operation of the Forestry Department. In terms of specific resources, financial resource unavailability was the most reported, being cited by almost every officer interviewed. Lack of equipments and machinery was another problem, cited by as many as 84% of the interviewees (not shown in the Table below).

Table 7.1 Opinion of forest officers on level of resource availability

Level of resource availability	Frequency	Percentage
High	1	1
Moderate	12	11.7
Low	89	87.3
Total	102	100

Officials tend to attribute this lack of resources to the inability of the Ghana Government to adequately support the organisation. I argue that lack of resources is also a product of informal networks, since a greater proportion of revenue is lost to big timber men and a few government officials (see section 7.5.4). The effects of resource constraints on forest policy implementation was dramatised by many officials. Top officials mentioned that it makes it difficult to adequately patrol the forests, and or employ more guards to monitor the activities of illegal chainsaw operators. It is also partly responsible for poor salary levels, which predisposes some lower-level officers to connive with the illegal chainsaw operators. At the community level, guards explained that they are not provided with booths, uniforms, bicycles etc.

Resource constraints also affect supervision, which is important whenever a hierarchical model is being adopted (Weber, 1952; Derthick, 1972; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Some Technical Officers (TOs) stated that they are not able to supervise guards well because they lack vehicles to visit the hinterlands. While this is partly true, there is no guarantee that making more resources available to technical officers will end the connivances between forest officers and chainsaw operators. Interviews show that some TOs themselves also connive with guards and chainsaw operators to cut wood for sale. It was revealed by some guards that gifts and money collected from chainsaw operators are sometimes shared with the TOs.

Another organisational weakness that serves an opportunity for illegal chainsaw operators is poor conditions of service within the Forestry Department. As shown in Figure 7.2, about 83.3% of employees of the Forestry Department are not satisfied with their working conditions. Most of these people mention low salary levels as the problem. Some guards reported that they receive only about £25 monthly.

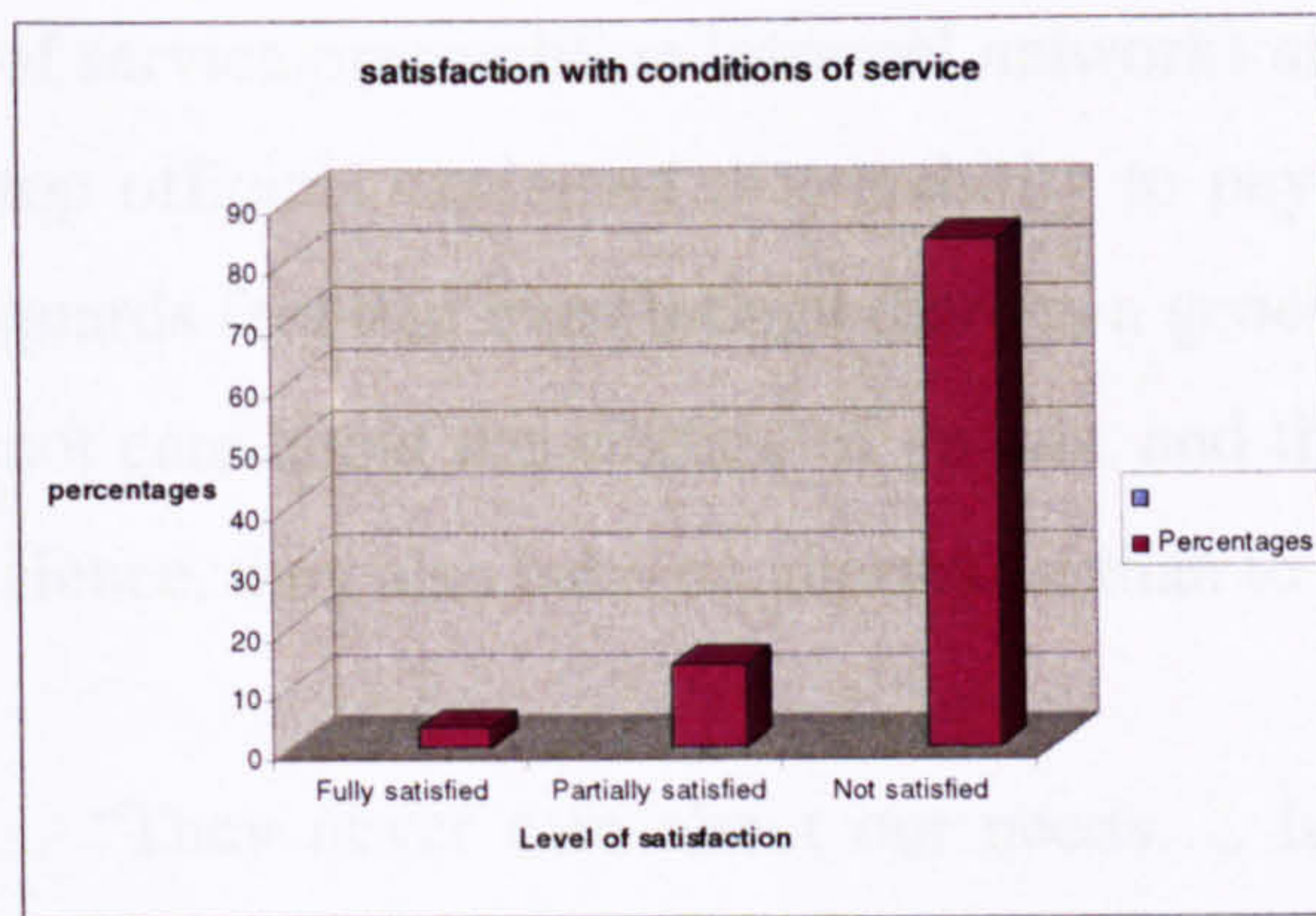


Figure 7.2 Forest officers satisfaction with condition of service

Such poor conditions mean that they have no alternative than to accept bribes from chainsaw operators:

“We have conscience that tells us what is good and what is bad. Yet with the low salary levels, one has no choice than to accept money from chainsaw operators. It is like asking a hungry dog to watch your meat while away. Certainly the dog will chew the meat itself. To avoid this, you first have to feed the dog well” (Kojovi, Forest Guard, 6th July 2006).

A field assistant mentioned the same problem when he stated:

“If they pay us well, many people will not take bribe. So you don’t blame us now. We have personal problems so we always look at both the money to be obtained and the punishment [risk] if caught” (Korley, Field Assistant, 12th April, 2006).

Even guards who claimed that they do not accept bribes acknowledged that it is so difficult to refuse such bribes due to their high poverty levels:

“I do not collect bribes but I know it is not easy rejecting them. You know a single bribe could be higher than your salary for the whole year..... Refusing a bribe is a serious headache because you always think of the needs that a single bribe can provide” (Minta, Forest Guard, 6th July 2006).

Such petty/survival corruption is widespread in many developing countries (Heidenheimer, 1989), where “unofficial payments seem to be the only way for low-paid government workers to get by” (Spector, 2005: 1). It is evident that poor conditions

of service precondition informal networks among guards and chainsaw operators. While top officials explained that inability to pay guards well is due to lack of funds, some guards feel that even though there is a general lack of funds, their top managers also do not care about the welfare of guards, and that also contributes to their poor conditions. Hence, they also have no alternative than to accept unofficial payments:

“They never care about our needs.... laws don’t protect the forests on their own. They are in the cities and we are here to see to it that people do not break the laws. ...if we are hungry then we have no choice than to take money from chainsaw people” (Okoampa, Forest Guard, 13th April 2006).

Poor conditions of service therefore negatively affect the dispositions (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975) or role orientation (Lester and Goggin, 1998) of forest guards. Another guard, who reported that he was once a house boy of one of the top forest managers, similarly stated:

“They [managers] use all the vehicles for their private activities.... like sending their children to school and attending funerals but we do not have even cycles... they do not give us good pay... [but] they expect us to follow their instructions always” (Fuseni, Forest Guard, 28th June 2006).

The literature on corruption identifies three groups of factors that cause such forms of corruption, and it seems all those factors are applicable here. These are *opportunity*, *motive* and *probability of being caught* (World Bank, 1997; Morse, 2006). Opportunities for corruption arise when there are distorted policies that create gaps between demand and supply. Private business groups then put high pressure on policy implementers (Morse, 2006).

In Ghana, the small scale chainsaw operators have been banned, yet the large scale firms only produce for export. This has created a wide gap between demand and supply on the local market (Birikorang, 2001). Chainsaw operators, therefore, produce illegally to meet this demand. The guards’ motives for corrupt exchanges are also enhanced by the low salary levels and their perception that their bosses do not care about the welfare of guards, and are also corrupt. Further, given that they stay in remote communities alone, it is difficult for guards to be caught by top officials. Thus, although Robbison

(2000) has suggested that corruption is not *necessarily* environmentally destructive, the Ghanaian situation supports the assertion that corrupt exchanges are detrimental to environmental sustainability (Levy, 2001; Damani *et al.*, 2003; Winbourne, 2005, Morse, 2006; Soreide, 2007).

There is an interaction of formal organisational factors and networks here. Relationships between illegal chainsaw operators and guards are partly conditioned by resource unavailability and poor conditions of services. As these factors are partly products of the macro-economic order, it is safe to argue that these micro relationships are conditioned by macro-economic factors. The actions of guards must, therefore, be understood as a survival strategy. Organisations depend on humans as means of achieving goals but the humans tend to resist being treated as means. They interact as wholes bringing to bare their own problems and purposes (Selznick, 1949: 251). When actors' interests in formal organisations are not met, they are likely to form informal reciprocal networks to deal with their problems (Campbell 1989:328). Such reciprocal relationships provide *property rights* to those actors with whom they are interdependent (Hoffman *et al.*, 1998).

7.5.6.2 Attempts to Reconfigure Networks between Chainsaw Operators and Local Farmers

Realising its own weaknesses in controlling the small scale chainsaw operators, the Forestry Department has, in recent times, been increasingly encouraging farmers to drive away illegal chainsaw operators from their communities (see Smith, 1996; Oppon, 2004). This was also one of the aims of the Community Forestry Committees. Some forest officers reported that this plan initially worked well in a few communities, but farmers stopped cooperating shortly afterwards. In a large number of communities too, farmers rather continue to support the chainsaw operators. It came out clearly during focus group discussions and interviews that one reason why it has been difficult to turn farmers against chainsaw operators is the fact that farmers and chainsaw operators are locked up in exchange relationships. Consequently, farmers tend to like the activities of chainsaw operators.

Only 12% of local people reported not liking the activities of chainsaw operators. In contrast, about 87% of them stated that they do not like the activities of timber

contractors. This distribution is related to variations in positional interests among the various actors. Top state officials prefer the activities of the contractors because of the huge financial rewards. On the other hand, the activities of chainsaw operators are more congruent with interests of local farmers, who do not benefit from the operations of the contractors. An assemblyman at one of the study communities made this point:

“We have tried to encourage them to help fight illegal chainsaw operations but... cooperation in this area will only work if the government pays something directly to these farmers whenever trees are harvested here. Telling them to report illegal chainsaw people will never work since they benefit from these activities”.

Farmers sometimes receive payments from chainsaw operators. This provides them with a source of income. At Ahinkwa, farmers noted that they usually get about 25% of lumber from such deals. Prompt payments are assured in such deals. The ability of farmers to directly negotiate payment of timber revenue and compensation with chainsaw operators makes the activities of chainsaw people more favourable to farmers:

“With the [chainsaw] operators, you know how much you will get before they even cut the trees. They wait for you to harvest the crops even before they cut down the tree but these contractors just come anytime to destroy all your crops with the caterpillar and you don't get anything from them” (Dede, June 3rd 2006).

Furthermore, without any timber markets in the villages, farmers rely on chainsaw operators to get wood for their own use. For marginalised farmers, therefore, the benefits from their livelihood networks with chainsaw operators mean so much to them than collaborating with the Forestry Department to drive such loggers away. The network configuration literature suggests that, if agents are already fully embedded in an existing network, they are not likely to break up such ties to join new networks unless there are more benefits in the new networks (De Mesquita and Stephenson, 2006). Even so, some actors would not be willing to break existing friendship ties because of trust (Uzzi, 1997). Farmers' existing networks with chainsaw operators provide them with the opportunity to get some revenue, which they are denied by the state. Their support for illegal chainsaw operators is therefore influenced by the strength of their ties between them. *Tie strength* refers to “the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which

characterise the tie” (Granovetter, 1973:1361). The concept implies that if actors are locked up in very strong interdependent relationships, attempts by a third party to influence one of the participants to break up such networks are not usually successful (Nelson and Winter, 1982).

7.5.7 Enforcing Forest Protection Laws in the Countryside

Although their user rights have been formally usurped, local people are still able to extract some resources from forest reserves. In fact, they are able to harvest fuel wood and produce charcoal for domestic use and even sometimes for sale (Figure 7.3).



Figure 7.3 A charcoal producing site in the forest

While these resources are sometimes obtained secretly without the knowledge of guards, in many cases, guards know about these activities but allow them to go on because of their own patronage networks with local people. Thus, although international pressures to force the government to transfer resource user rights to local communities have been contested through ambiguities, local communities have been able to survive through their own social networks with forest guards within their communities. The *social network analysis* model, which is based on the notion that all aspects of life (i.e. economic, social and political) entail social networks of relations (Wasserman and Faust, 1994:3), is applicable here. It suggests that the policy process is significantly shaped by social networks among various policy actors (Provan and Milward, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). A social network is “a set of players and a pattern of exchange of information and/or goods among these players” (Annen 2003:451). The local people contribute cash, food stuff and domestic animals to the guards, who in return allow them to harvest the livelihood resources:

“I got the permission [to produce charcoal] because the guard is my good friend. I sometimes give him some of the charcoal and food stuff. Even last Christmas I gave him a goat” (Minta, charcoal producer, April 23rd 2006).

Thus, maintaining good relationships with the guard is the best way to get resources even if one does not obtain a permit. A dialogue with a palm wine taper, who produces “akpeteshie” (i.e. local alcoholic drink) from the oil palm and raffia trees in the forests, further demonstrates the exchange relationships between guards and people who extract non timber forest resources on small scale for sale (see Box 7.7).

Box 7.7 Dialogue with a local palm wine producer

Taper stated that he always gets permission and researcher asked how he does that.

Taper: I can go to Bosonsu and buy the permit. That is not very good because the managers charge too much. It also takes a long time before I get a permit. If you apply, you go there for about a year before they give you the permit. It is cheaper if I take it from the guard here. He only takes some of the akpeteshie [alcohol] for his personal use then I give him something after selling what I produce.

Researcher: Does it mean if you go to Bonsoso, then you do not give the guard anything?

Taper: You see the trouble.... If I go there, they only sell the permit for a few palm trees. When I come here to fell more because I want plenty akpeteshie, the guard will still take something before allowing me to work. So it is better to deal with him without going to Bonsoso. ...The only thing is that at Bonsusu, they give me a paper [official permit] but if I do things with the guard he tells me there is no paper.

Researcher: Does it matter when you get a paper permit?

Taper: Yes sometimes if you don't have a paper and a wicked officer comes here, they could still arrest you because the guard will tell you not to mention his name... The only way to avoid that is you don't operate on any day an officer is coming here. That is still better because officers don't come here often.

Apart from harvesting forest resources, these networks make it possible for some farmers to illegally cultivate annual crops on degraded forest lands. This was observed in communities like Ahinkwa, Dadetsunya, Samlesi etc, which are very remote. In the

late 1970s, the Forestry Department allowed farmers to cultivate crops on some degraded forest lands. The initial plan was that farmers could plant some trees for the Forestry Department. Farmers were asked to abandon these farms in the late 1980s, but they still connived with the guards to make farms on those lands and even on other lands that were not initially allocated to them (see Box 7.8).

Box 7.8 Dialogue with a farmer on farming illegally on forest lands

Researcher: Your crops are doing very well.

Farmer: [he smiles] hmm...Thanks.

Researcher: So do you have another farm or only this one?

Farmer: I have three new farms, but one is not that big In this community, most men make at least three farms each year.

Researcher: Really!... Are all your farms on the forest land?

Farmer: No two are in the forest and one is on my own land. ...

Researcher: So how do you get access to the forest land?

Farmer: To get a forest land, one must have a good relationship with the surveyor [guard] ... it is good to give him gifts sometimes. If he agrees that you should go ahead and make the farm then you are free....I always first find something for him.

Researcher: If the TOs come here won't they see these farms?

Farmer: It works because even if the TOs come here it is the surveyor who takes them around so your farm will never be destroyed since the surveyor will not take them to the area where your farm is located.

Researcher: Is it not possible that the TOs may see your farm themselves as they pass to other areas?

Farmer: Yes that happened sometimes. So these days the guards do not allow people to make farms close to major paths.... sometimes this is the problem because you may pay something to the guard but if TOs see the farm on their rounds, they may destroy it. If you are lucky then they collect some money and leave the farm. Like four years ago, they started destroying my crops, then the guard begged them so I had to give them something before they left us... last year, we [farmers] also contributed money to the TO so he has not come here to worry us.

These observations imply that, although the guards are supposed to govern the behaviour of local farmers, they actually give them some freedom because of friendship ties that are based on trust and reciprocities. As Watts (2003:12) noted, "trust,

conventions, networks and non formal obligations and reciprocities figure centrally” in any form of governance in the contemporary world. The *game model* (Bardach, 1977; Dunsire, 1978) and *policy action framework* (Lewis and Flynn, 1979; Barrett and Fudge, 1981) assumed that, where stated policy conflicts with the interests of societal actors, they will usually challenge policy implementers. In the Ghana forestry sector, such violent scenarios occurred in the early 1960s, when the Forestry Department attempted to implement the Protected Lands Policy (see section 7.4). They also still occasionally occur between illegal chainsaw operators and forestry officials when the latter attempted to arrest the former. However, rural dwellers generally tend to employ more subtle forms of power, notably persuasions and inducements in their dealings with guards. This situation is also consistent with a model of power that emphasises friendship, consisting of mutuality and negotiation (Robinson, 2000: 67).

Valentine and Longstaff (1998) documented similar relationships in prisons between inmates and guards in England. The writers noted that these actors were “locked up in alliances, conflicts and collusions which involve daily compromise, accommodation and negotiation” (148). As Winbourne (2005) noted, the employment of such informal exchanges is sometimes the best option to survive when forest policy is not practicable. Given the marginalisation of local people, seeking the consent of guards is the practical mechanism for them to influence actual policy.

As noted in Chapter 4, the *top-down policy model*, which is based on elitists’ accounts of power, assumes that policy is formulated within formal structures of government and implemented by street-level bureaucrats. On the other hand, the *bottom-up model*, which sees society as being “messy”, posits that power is diffuse and so policy is actually formed within multi-actor structures or complex networks among various actors. Policy therefore also emerges through everyday struggles and networks among various people (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). It is not easy to make a clear distinction between policy formulation and implementation, since networks between policy implementers and societal actors can lead to a reformulation of policy. Such networks constitute what is referred to as “implementation structure” (Hjern and Porter, 1981). This study shows that forest guards in Ghana are the “real policy makers” within such an “implementation structure”, since they determine whose activities are reported, punished or ignored. Lipsky (1980:12) was right to assert that:

“[P]ublic policy is not best understood as made in legislatures or top-floor suites of high ranking administrators, because in important ways it is actually made in the ... daily encounters of street level workers”.

These networks fit into the wider configurations of power within the neo-patrimonial state. Street-level bureaucrats take their orders from top state officials, yet they also have the power to change some of those orders to suit their individual interests. Having a cordial relationship with the street level bureaucrat is, therefore, an important step to getting whatever one wants. For instance, it is a common practice to find some money for the men who go around destroying unauthorised structures rather than trying to produce the building permit itself. In the same way, drivers do not care so much about maintaining their vehicles as bribing the police men at the check points. Thus, maintaining exchange relationships with the street-level bureaucrat is sometimes the most effective practical way to realise one's interests.

Such “friendships” between street-level bureaucrats and the citizens are still characterised by asymmetrical relationships, just as in every patronage system. For instance, guards and the local farmers are not equal in their friendship networks. The guard has more authority because he legitimately controls access to useful resources. Yet, within the village context, he and the clients *appear* to be equal. Campbell's (1989: 328) statement on similar patronage relationships in some Greek villages applies here:

“[A]lthough the character of the relationship isasymmetrical, patron and client, because they are interacting in the context of village community relations where all true villagers are in principle equals, they continue to treat one another as if they were equals in the situation of their friendship as well. Both patron and client claim publicly that the other “is my friend”. their friendship exists within the field of village values”.

The stability of the patronage system is based on such asymmetrical relationships because although the system benefits both the patron and the clients, the latter often assumes that the “patron has more favours to offer than the client can return” (Campbell, 1989: 330). These asymmetrical relationships also constitute the basis for complaints by local people about over restriction. They feel the Forestry Department

should have allowed them direct access. In that case, there would have been no need to please any guard before getting the permission to harvest resources.

The asymmetrical feature of these networks supports my assertion that networks and hierarchies can operate together. Early perspectives on the policy network approach tend to ignore power differentials within networks (see Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993). This is one area where the approach has faced intense criticisms (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997). As pointed out in Chapter 4, both hierarchies and networks can operate together (Pierre and Peters, 2000). The actors within the network depend on each other but dependency situations do not necessarily have to be symmetrical (Lin, 2001).

7.5.7.1 Ordering Actions at Zones of Incongruence: The Dilemma of the Guard

Given that forest guards live within rural communities, they are located at a “zone of incongruence” or the interface of the Forestry Department and the local community. The actions at such zones are often influenced by both formal and informal rules and this can produce contradictions (Machado and Burns, 1998). In this case, the forest guards often face situations of conflicting role involvements, since they have to obey strict orders from their managers, and at the same time respond to demands from local people, with whom they are interdependent. Obeying the strict orders of the leaders implies that local people cannot get livelihood resources, unless they apply for a permit from the District office. On the other hand, responding positively to the demands of the local people implies that guards are not following orders from their leaders. It is evident from the preceding discussions that guards tend to follow the latter option.

According to Knoke (1990: 9), the “structure of relations among actors and the location of individual actors in the network have important behavioural, perceptual, and attitudinal consequences both for the individual units and for the system as a whole”. This is the situation here because the actions of guards are influenced by their location at the hinterlands and their inter-dependent relationships with local people. Thus, while local people cannot survive without compromises on the part of the guard, the latter also has a number of constraints that makes such compromises a rational choice. In fact, the guard is more powerful than individual farmers, yet he is not more powerful than the entire community. This is because he needs to depend on *at least* some of the local

people to survive. This mutual dependency serves as an opportunity for local people. About 86% of forestry officials stated that it is not possible to strictly apply all the forest rules. Most of them cited their dependency on the local people as the main reason. This is partly a result of their poor conditions of service (see 7.5.6.1).

Besides, the socio-economic organisation of rural Ghana also conditions such dependencies and networks. Unlike urban areas, there are no formal welfare organisations or public services in most rural areas. In an emergency health situation, for instance, one just has to shout and neighbours usually rush there to assist. Various herbs may be given to the sick by those respected for knowledge on herbs. Sometimes the sick person may be carried to the nearby health post, which may be located several kilometres away. Neighbours may freely donate money to support such a victim. Further, any person in financial difficulty can just approach another member of the community to ask for a “free loan”. Agreements on such loans are verbally done between the lender and the borrower. Survival in a rural community, therefore, depends on one’s personal relationships with others. Guards argued that given these mutual dependencies, it is impossible to apply formal rules strictly (Box 7.9).

Box 7.9 Statements made by guards on enforcing forest protection laws

“.... it is not possible to apply these [forest] laws strictly....I live with these people alone [in this community]. Some are my friends... We do many things together so how can I arrest the same people” (Tseko, 13th April 2006).

“We live with these people and so we are also members of this community.... If the laws were to be enforced strictly, this community would not exist because day in and day out all of us need some forest products. ...We have been trying to make sure they do not destroy the forests but talking of complete restriction is not possible.” (Asodji, 27th April 2006)

“It will seem easy to talk about this [complete restriction] if you don’t live here but not when you stay here. You have friends among them, you eat with some of them on the same table, and they are the people you go to when you need to borrow money. How then do you arrest them for every minor thing [offence]” (Lagmatey, 11th May 2006)

Apart from the general community mutualism, some guards also have special dependencies with some service providers. A guard at Saponso highlights his dependency on a kenkey (food) seller as follows:

People blame us wrongly without understanding our problems.... You just think of this case eh like me ehh. How can I refuse to permit the kenkey seller to cut firewood which she needs to prepare the kenkey? When I know she gives me kenkey free of charge?

It must be emphasised here that from the perspective of many guards, giving local people verbal permission to harvest resources is simply an act of ordering actions in consonance with an informal rule system. In other words, such actions are congruent with rules governing informal interactions in the local community, where reciprocity and verbal agreements constitute the norm (Box 7.10).

Box 7.10 Statements made by guards on verbal permits

“[I]f I insist that they produce papers [written permits] for everything they want then I will also be required to sign papers when I go to them with my own problems. ...” (Lagmatey, 11th May 2006).

“Our leaders say everybody who needs something must go to Bonsoso for permits but if you live here you will understand that insisting on this permit thing is not practicable. We all can't write..... Every time I borrow money from people I don't sign any paper so how can I ask them to get a paper permit” (Okoampa, Forest Guard, 13th April 2006).

These informal networks are pervasive in the informal segment of the modern society (De Soto, 1989; DiMaggio and Louch, 1998). They constitute the basis of survival in the informal economy. As Williamson (1991) argued, social networks of this kind serve as a “shift parameter” favouring non-hierarchical forms of governance. The forest managers, who are not within the communities, want the guards to be strict on local people. However, these orders have been rejected by guards because they contradict the interests and rules within their livelihood networks. Thus, although the forest laws dictate how guards must implement policy, they are also knowledgeable actors who are

conducting themselves based on the informal rules within the community. The rules on reciprocity shape the actions of guards by providing flexible orientation points which may either constrain or enable what is possible (Leach *et al.*, 1999: 230; Giddens, 1984).

The actions of the guards are also in consonance with the three dimensions of social action identified by Mouzeli (1991, 1995). In terms of *role/positional* dimension, the inferior position of guards and their associated poor conditions of service predisposes them to respond positively to the demands of actors in their livelihood networks. In relation to *dispositional dimension*, norms within the local environment have rationalised and legitimised such exchanges between guards and local resource users. With regard to the *situational-interactional dimension*, situated meanings that guards get from their interactions with local people motivate them to think of such associations as most appropriate within the context.

7.5.7.2 Informal Venues of Power and Influencing Guard

I have already argued that even though power is fluid, certain actors may hold more bargaining strength (Cook, 1977; Ensminger and Knight, 1997), and may therefore be more successful in establishing networks to their advantage (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Indeed, differences in endowments determine who is more influential within any particular context. While all local people get some of the livelihood resources, there are several informal venues of power that made some local people more influential than others. For instance, a village bourgeois, who provides free accommodation to a guard, has a significant influence on the guard:

“It is not possible to arrest every person seen doing illegal things. You know me like this ehh I do not pay rent so how can I arrest the workers of the man who gave me this room free of charge?” (Wofa, Field Assistant, 18th May 2006).

There are many other informal venues of power. At Ahinkwa, there is only one private commercial vehicle that transports people to the nearby town. People with financial difficulty may be allowed to travel free of charge or on credit if they have good relationships with the car owner. The guard reported that each time he goes to the town, he is not charged by the car owner. Hence, he also often grants any permission

requested by this car owner. It was interesting to note that even such minor things as: writing letters for a guard (if he is an illiterate); cutting the guard's hair; selling commodities like cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and fuel are all important endowments that constitute what Jonas and While (2005: 74) refers to as "informal venues" in which power is wield (see Box 7.11).

Box 7.11 Statements by rural people on their informal networks with guards

"You know my wife sells cigarettes and sometimes he [guard] comes to buy on credit. At times I pay for him so that is why he gives us permission each time we ask of something. ...Some people are jealous about this, forgetting that we also help him" (Addo, 10th June 2006).

"He gave it [land] to me because I have been writing and reading his letters for him" (Annor, 3rd June 2006).

"Oh his wife came from the same village where I moved from and we knew each other. When they came here, we naturally became friends and that is why they allow me to burn charcoal here. ..." (Ladjer, 6th May 2006).

These informal venues of power, therefore, partly explain power differentials even within local communities. Despite these variations, actors without power can survive if they manage to associate themselves with more influential ones. The ability to farm on forest lands provides a classic example of these relationships. Powerful farmers, who have the "right connections" with the guard, get access to several tracts of forest lands. They, in turn, give part of such lands to less influential farmers for share cropping. Thus, to survive, less influential farmers have to work for those influential ones. The explanation for this is captured in the following statement by one farmer:

"If you refuse to work for them, you can't get anywhere because they are the friends to the surveyor [guard]... some of us can't get large farming plots from the surveyor but they can get so we have to work for them".

What is important here is that less influential actors are able to get some of their interests so far as they associate themselves with the powerful ones. The powerful ones became more or less "middle men" or what is known in Ghana as "connection men".

These complex relationships conform to relationships within the neo-patrimonial state. For instance, one usually only gets permits from relevant authorities, if he or she relies on “connection men”, who serve as middle men between the customer and top officials of the public authority. Unofficial payments are often channelled through the “connection man”. State officials prefer this arrangement because it protects their identities.

7.6 Conclusions

Forest policy implementation in Ghana has been influenced by interactions between formal organisational rules and informal institutions. In the pre-colonial era, shared traditional beliefs ensured quite a successful enforcement of by-laws on the conservation of sacred groves. The relationships between traditional rulers and subjects were characterised by traditional patronage exchanges. A combination of formal and informal institutions in the early colonial period made forest policy implementation complex. Early attempts by the colonial administration to implement policies which sought to establish state forest reserves were not successful due to resistance from traditional communities. Indeed, civil society was able to resist any attempt to create Crown Lands and forest reserves. Implementation of reservation policy was only possible after 1927, when the colonial administration won the support of traditional rulers.

A failed usurpation strategy, adopted in 1951, negatively affected the implementation of forest policy in the latter part of the colonial period. Local councils, which replaced traditional authorities, did not have the power needed to establish more reserves. In the early postcolonial era, worsening relationships between traditional rulers and the Forestry Department, due to the passage of a number of policies that aimed at further restricting community rights over off reserve trees made it difficult for the latter to implement forest policies. The scenario was described as a clash between executive power and traditional power. Meanwhile, neo-patrimonial networks determined how various aspects of policy were implemented. Concessions were usually awarded to only friendly local Ghanaian contractors. Regulatory rules on logging were relaxed to help local firms. Timber contractors with close ties to the executive defaulted in paying stumpage and taxes, yet they were still allowed to operate.

Despite attempts by international donors to bring about institutional changes, policy implementation in the contemporary era is still not satisfactory. The decentralised forest management policy has been poorly implemented. Local communities' rights over forest resources are still practically usurped, yet they are asked to provide free labour for the Forestry Department through a Community Forestry Committee programme. Members of these committees are not rewarded, and so many farmers are no longer active members of them. Those farmers who are still participating are doing so only because membership enables them to get "illegal permissions" from the guard to harvest forest resources. Thus, the state has not provided any rewards to CFC members, yet the actors themselves have been able to negotiate their own rules for interaction, in which guards continue to get free labour and gifts while also allowing farmers free access to forest resources.

The implementation of policies on concessions and timber revenue is influenced by patronage networks between top state officials and the "big timber men". Party affiliations and "kickbacks" are important endowments that determine who gets a Timber Utilisation Contract and who pays full rent. There is also a high level of illegal logging by both large-scale timber firms and small-scale chainsaw operators. However, similar to situations elsewhere in the developing world (see Winbourne, 2005; World Bank, 2006; Soreide, 2007), the Forestry Department has ignored the illegal activities of large-scale firms due to grand- and mid-level exchanges between top state officials and the big timber men. It has focused only on the activities of small-scale chainsaw operators. However, its attempts to prevent this group from operating totally have also not been successful, due to resource constraints and the ability of this group to enrol guards into their exploitative networks.

Implementation of laws on forest protection in the countryside is also influenced by complex livelihood networks between guards and local people. The forest guards and local people are locked up in various informal networks, which are characterised by what Valentine and Longstaff (1998:148) refer to as daily compromises, negotiations and exchanges. These networks enable local people to get some of the resources which they need for their livelihoods.

It was concluded that, while both informal networks and organisational deficiencies interact to influence policy implementation, the influence of the former is

overwhelming. Top state officials have often blamed poor policy implementation on resource constraints but the findings here suggest that the pervasiveness of informal exchanges is the major cause of poor policy implementation, and for that matter the high rate of deforestation in Ghana. Indeed grand- and mid-level corrupt exchanges among the political elite, top officials of the Forestry Department and big timber men negatively affect the award of concessions, revenue collection and checking illegal activities of large timber firms. Similarly, petty level exchanges between and among guards, local farmers and small scale chainsaw operators also lead to poor implementation of forest protection policies in the countryside. Thus, formal rules hardly function without exceptions to actors within the various categories of patronage networks.

The overwhelming influence of informal networks on policy implementation implies that while strengthening of state organisations is important, the current concentration on those formal aspects, probably in line with the propositions of mainstream theories, is not likely to result in positive changes. Technical improvements must be accompanied by social change in all spheres of political and social life if formal policy could ever be well implemented in Ghana. Some groups within civil society (e.g. Forest Watch) are increasingly putting pressure on the government to be more transparent, and it is hoped that their efforts will eventually bring about a more sustainable forest management in Ghana.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This study sought to design an integrated policy network model, and use it to examine forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana. It also aimed to examine the influence of complex power relations and informal networks on actual forest policy outcomes in Ghana. This chapter summarises the main research findings and the conclusions drawn from them. It also outlines recommendations for future research and for a more sustainable forest management in Ghana.

8.2 Principal Contribution of this Thesis: The Integrated Policy Network Model

Most existing policy models focus only on policy formulation (see, for instance, Miller; 1994; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999; Grainger and Malayang, 2006). Other models focus on policy implementation (see Wildavsky, 1984; Dunleavy, 1987). This situation is partly due to the fact that for a long time, the policy process had been represented only in hierarchical terms. Policy network theory, which posits that the policy process is shaped by interactions between both state and societal actors, has criticised hierarchical representations of the policy process (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993; Pierre and Peters, 2000; John, 2001). It recognises that there is no clear distinction between policy formulation and implementation, since policy can emerge through everyday struggles and networks among several actors (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008).

Despite these useful contributions, most policy network researchers have confined their analyses to macro- and meso - levels. Very often, only inter-organisational networks at the formal policy-making stage are analysed by these researchers. Studies that apply policy network approach to examine policy implementation are very few (Provan and Milward, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Consequently, there is still no comprehensive model that can be used to analyse, in an integrated way, policy formulation and implementation.

Given these limitations of existing policy models, the *first aim* of this study was to *design an integrated policy network model for analysing forest policy formulation and implementation*. As the central factor in such political relationships is the concept of power, the first step taken by this author was to outline a new approach to modelling power (Chapter 4). This is based on the “Foucauldian entanglements of power” perspective, which posits that power is fluid, and operates within networks (Foucault, 1980; Cresswell, 2000; Sharp *et al.*, 2000). Based on this model, an integrated policy network model was devised. It addressed the main criticisms of the existing policy network approach, especially its: (a) negligence of power differentials (Dowding, 1995; Brans, 1997; Barnett, 2003); (b) confinement of policy analysis to formal policy-making circles (Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008); (c) failure to analyse micro-interactions (John, 2001; Raab, 2001; Sibeon, 2004).

In addressing the power differential problem, I incorporated certain elements of the “hierarchical model” of governance into my framework. This clearly departs from existing policy network models, which only emphasise “horizontal interactions” (see for instance, Marsh and Rhodes, 1992a; Smith, 1993; Rhodes, 2000). Thus, I did not treat hierarchies and networks as mutually exclusive. In order to provide a framework for analysing both inter-organisational relationships and face-to-face interactions, the model assumes that groups/organisations consist of individuals with different “positional” interests. Consequently, interactions are complex, and depend on the interests and the “endowments” (right and resources) of the various actors. Macro conditions structure micro-interactions, yet the latter can produce structures at macro level. Policy changes are explained by changes in interests and network relationships among main policy actors.

The analysis shows that the various actors in the Ghana forestry sector and the patronage networks among them perfectly match the hypothetical actors in my integrated policy network model in Chapter 4 (figure 4.3). The chain G represents the state political network, with G1 as the executive. Actors located at g2 and g3 are regional and district-level state officials, such as regional ministers and district chief executives, who are members of the executive’s neo-patrimonial network. Chain A represents the Ghana Forestry Department; with A1 being top directors of organisation and a3 representing guards. Chains B and C represent groups whose leaders have some level of access to policy makers. This was found to include large timber companies,

international donor groups, local environmental NGOs and local communities. It was demonstrated that only the top leaders of these groups have historically been involved in forest policy-making. For instance, only top paramount chiefs have been consulted on policy issues, despite claims of decentralisation in the contemporary era (Chapter 6). Forest revenue distribution also favours only this group and officials of the district assemblies, who are actually members of the executive's neo-patrimonial networks. Chain D (i.e. outsiders) represents illegal chainsaw operators. They are seen as an illegal group and are, therefore, never consulted on any forest policy issue. Their activities were also banned in 1995, yet they do still have significant influence on actual policy outcomes. In fact, they are able to rely on their networks with guards and local farmers to realise their exploitative interests (see Chapter 7).

It is evident that by employing the same framework to analyse both forest policy formulation and implementation, it was possible to get a deeper understanding of relationships between macro-level political factors and micro-interactions. For instance, exchange relationships between guards and local farmers were explained, not only in terms of their "positional interests", but also in relation to macro-political factors. I have therefore taken the policy network approach one step forward, responding to previous calls for models that link macro and micro-interactions (John, 2001; Raab, 2001; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008).

While existing policy network models only focus on inter-organisational resource dependencies, I have argued that policy networks are actually intertwined with social and economic networks. A holistic approach, which examines all forms of dependencies, is therefore important for any comprehensive policy analysis. I have demonstrated that a greater understanding of policy outcomes can be achieved if aspects of the *social network analysis model* (Wasserman and Faust, 1994) are incorporated into the policy network approach. For instance, it was shown that Guards in the communities are not able to enforce strict forest laws because of their social networks with local farmers.

The new model also allows for a deeper understanding of the fluidity of power than is the case in existing policy models, which only focus on policy formulation. It provides a framework for an examination of the influence of various actors on the forest policy process. The empirical findings support the predictions of the model concerning the

fluidity of power. In the early post-colonial era, for instance, traditional rulers could not influence stated policy, yet their powers prevailed at the policy implementation stage (see Chapter 7). Similarly, chainsaw operators have no influence on stated policy in the contemporary era, yet they have the power to harvest wood illegally. I have therefore demonstrated that some actors may not have the power to influence *stated policy*, yet they can influence *actual policy outcomes*. Hence, models that examine power relationships only in terms of influence on stated policy are inappropriate. Thus, my new model provides a good framework for examining the “issue-scope” and “context-bound” aspects of power (see Chapter 4).

8.3 Applying the Policy Model to Analyse Forest Policy formulation and implementation in Ghana

As a way of testing the robustness of my new policy model, and to explain the high rate of forest loss in Ghana, the *second aim* of this research was *to use the designed policy model to analyse forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana, and test its applicability to this country*. In fulfilling this aim, primary data was gathered through interviews, focus group discussions and direct researcher observations in Ghana. Secondary data was also obtained from various sources (see Chapter 4). While the same framework was used to examine both policy formulation and implementation, the analysis was divided into three parts to ensure clarity. The first part focused on the evolution of stated and actual forest policies (Chapter 5). This was followed by a more rigorous analysis of forest policy changes in relation to changes in interests of the main policy actors and their network relationships (Chapter 6). The last part focused on the analysis of forest policy implementation (Chapter 7).

The empirical findings are largely consistent with the predictions of the integrated network model. Forest policy formulation and implementation in Ghana have been influenced by complex power relations and informal networks, which simple state- and society-centred models cannot adequately explain. Actual forest policy has historically been exploitative and policy implementation has also been very poor, due to informal networks and exchanges between state actors and exploitative groups. In the pre-colonial era, religious interests led to the formulation of by-laws on the conservation of sacred groves, yet trading networks between traditional rulers and European merchants contributed to exploitation outside them.

There was no stated policy in the first three decades of the colonial era (1874-1900), but actual forest policy continued to be exploitative, since it satisfied the interests of both traditional rulers and the colonial administration, who constituted what could be seen as the colonial policy community. Despite assertions that conflicts are usually absent in such closed type policy communities (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992b; Smith, 1993), there were conflicts within this policy community. I argued that interactions within networks involve “bargaining games”, which are aimed at allocating resources within the networks (Coleman, 1990; Thatcher, 1998; Carlsson and Sandstrom, 2008). Such bargaining games are sometimes characterised by conflicts, since various groups may want to maximise their interests. This is what happened in the colonial era. While traditional rulers and the colonial administration were cooperating, each group also wanted to have a greater control over resources. This demonstrates why it is not appropriate to classify groups as either “exploitationists” or “protectionists” (see, for instance, Grainger and Maylayang, 2006). Such a dualistic classification does not provide an adequate framework for examining intra-network conflicts.

By 1900, colonial environmental discourse shifted the actual forest policy from exploitation to conservation and sustainable management. However, attempts by the administration to use its authority to implement certain reservation policies were resisted by traditional rulers. These conflicts were only resolved in 1927 when the administration employed persuasive tactics and policy ambiguities to win the support of traditional authorities. Although the terms of this “collaboration” financially benefited only traditional rulers, local farmers played a significant role in the establishment and management of forest reserves. The explanation was that traditional rulers had “non-state forms of power” (Boone, 2003), which enabled them to control farmers. Actual forest policy shifted again from sustainable management to exploitation by 1940. This change was driven by increased international demand for timber products during and after the World War II. The first comprehensive forest policy, the 1948 Forest Policy, was largely exploitative because it was formulated within this exploitative period.

Consistent with the predictions of the integrated policy network model, this change was accompanied by a re-configuration of policy network relationships. In order to control timber revenue from the booming timber trade, the colonial executive ejected traditional rulers from the policy community in 1951, and replaced them with local government councils. Thus, the administration employed different *network management strategies* at

different times. *Process management*, which entails steering strategies that seek to unite interests of the various actors, was adopted to win the support of the traditional rulers during the early reservation period. The subsequent adoption of the Local Government Ordinance (1951) represented a *network constitution*, which involves bringing about changes in the composition of networks. The adoption of each strategy was influenced by its interests and the distribution of “endowments” (see Chapter 7). This 1951 network re-configuration negatively affected forest policy implementation. Local government councils, which were brought into the policy community, did not have the power to control land and forest issues without the consent of traditional rulers. Consequently, the councils could not play any effective role in forest management.

Timber exploitation continued to be the main goal of both stated and actual policy in the early post-colonial era (1957-1994), since it satisfied the economic and political interests of the successive post-colonial leaders. They continued to exploit natural resources to fund their neo-patrimonial networks. While local communities were marginalised, exploitation benefited only top state officials and their merchant allies. Rent collection was very poor and concessions were usually awarded to friendly timber contractors. Timber harvesting rules were also not strictly enforced because of patronage networks between and among politicians, top forestry officials and “big timber men”. The desire of various military officers to get a share of the natural resource “cake” partly contributed to instability between 1966 and 1982. Stability has been restored by President J.J. Rawlings since 1982, but largely also through the operation of neo-patrimonial networks. This resonates with the assertion that neo-patrimonial networks can cause both political stability and instability (Brattan and Van de Walle, 1997; Gabriel, 1999).

The conditions under which neo-patrimonial networks lead to stability are quite poorly understood (Gabriel, 1999; Gibson and Hoffman, 2002). The Ghanaian experience shows that stability can only be achieved when the government extends its neo-patrimonial networks to every corner of country. Yet resource constraints limit the ability of governments to fund such extensive networks (Herbst, 2000). Rawlings overcame such constraints by directly putting his “men” in charge of some revenue generation activities. This led to further natural resource exploitation. Apart from patronage networks, marginalisation of local farmers and traditional rulers also contributed to deforestation in the early post-colonial era, as these actors were forced to

destroy forests for farming activities. They also connived with chainsaw operators to harvest timber illegally.

In view of these past problems, international donors pressured the government to adopt policy changes in 1994. While stated forest policy maintains participatory and sustainable management goals to please the donors, exploitation continues to be the actual forest policy. The 1994 Forest Policy can be seen as, to use the words of Rees (1990: 417), “a token gesture, designed to diffuse political conflict, without making any real change in the status quo”. This employment of ambiguities to contest international pressures challenges the notion of “eco-imperialism”. International donors do influence the stated policies of developing countries, yet there is no evidence to support claims that the sovereignty and autonomy of these countries are being usurped by international donor groups (Hyden *et al.*, 2000; Leonard, 2001). This also challenges assertions that financial aid “conditionalities” can bring about policy changes in the developing world (Nelson, 1990; Gibson *et al.*, 1992; Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997).

Given that the executive is still more interested in exploitation, forest policy implementation in contemporary Ghana is still very poor, and significantly influenced by informal networks. The decentralised/collaborative forest management policy has been very poorly implemented. Although collaborative resource management entails a network form of governance (Carlsson and Berkes, 2005; Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008), few researchers have applied the network theory to explain natural resource management (see, Crona and Bodin, 2006; Frank *et al.*, 2007; Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008). The need to apply network theory to analyse natural resource management has recently been suggested by some researchers (Janssen *et al.*, 2006; Carlsson and Berkes, 2005; Carlsson and Sanstrom, 2008), and my findings support the importance of such approaches. By analysing collaborative resource management within the framework of a policy networks approach, it was possible to examine the complex interactions between state and local communities in Ghana.

Various state actors who are involved in collaborative management have different “positional interests”. Similarly, local communities are also made up of individuals with different interests. Interactions between the state and the local communities are shaped by individual positional interests and needs. It was found that local communities’ rights over forest resources are still practically usurped by the Forestry Department. The

communities' share of timber revenue is paid to unrepresentative paramount chiefs and District Assemblies. Here, although what constitutes a local community is an important question that needs to be addressed in any collaborative/participatory management programme (Cline-Cole, 1997; Leach *et al*, 1999), the government of Ghana deliberately failed to address this issue. Relying on such ambiguities, the executive has been employing the decentralisation programme to enhance and masquerade its neo-patrimonial networks with local elite. In the absence of any proper reward system, the community forestry committees (CFCs) are ineffective. Many farmers have stopped taking part in CFC programmes. A few others are still cooperating with the guards, not because they are happy with the government's arrangements, but because membership of the CFC enables them to get "illegal permissions" to harvest forest resources.

As in the early post-colonial period, grand- and mid-level corrupt exchanges between "big timber men" and top state officials have negative influence on the award of timber concessions and rent collection. The same corrupt exchanges make it difficult to control illegal logging, which is around 70-80%. Similar to situations elsewhere in the developing world (see Callister, 1999; Winbourne, 2005; World Bank, 2006; Soreide, 2007), the Forestry Department has ignored the illegal activities of large-scale firms. The Department has been focusing only on preventing small-scale chainsaw operators and poor farmers from extracting forest resources. However, attempts to stop chainsaw operators from operating have not been successful, due to resource constraints and the ability of some chainsaw operators to enrol poor guards and local farmers into their exploitative networks. Similarly, although the rights of local people have been unjustifiably usurped, attempts to prevent them from harvesting forest resources have not been successful because of complex dependencies between them and forest guards. There is a link between macro-level politico-economic factors and these micro-level interactions. Poor conditions of service for guards, inappropriate forest policies and marginalisation of local farmers contribute to these petty-level exchanges among guards, farmers and chainsaw operators.

It is concluded that while both informal networks and organisational deficiencies interact to influence forest policy outcomes, the influence of the former is overwhelming. A close link was also established between informal networks and organisational deficiencies, such as resource constraints, poor conditions of service and poor supervision (Chapter 7). The government has often made donors believe that an

inability to protect the forests is due to resource constraints, but this research concludes that the pervasiveness of informal networks and corrupt exchanges is the major cause of high deforestation in Ghana.

8.4 The Influence of Complex Power Relations and Informal Networks on Actual Forest Policy Outcomes in Ghana

By applying the integrated policy network model to analyse forest policy formulation and implementation, it was possible to achieve the *third aim* of this research, which was *to examine the influence of complex power relations and informal networks on actual forest policy outcomes in Ghana*. The analysis revealed that although power is not equally distributed, it is still relatively fluid. The executive has historically marginalised local communities in the distribution of forest benefits, yet its powers have never been total. The colonial administration, for instance, was practically powerless whenever its forest and land policies were not supported by traditional rulers. Similarly, early post-colonial governments enacted policies to usurp the rights of forest communities. These actors could not influence stated forest policy, yet their resistances prevailed at the rural landscapes (see Chapter 7). As Sharp *et al.* (2000: 10) noted: “through resistance by non-consenting and non-cooperation leading to disobedience, subjects decline to supply power-holders with their sources of power”.

Actual forest policy outcomes in the contemporary era are also shaped by complex power relations and informal networks. High levels of illegal logging and poor revenue collection are partly caused by patronage networks and corrupt exchanges between top state officials and big timber men. International pressures for greater transparency and participatory forest management have been contested through the employment of “subtle forms of power”, especially manipulations (Chapter 6 and 7). Within Ghanaian society, the fluidity of power has been reinforced by the pervasiveness of informal networks and exchanges. It was shown that small-scale chainsaw operators are no longer allowed to harvest timber. However, by relying on their networks and exchanges with guards and farmers, the group still illegally produces 46% of total wood harvested annually. The operation of these networks is consistent with the “entanglement of power perspective” The actors involved are individually “powerless”, but through these networks, they all get access to timber revenue. This relates to the concept of *social capital*, which suggests that “how, or the way, individuals relate to one another affects

their own and others' long-term benefits" (Ostrom and Ahn 2003, xiii). Unlike other forms of capital, social capital is an asset of networks (Coleman, 1990).

Similarly, rural dwellers are formally not allowed to harvest even non-timber forest resources, unless they produce a permit from the District Forest Office. However, these actors and the guards are locked up in various informal networks, which are characterised by daily compromises, negotiations and exchanges. This situation is a result of complex interaction of formal and informal institutions. In any social and political relationships, actors try to order their actions in line with the institutional system that has legitimacy over the space within which they find themselves (Burns and Flam, 1987). Guards abandon formal rules on forest protection because such rules contradict informal rules on reciprocity, flexibility and friendliness within the local community. These relationships are, however, not symmetrical since it is assumed that the guards have more favours to give to the local people. The actors appear equal only because they are interacting based on village rules that construct them as equals. This also supports my criticism against policy network models that ignore power differentials. Dependency situations do not necessarily have to be symmetrical (Lin, 2001).

The effects of these networks on actual forest policy outcomes demonstrate that it is wrong to portray figures of domination as the only actors with power. As some scholars have noted, both rulers and subjects have some forms of power (Foucault, 1982; Tarrow, 1994; Cresswell, 2000; Crang, 2000; Lukes, 2005). Marginalised groups do not have power to influence stated policy, but they certainly influence actual policy outcomes through their networks. This resonates with Layder's (1997: 147) assertion that "people are constantly subjected to the effects of power, but to varying degrees, they themselves also have powers that they may deploy to greater or lesser effect".

8.5 Conclusions

The integrated policy network model designed and tested in this study demonstrates the importance of applying policy network approaches to analyse forest policy formulation and implementation, especially in the developing world. It also shows that the best way to understand complex power relations, and explain disparities between stated forest

policy and actual forest policy outcomes is to employ a network model that allows for analysing both policy formulation and implementation.

These issues became clearer in this thesis, as it shows that actual forest policy in Ghana has historically been exploitative, and policy implementation has also been very poor, due to complex interdependencies and informal networks between state actors and exploitative groups. It was also shown that power is not equally distributed, yet it is still relatively fluid. The executive employs subtle forms of power to contest international pressures. Similarly, marginalised groups, such as local farmers and chainsaw operators, have no power to influence policy makers, yet they still have what Sharp *et al.*, (2000: 22) call the “power of the powerless” to influence actual policy outcomes.

It is concluded that the high level of deforestation in Ghana is a result of complex interdependencies and corrupt exchanges between state officials and private loggers. Rent levels have been very low and local communities have been marginalised, due to the desire to use forest resources to fund neo-patrimonial networks. Illegal logging has been allowed to continue because of patronage networks between “big timber men” and top state officials. Similar networks between guards, chainsaw operators and some farmers affect forest protection.

The thesis thus demonstrates the importance of policy network approaches for understanding why the rate of deforestation is still high, despite the claim by the government of Ghana that it has adopted sustainable forest policies. Given the significant influence of informal networks and exchanges on actual forest policy outcomes, it is concluded that analysing organisational performance and policy implementation only in terms of resource availability is inappropriate. Organisations must be analysed not only in relation to material resources, but also in relation to culture, power, dependencies and networks. It is also concluded that while strengthening of state organisations is important, the current concentration on those formal aspects alone is not likely to result in better forest management in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa. Technical improvements must be accompanied by greater transparency on the part of state officials. It is hoped that a change driven by civil society and a strong local media should help improve governance and forest management in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

8.6 Reflections on the Research Process/Experience: Positionality and Limitations

As discussed in Chapter 4, established guidelines for dealing with ethical issues, such as informed consent and guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality (see Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Valentine, 2001), were strictly observed to protect respondents. Besides, a number of strategies, including the cross checking of responses and the use of method triangulation, were adopted to ensure that the research findings are valid and reliable. Despite these measures, it is obvious that a number of issues beyond my control might have influenced the findings of this research. Thus, the relevance of situating knowledge in particular contexts and articulating the positionality of both the researcher and the researched (see Rose, 1997) cannot be ignored, given the fact that interviews were conducted within different contexts. Indeed, my fieldwork experience in Ghana supports the assertion that a researcher's positionality (i.e. age, gender, education, class, cultural and ideological background, and other statuses) *vis-a-vis* the researched can influence access to informants and the data that are produced (Mohammad, 2001).

A dimension of positionality that was particularly important in this research was power relations between the researcher and the researched. Cormode and Hughes (1999) pointed out different ethical and methodological challenges are faced when one is conducting a research among respondents with different social statuses. This was the situation that I found myself in during this research. While giving them all the due respect, I tried to maintain equal power relations with top state officials. Yet in practice, some of them saw me as too young to be asking questions about the government's financial practices and transparency in forest resource management. For instance, one official at the Ministry of Lands and Forestry asked me: "*Young man, what do you need all these for?*" (Yohuno, 7th March 2006). Some top officials also felt a student should not have been asking some of the questions I was asking. For instance, one stated: "*I don't think a student needs this information you are asking for*" (Gidi, Forest Manager, 28th February 2006).

On the other hand, some respondents, mainly street-level bureaucrats and local people perceived me as a privileged Ghanaian because of my level of education and affiliation to a UK university. This helped me to gain access to some information. However, this also negatively affected access to data in some ways. Some local farmers were initially giving us (myself and my assistants) so much respect that they were feeling shy to chat

with us for long hours. I spent a lot of time telling them about my personal history in a rural community just to make them see me as one of them. Thus as my research involved interviewing both elite (i.e. government officials) and ordinary people (guards and local farmers) my power relations with these respondents changed from one context to the other, even though I tried to maintain equal relationships with all the respondents.

My experiences also mirror some of the theoretical perspectives on the advantages/disadvantages that a researcher may have by being perceived as an “insider” or an “outsider”. It has been argued that “insiders” (i.e. researchers who study a group to whom they belong) have an advantage because they are more likely to be trusted by respondents and can, therefore, get access to information that would not be given to an “outsider”. A counter argument is that “outsider” researchers are more objective and are able to gain access to information without distorting the meanings of these responses (Mohammad, 2001). Mullings (1999) has challenged these traditional view points, and argued that the “insider – outsider” boundary is not stable, and that it is actually subject to the dynamism of positionalities in time and space. My experience in Ghana supports this position. As I conducted interviews among various participants, there were times that I was seen as an outsider or an insider depending on the background of the respondents.

As hinted already, my interaction with top state officials from the Ministry of Lands and Forestry and the Forestry Departments could be portrayed as a situation involving a young postgraduate researcher trying to study the actions and networks of government elite. As Cormode and Hughes (1999) noted, access to information within those contexts is sometimes difficult. My background as a young Ghanaian postgraduate student in the United Kingdom had both negative and positive effects within this context. It appeared that some top state officials were particularly suspicious about the main reasons for conducting this research. Most of them asked me if I have some connections with the DFID, the World Bank or the Transparency International. Thus, some of these respondents treated me as an outsider, who was interested in getting information for international organisations. Even some directors did not allow me to record them electronically because of this suspicion. This obviously affected the quality of information I got on issues such as award of timber contracts and the use of donor funds to promote forest decentralisation programmes. Nevertheless, I got some rich information from some members of this group by virtue of my nationality. Some

referred to me as “*my brother*” while others stated “*since you are also a Ghanaian*” to justify why they were giving me a particular “secret” information or the other. Again it was obvious that some officials cooperated with me just because of my affiliation with a UK University. One forester was excited when I introduced myself and he stated: “*Ohh Leeds, I like that school....*” (Mussa, Forester, 30th June 2006). This particular official was exceptionally helpful to me apparently because of my affiliation with this University.

My positionality was different within the local communities where I had to interview street-level bureaucrats, commercial loggers and local people. These groups did not care much about the possibility that I could leak information to international donors. However, they feared that I could rather be a spy for the government or local anticorruption organisations. Some forest guards, for instance, refused to take part in the survey because of these fears. Some of them also took part in the research but refused to talk about issues on bribery. To deal with these problems, sensitive questions and themes were sometimes skipped when I was feeling that the interviewee did not want to give specific information about those matters. It was also difficult to obtain detailed information from illegal chainsaw operators and timber contractors because of suspicion.

Within the local communities, my tribe and ability to speak the local languages of the people appeared to be important determinants of how I was perceived by respondents. We did not encounter any serious problem at Ahinkwa where the people speak my native language (see Chapter 4). I was treated as an insider and this allowed me to get important information from local people and even chainsaw operators. Things were, however, not very easy at Saponso. Despite explaining the purpose of this study to them, some of them thought that my aim was to get information for the Forestry Department. I was thus seen by many respondents here as an outsider. Some respondents were sometimes not willing to talk about their activities, while a few others were also giving answers that were obviously incorrect. It is evident from the above that the insider-outsider boundary was indeed not stable within this research. Indeed whether I was seen as an *insider* or an *outsider* depended on the context within which I found myself.

Apart from these positionality issues, some limitations of this research also emanated from the very nature of the research topic. The study involved investigations about both corrupt and non-corrupt exchanges and networks. It is obvious that given the nature of the issues explored, there is some probability that a few respondents might have consciously or unconsciously given incorrect or biased responses. Some respondents might have also lied to protect their integrity. As Newman (2000) noted, when questions are sensitive, respondents may try to present a positive image of themselves instead of giving the “correct answers”. They may be embarrassed, ashamed or afraid to give truthful answers. In such situations, respondents are likely to give answers that are believed to be normative (socially desirability bias).

Another weakness of this research is the fact that quantitative methods were not used in the analysis of policy network structure and interactions within them. Although the study employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques, the latter was only applied to describe the distribution of responses where appropriate. This is a common problem that network researchers face. They tend to employ either a quantitative approach or a qualitative approach in analysing the network structure and interactions, since a combination of both methods is quite difficult. The idea of combining both methods came to mind at the initial stages of the research, but it was abandoned later when it became obvious that such an engagement would be over-ambitious, given time limitations.

Paucity of data was another limitation of this research. I would have liked to present a more detailed account of forest cover and wood production trends, but poor monitoring made this impossible. Data on wood production does not include the proportion harvested illegally, though anecdotal reports suggest that the volume of illegally harvested wood is very high. There was also no detailed information on policy implementation, especially in the pre-colonial and the colonial periods. Notwithstanding these limitations, the overall quality of the data presented in this research has not been affected. The use of method triangulation, the combination of different sources of data and the reliance on secondary data from very reputable sources have all gone a long way to ensure that the data used in this research has a high degree of validity.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR OFFICIALS OF FORESTRY ORGANISATIONS

I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds and I am conducting my research on the topic "Forest resource management in Ghana: an analysis of policy and institutions" Please, you have been identified as a knowledgeable informant on this topic and hence I will be very grateful if could complete this questionnaire which is important for the success of my study. Please, the study is purely an academic exercise and as such be assured that all the information provided will be treated in absolute confidence. Responses will be used anonymously and cannot be traced to the persons who provide them. Kindly permit me to thank you in advance for your time and contribution to this research.

Policy Formulation

1. Is there any specific policy document that guides the operations of your organisation?
Yes / No / Don't Know
2. If yes to Q1, are you very familiar with the entire content of this policy document?
Yes, very familiar/ Yes, slightly familiar / not familiar
3. Have there been any changes in this policy document since it was first developed?
Yes / No/ Don't know; If yes what were the reasons for the changes in policy.....
.....
4. Do you think the current forest policy is appropriate? Yes / No, If No, which aspects of the policy do you think should be modified?
.....
5. Are you very clear with the goals of the policy document you currently work with?
Yes, very clear/ Yes, partially clear / not clear
6. Have you ever been personally involved in the formulation of policy? Yes / No
If yes, what was your role..... . If No, were you ever asked for your views before the formulation of policy? Yes / No
7. Are local communities involved in forest policy formulation? Yes / No/ Don't know;
If yes, state why and how they are involved.....
.....
If no, why are they not involved.....

8. Which other groups/organisations (e.g. donor organisations; NGOs; District Assemblies) take part in forest policy formulation and what specific roles do they play?
9. Why are those groups involved/consulted?
10. How often do policy makers accept demands made by local communities and or other groups? Always / Seldom / Never
11. How do you resolve conflicts during policy formulation when interests of the government, your organisation and groups involved are not compatible?
12. Whose demands/interests are adopted into policy when disagreements among interests of groups are difficult to reconcile?

Institutional Strength and Linkages

13. Does your organisation work closely with other organisations in implementing forest policy? Yes/No/Don't Know. If yes which organisations.....
14. If yes to Q13, in what ways does your organisation have ties with those other organisations? (Tick as many as applicable) (a) Sharing information... (b) Sharing equipment..... Specify which equipment.....(c) Sharing of personnel/expert knowledge..., Specify how this happens..... (d) Other, please explain.....
15. Does your organisation involve local communities in policy implementation? Yes/ No/ Don't know; If yes, explain how they are involved.....
16. Are you responsible for supervising some other workers? Yes/ No
If yes: (i) who do you supervise?
(ii) how do you supervise those people?
17. Are you supervised by some other person (s)? Yes, always/ Yes, seldom/ No
If yes: (i) who supervises you?
(ii) how are you supervised?.....
18. If you are supervised by somebody who stays outside your usual place of work, how often does your supervisor (s) visit you at your work place? Once a week / once a month / once every 6 months / once a year / No regular visits

19. Are meetings held regularly to evaluate/plan progress? Yes / Seldom / No
20. Do you consider your organisation to be independent with respect to planning its activities? Yes, highly independent/ yes slightly independent/ No; Please give reasons for your answer.....
21. What is the level of resource availability (e.g. financial, technical etc) for your organisation to carry out activities? High /Moderate/Low
22. Which resources are inadequate
23. What training have you received for your current job? Full / Partial/ No training
24. How often does your organisation organise refresher courses for you? (Yearly/ every two years/ once every five years or more / No refresher course at all
25. Are you satisfied with your working conditions? Yes/ Partially/ No; If partially or not satisfied, what are you not satisfied with.....
26. Have you ever complained to your supervisors/employers about the things that you are not satisfied with? Yes/ No; If yes, what were the responses.....
.....
If no why did you not complain.....
27. Have you ever been transferred from one job or area to another? Yes/ No; If yes please state (i) the number of times you have been transferred.....
(ii) the reasons for the transfer.....
28. Are you happy about transfers? Yes/ No; Explain your answer.....
.....

Policy Implementation

29. How would you rank the level of disparities between stated forest policy goals and actual policy outcomes? High /moderate/low
30. What, in your view, are the causes of disparities between stated policy goals and actual outcomes?
31. Do you think the institutional arrangement of your organisation allows for effective policy implementation? Yes/No/ Don't Know; 'If no, please explain your answer.....
32. Are you allowed to independently make major decisions that affect your operations during policy implementation? Yes always/ Yes sometimes/ No;
If yes, on what issues?

33. Is it always possible to strictly apply institutional rules during your operations? Yes/ No; If No, explain the conditions under which strict application of rules is not possible.....
34. Do some people sometimes seek permission from you to engage in certain activities in the forests? Yes always/Yes sometimes / No; If yes what activities do people usually seek permission for?
35. What factors do you consider when taking decisions on what to do when people ask such permissions?
- 36 How often do you meet people engaging in illegal activities in the forests? Very often / seldom/ never; what do you do when you get such people?
37. What factors do you consider in taking decisions on your actions when you meet people engaging in illegal things in the forests?
38. Have you ever had a violence encounter with any individual/group during your operations? Yes often /Yes seldom/ No; If yes, explain
39. Has someone ever attempted to bribe you in your operations Yes/ No; If yes with what and what did you do?
40. Were there ever any situation where you think your personal interests/or interests of the community in which you work conflicts with stated policy goals? Yes/ No If yes, (i) explain how this occurred
- (ii) whose interests do you try to satisfy in such situations.....
- 41 What suggestions would you want to make for improvements in forest management in Ghana.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HOUSEHOLD HEADS**Key themes that will be discussed in interviews**

1. Forest resources on which household depends directly and how they are obtained
2. Knowledge of existing forest policies
3. Views on forest policy and how it affects interests and welfare of household
4. Participation in forest management (policy formulation and implementation)
5. Community compliance with forest policy
6. Influencing forest officials/ relationships and networks with forest officials
7. Impressions about operations of forest officials
8. Farming on forest lands / getting access to forest lands
9. Harvesting of wood products for personal use or sale
10. Activities of chainsaw operators and timber firms
11. Sharing of forest revenue / royalties
12. Views on the sustainability of current forest management in the community
13. Suggestions for improvement of forest management

Possible questions that will be asked on each of the above themes

Note: This guide is just to give an idea of what will be discussed under each of the themes but it will not be rigidly followed. The interviews will be flexible and hence questions will not necessarily be asked in the order in which they are listed. Again questions will be asked in the local languages and hence their exact translations may differ from how they are stated here. Please note that questions in parentheses are possible follow up questions.

Forest resources on which household depends directly and how they are obtained

1. Does your household rely on some forest resources for sustenance? If yes please tell me about the forest resources and services that are very important for the survival of your household?
2. Tell me about how you get these resources/ services

3. Do you have to obtain permission from any person before entering the forest reserves for these resources/services? (From whom? how?)
4. What conditions/factors affect ones chances of getting such permissions granted?

Knowledge of existing forest policies

5. Are you familiar with the content of the current forest policy? (what are some of the forest laws? How did you first hear of these laws?)

Views on forest policy and how it affects interests and welfare of household

6. Do you think the forest policies are good? (Why? how do they favour/affect the interests and welfare of your household?)

Participation in policy formulation and implementation

7. Have you or any member of your household ever participated in the formulation of forest policy? (when and how?)
8. Do you or any of your household members play any role in forest management (What role? Guarding the forests? Whom does the person work with? Any remuneration?)

Community compliance with forest policy

9. Do you think it is possible for people in this community to comply with all the rules in the current forest policy? (reasons?)
10. Have you ever seen some people engaging in illegal activities in the forests? (which activities? Did you report them? Why and what happened?)
11. Have you ever seen some people being arrested in this community for violating the forest laws? (what offences? who arrests the people? what happened to those arrested?)

Influencing forest officials

12. Have you or any of your household members ever been seen by a forest officer whilst doing certain activities that were not generally permitted? (How often? Tell me about what happened)
13. Can you tell me about how one can get permission from forest officers in order to engage in certain activities which are restricted in the forests?

14. Can you tell me about the factors that affect ones ability to get such permissions from the forest officials?

Impressions about operations of forest officials

15. Do you think the forest officers are doing their work very well? (Reasons?)

Farming on forest lands

16. Have you ever made a farm on a forest reserve land? (which crops? Can you tell me about how you got access to those plots?, from whom? any conditions?)

Harvesting of wood products

17. Have you ever harvested timber from any forests for your personal use? (What of for sale?; Do you have to gain permission before? From whom and on what conditions were you granted the permission? Any problems whilst harvesting?)

Activities of chainsaw operators and timber firms

18. Do you like the operations of timber firms that operate in this community? (why? What of chainsaw operators?)

Sharing of Forest revenue / royalties

19. Have you or any member of your household ever received some revenue from forest resources (like royalties? Who paid it? when and how?)

Views on the sustainability of current forest management in the community

20. Do you think forests in this community are being managed very well (Reasons?)

Suggestions for improvement of forest management

21. What suggestions would you want to make for improvement of forest management in this community?