Australia’s regional forest agreement process: analysis of the potential and problems

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Accepted 19 November 2003

Abstract

The 1990s heralded a new era in forest policy in Australia with the introduction of The National Forest Policy Statement which provided a framework under which native forest resources would be protected whilst also permitting ecologically sustainable timber harvesting. However, the implementation of the statement through the Regional Forest Agreements by state governments appear to contradict the conditions of the policy. Political bias towards development imperatives in implementing RFAs is evident. Community involvement in RFAs has not been satisfactory for sustainable forest use and management, with ongoing dissatisfaction from some stakeholder groups. There is still increased demand for protection of what remains of the various forest reserves. Aboriginal issues have not been settled in line with the expectation of the policy. There are continuing conflicts between the Commonwealth Government and some state governments.

Keywords: Regional forest agreements; Public choice; Interest groups; Politics; Forest policy

1. Introduction

The forest sector in Australia provides a multitude of products and employment to a substantial section of the population. Since European settlement Australian forests have been indiscriminately used removing two thirds of the original tree cover. By 1920, land had been widely exploited with existing technology, and wilderness, biodiversity, and other forest values were under threat. Australian forest policy developed in this environment that valued forest exploitation. The timber industry requiring unfettered access to wood resources from native forests for domestic needs as well as export wood-chip and paper pulp. The taxation benefits and subsidies for land clearing further accelerated the decline in forested land.

An important feature of Australian forestry is the dominance of public institutions. Nearly 75% of the forest land is in the public sector which means that forest management in Australia is primarily the management of state forests. Constitutionally, forest resources are under the jurisdiction of state govern-
ments although the Commonwealth Government can intervene under various powers. The wood using industries are highly-dependent on the state governments for their forest resources. Because the government was so closely involved in the forest sector it was inevitable that sector investment and performance were heavily influenced by political and bureaucratic interventions and objectives. Existing evidence clearly indicates that past government policies favoured the timber industry over conservation interests (Dargavel, 1998a; Herath, 2002). The first movements to preserve national parks occurred in the nineteenth century, ironically to preserve the native forests for future forestry enterprises.

In the 1950s, community dissatisfaction over forest exploitation spawned environmental awareness and the emergence of a number of interest groups. The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA), the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and Australian Wilderness Society (AWS) and the various state level national parks associations are examples of such interest groups (McKercher, 1998). These environmental groups increasingly challenged the acceptability of extensive harvesting of the forests. These groups focused their campaigns for forest protection on the state because the state controlled the managing agencies and was the arena where acrimonious conflicts had to be fought (Dargavel, 1998b). These groups generally articulate their concerns through collective activities or by directing votes in marginal seats to influence forest policy to promote their own interests. High profile forest issues such as the Lake Pedder and Franklin Dam issue in Tasmania and logging in Tasmania, New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland among others (Kellow, 1989) serve to galvanise public support for forest protection. Many other groups such as the indigenous people, tourism operators, bushwalkers were intertwined in most forest conflicts.

Governments attempt to maximize their political opportunities by aligning with those interests that wield greater political power. As a result, political parties have won power and environmentalists have won concessions often in the form of protective legislation or new protected areas (Davis, 1989). The success of the Labour Party in the 1983 election was partly due to active campaign of the wilderness movement against the Federal Liberal Government over the Franklin dam issues. Commonwealth Government involvement peaked during the 1980–1989s, largely triggered by a recognition that some of the major environmental conflicts at the time required involvement of the Commonwealth Government. In New South Wales, after the pro-logging Greiner Liberal Government was elected in 1988, the wilderness movement turned to the Commonwealth Government to proclaim the southeast forests under its heritage legislation (Gerritsen, 1990). In the southwest Tasmanian wilderness conflicts, interest groups used direct political lobbying as a critical element in their strategy. This lobbying captured the important swing vote in marginal seats and helped the labour government, which advocated the preservation of the southwest Tasmania.

The interest groups also attempt to capture the bureaucracies which form part of the governments supportive institutional environment. Many institutions represent very narrow interests, reflecting the dominance of the logging and milling industry. Historically, the state forests and the early national parks were only reserved against opposition from agricultural interests and the well entrenched Lands Department (Dargavel, 1998b). Recently, the forested national parks were reserved against opposition from the forest industries and the state forest services. In delivering the needs of many interest groups, the governments have to find some way of satisfying its own power base. The interest groups, bureaucracy and politically sensitive governments have brought significant changes to Australian forest policy in the 1990s, which is a strong contrast to those that existed a century earlier.

This political approach to forest policy did not lead to any resolution of some of the major conflicts because governments tend to follow a path of least resistance, a course that is perceived to be politically least problematic, rather than what is deemed ecologically rational or necessary. These approaches have provoked intense conflict among the stakeholders including state and the Commonwealth Government. Some of these conflicts have been politically very expensive for governments (Carron, 1993; Dargavel, 1995).

The 1990s heralded a new era in forest policy in Australia. In 1992, the then Prime Minister Paul
Keating announced a new strategy for the protection of native forests. The policy represented a consensus between the Commonwealth and States in the form of the National Forest Policy Statement (NFPS), which provided a framework under which forest resources would be protected and sustainably used (Australia, 1992). This is a comprehensive package with a mandate to include all stakeholder groups in a consensual negotiations of forest land allocation. The NFPS reflects a departure from the traditional approach of centralised decision making to a participatory model emphasizing open discussion and the recognition of different stakeholder groups and their values. The NFPS established a new direction in forest policy at both Commonwealth and State levels that would eventuate in the signing of Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) as the approach to the sustainable use and management of forest resources in Australia. Nearly 10 years have elapsed since the adoption of the RFA process but many of the problems still remain unresolved. A comprehensive understanding of the economic, political, environmental, institutional and social dimensions of the RFA process would provide valuable insight into the policy making process and their failures.

According to Public Choice Theory, government decisions on forest policy are subject to pressure from interest groups, lobbying and voting and self-interest, in the political market. The political purpose of the RFA process, although not explicitly stated, was to take forest issues off the political agenda by securing Commonwealth and State cooperation (Dargavel, 1998b). It is hypothesised in this paper that the RFA process was dictated by a constellation of interest groups. The political and bureaucratic opportunities that governments displayed in early forest policy have not changed significantly in the RFA process leading to some of the failures.

The specific objectives of this paper are to:

a Briefly review the RFA process and Public Choice Theory;
b Evaluate the Regional Forest Agreement from a Public Choice Theory perspective; and
c Derive implications for future forest policy in Australia.

The paper is organised as follows: the next section will discuss the salient features of the RFA process. Section 3 then presents the basic elements of Public Choice Theory. In Section 4 the paper analyses whether the RFA process has been consistent with public choice theory prescriptions. The last section draws conclusions on whether public choice theory is a useful framework for the design of forest policy in Australia.

2. The regional forest agreement process (RFAS)

In December 1992, the Prime Minister and all State Premiers (excluding Tasmania) and both Territory Chief Ministers signed the NFPS which had eleven major goals ranging from conservation through to sustainable wood production. These include:

- Management of privately owned native forests;
- Establishment of hardwood and softwood plantations;
- Water supply and catchment management;
- Tourism and timber related training and employment.

The NFPS was committed to a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) reserve system and the implementation of strategies to protect old-growth forests and wilderness as part of the reserve system. The three broad reservation criteria for biodiversity, old growth forests and wilderness are:

- A benchmark of 15% of the pre-1750s distribution of each forest community be protected within conservation reserves;

2 Tasmania had expressed its intention to continue management of its resource as set out in the Tasmanian Forests and Forest Industry Strategy (Australia, 1992).
The retention in reserves of at least 60% of existing old growth, increasing up to 100% for rare forest community old growth; and

- The protection of 90% or more, wherever practicable, of high quality wilderness (JANIS, 1997).

The day following the NFPS, New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia declared six million hectares of forests as 'deferred forest areas' (DFAs) to provide interim protection of forest areas until an RFA could be put in place. The DFAs as agreed to with each State were of a fixed term and overridden when an RFA was entered into between the State and Commonwealth for that region.

The most important step in this new vision is the negotiation between the Commonwealth and States over the long-term management of forests called Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs). The RFAs are 20-year agreements, with 5 yearly reviews and are intended to give certainty to industries and regional communities, enabling the development of internationally competitive and ecologically sustainable industries. In addition, the RFA was to provide ecologically sustainable management to the whole forest estate, both on and off reserves (Environment Australia, 1999). Already, ten RFAs have been signed as shown in Table 1.

An essential part of the RFAs is that the Commonwealth control over the export of hardwood is removed for that region. The Export Control regulations (hardwood wood chips) state that wood chips from native hardwood forests are permitted to be exported only if they are derived from a region to which a RFA applies. In 1997, amendments were made to the Export Control (Regional Forest Agreements) Regulations. The effect of the amendments being to permit the export of hardwood wood chips from an RFA region, without any form of Commonwealth approval or control. The concept of sustainability in commercial forest use is a significant change in direction for traditional forest management.

The States were to undertake scientific analysis of both Public and Private Native forests, ensuring that 15% of pre-white settlement forest cover was set aside under a comprehensive reserve system, with unique, or endangered ecosystems also protected. Described as mega-diverse in terms of biological diversity, it is likely that most forest diversity remains unknown (Mobbs, 2001).

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RFA region</th>
<th>Date signed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) South East</td>
<td>RFA not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) North East (Upper and Lower)</td>
<td>31 March 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Southern</td>
<td>24 April 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Eden</td>
<td>26 August 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) East Gippsland</td>
<td>3 February 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Gippsland</td>
<td>31 March 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) North East</td>
<td>23 August 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Central Highlands</td>
<td>27 March 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) West</td>
<td>31 March 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Tasmania</td>
<td>8 November 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) South West</td>
<td>4 May 1999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4 The concept of sustainability of open to broad variation in definition ranging from very weak sustainability to that of very strong sustainability. Inclusive are the terms weak sustainability and strong sustainability with each term having specific definitions as to sustainable practices (Turner, 1993).

### 3. Public choice theory

Public choice theory (PCT) is the application of economics to political decision making (Mueller, 1989). PCT assumes that bureaucrats are motivated primarily by self-interest rather than the public interest. PCT explains decision making by voters, bureaucrats and politicians. According to PCT, government decision making is subject to pressure from ‘interest groups’, lobbying, and voting behaviour, and self-interest, expressed in the ‘political market’ (Johnson, 1994).
3.1. Interest groups

The 1950s and the 1960s witnessed the emergence of a number of interest groups. Some of them being highly institutionalized with a highly organized leadership structure, long-term stable membership, and an extensive knowledge of the working of the government (Hutton and Connors, 1999). Single platform or local groups also form around one or two issues. These groups are not generally well organized and the membership dissolves after the objective has been achieved. Early estimates of the direct membership in all environmental groups ranged from 150 000 to 300 000 persons, a high figure for a population of less than 19 million (Davis, 1991). The success of interest groups, depends on their organization, access to information, knowledge of political machinery, and the degree of consolidation to address the particular issue. The groups generally articulate their concerns in two ways. They either use individually motivated channels of political involvement such as voting, or alternatively support collective activities in the form of an organized interest group. The interest groups in this way can influence public policy to promote their own interests. Interest groups can spend large amounts of money and time in lobbying the politicians to obtain special favours. Known as rent seeking, this is a highly inefficient practice as it misallocates resources in favour of one interest group over another, without justification. Environmental interest groups have become a major factor in the decision making process for the establishment of wilderness areas in Australia and Canada (Sewell et al., 1989). The preservation of the Franklin area acted as major catalyst and focus for the environmental lobby to become politically active in Australia. The rise of the environmental movement in the 1960s, resulted in widespread attention being given to matters such as conservation, resource allocation and environmental preservation. Environmental decisions, which are political in nature are the results of bargaining amongst interest groups who know what they want and how to get it.

3.2. Role of bureaucracy

According to public choice theory, relationships develop between state bureaucratic agencies such as the forest industry, conservation agencies, and other interest groups. The forest industry had strong links with State forest departments for industrial development. Since forest industries generate development and economic benefit, the financial management agencies at state and federal levels form part of their supportive institutional environment. Similarly, the conservation agencies support special interest groups on forest conservation and species protection. The financial resources are provided not by customers but by a political sponsor who allocates funds to public agencies. Therefore to the extent that bureaucrats are responsive to external pressures, they are more likely to pay attention to the desires of politicians than the need of the public. The Government response is to develop policies that maximize their political opportunities. To this end, government’s will support groups that are influential in getting votes. Rent seeking activities also lead to the redistribution of income. Those on the receiving end of such redistribution are then likely to spend resources in order to maintain the status quo. Thus there can be significant welfare loss due to rent seeking activities.

3.3. Political efficiency

A political market is where the politicians, bureaucrats and interest groups can negotiate on a preferred position using the least-cost ways of reaching the decision (Johnson, 1994). This is a mechanism used by rational economic agents, including individuals and their associates (Pasour, 1993). The decisions reached are considered politically efficient in the sense that no better alternative is available.

4. Performance of the RFAs

This section examines the performance of the RFAs from a PCT perspective. It looks at several relevant issues namely economic and political issues, conflict resolution, scientific credibility, stakeholder participation and aboriginal issues.

4.1. Economic issues

The major economic components of the forest sector in Australia are (a) wood supply potential (b)
sustainable sawlog yields, and (c) direct and indirect employment. In addition, forests create jobs and wealth through other activities such as tourism, firewood, specialty timber, grazing of livestock, and apiculture, which are dependent on intact and healthy forests. These secondary forest activities yield approximately $800 million in Victoria (Slee, 2001). Tourism Victoria have estimated that an annual injection of $250 million in the mid-1990s was made through forest-related tourism compared to an estimate of the annual gross value of farm and forest products of nearly $800 million in North East Victoria for the same period (Slee, 2001). The PCT perspective suggests that the creation of market forces in the forestry sector will lead to improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. A prerequisite for such changes is the valuation of all outputs at market prices.

However, in implementing the RFAs, some important values have not been estimated. For example, where the interest group is not politically significant such as the apiarists, their economic values were ignored. Similarly, no attempt was made to estimate the non-market values associated with native forests such as water gathering in forested catchments. The opportunities for further development of niche markets in forest-based ecotourism remain unexplored. There is an underestimation of the secondary benefits emanating from timber values or conservation activities. The limited evidence available shows that the conservation values could be significant. The value of remnant native vegetation (RNV) on private property shows that the aggregate benefits of RNV in Northeast Victoria was $60.7 million. Estimates based on a 5 year time horizon and 7% discount rate in Northeast Victoria show that the government can spend up to $29.8 million and still achieve a net economic benefits provided conservation outcomes are achieved (Lockwood and Walpole, 2000). However, such estimates of economic values were not widely used in the RFA process. This may result in under allocation of resources for conservation, which can affect sustainability of forest resources (Slee, 2001). Existing Commonwealth and State legislation does not include the modern concept of sustainable forest management, which results in the failure to protect the full range of forest values (Bartlett, 1999). Important trade-offs between conservation values and timber values have often been intuitive and never formal.

The decisions made regarding conservation of areas based upon mainly non-market approaches imply that market efficiency has not been seriously pursued. Another problem is the failure to recognise the regional economic multiplier effects associated with economic allocation decisions.

Also, important issue is that some of the major costs associated with the RFAs have not been estimated. Costs due to dramatic decline in water yield when mature forest is replaced by water hungry re-growth forest and reduced volumes of water in the catchments were not estimated. The water consumers indirectly subsidise the export timber industry (Kirkpatrick, 1998a). Water consumers are highly diffused and not highly visible, at least in forest controversies, and their interests may not enter the political agenda.

The RFAs can cause distributional problems. Cessation of logging and shift from labour intensive saw milling to wood chipping can lead to loss of regular income for workers. There is no serious examination of how economic benefits are distributed across society, and how they changed in relative importance with the implementation of the RFAs. Kirkpatrick (1998a) states that ‘it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the only major beneficiaries from the RFA process will be large national and international companies, given the adherence to the ideology of globalisation by our governments’.

4.2. Political issues

Broadly, forest conflicts have centred on demands for governments to alter or cease timber-logging and declare national parks to conserve long-term native biodiversity, wilderness and heritage values (Kirkpatrick, 1998b). Conservationists argue that the timber industry was being granted unfair access to scarce resources. According to Doyle (1998), governments often sought to institutionalise conflict over given issues, so as to reduce the degree of overt conflict surrounding them, thereby lessening their potential for political disruption.

The challenge for most governments is one of adapting to new demands and ensure that changes benefited native forests and society in general, rather than special interests. Hence it is politically expedient for the Commonwealth Government to be out of the limelight in relation to forest management and export
hardwood woodchip controls. The RFAs have surrendered much of the powers to the states (Lane, 1999). In this way, the processes of institutionalisation can result in issues being taken off the mainstream political agenda. The strategy also removed a judicial avenue for conservation groups to challenge the validity of logging operations.

Several key changes made to the RFAs also support conservationists concerns. The proviso that existing harvesting targets can be varied for socio-economic reasons and (b) that a substantial proportion of privately owned may not come under the RFA are examples. In short, the strategic direction of the RFAs has been altered from conservation first to that of socio-economic development. According to Caldwell (1993), this means that rent seeking and interest group pressure have not ended because of the RFA process. Political bias is influenced by pressure from the constituents, and politicians trying to maximise the basis of their political security (Caldwell, 1993). This is evident with governments and bureaucrats often displaying bias towards logging. The cooptation of government agencies by the interests of the consumptive forestry user groups reflecting this bias and hence the RFAs are no longer consistent with the original conservation mandate (Kirkpatrick, 1998b).

4.3. Conflict resolution

The inter-governmental conflicts have not been minimised by the RFA process. One of the major conflicts has been the disagreement between the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government over the implementation of the JANIS reservation criteria. The Queensland Government openly defied the Commonwealth by passing legislation that guaranteed wood supply for 25 years to Queensland Forest Industries (Palaszczuk, 1999). This is an act of political defiance, because the RFAs are for 20 year terms with five yearly reviews, and is meant to pander to Queensland forest interests. The Resources Minister stated that the public had lost confidence in the RFA process (Black and Phillips, 1999). Ultimately the WA Government changed its policy which resulted in the cessation of nearly all old growth logging (Edwards, 1999a,b).5

Once an RFA agreement is in place, the Commonwealth removes Export Controls from hardwood woodchips in that RFA region (Tribe 1998). Dargavel (1998b) suggests that this is because the Commonwealth is able to remove itself from costly and politically damaging environmental disputes involving the States achieving a key political objective of the RFA process. Dargavel et al. (2000) point out that although the process has resulted in a resolution of conflicts between State and Commonwealth, whether they remain governable in the longer term is subject to the continual dynamics of politics.

4.4. Scientific credibility

Horwitz and Calver (1998) state that the RFA did not facilitate scientific debate, or peer review. Independent scientists were not committee members in their own right (Mobbs, 2001). As the original scientific criteria for biodiversity conservation were watered down (Kirkpatrick, 1998a). The scientific assessments were weak. The definition of ‘ecolog-

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5 Cheryl Edwards MLA, Minister for Environment, Western Australia.
ical’ wilderness differs significantly from that of ‘physical’ wilderness which was applied to the RFAs. There is significant uncertainty, limitations and major gaps in knowledge and assessments and high probability of irreversible environmental impacts. In most states, the processes have been more dubious and under their cloaks of secrecy, politics have often run riot (Pugh, 1998). Lack of transparency of the methodologies used in calculating sustainable harvest volumes led to unsustainable timber harvesting practices. The Department of Natural Resources and Environment in Victoria admitted it had got its figure very wrong in the Wombat State Forest. The problem of over-logging in Victoria may require as much as a 20% reduction in harvest volumes to achieve sustainable levels.

In practice, no RFA to date has applied the criteria of adequacy and representativeness in a substantial manner. Dargavel et al. (2000) suggest that the various trade-offs between the requirements of conservation and those of industry during the RFA agreement processes, have weakened their adequacy. Given the weakening of reservation criteria, on socioeconomic grounds and due to lack of scientific rigour, questions exist as to the long-term validity of scientific assessments and decisions that have been made (Tribe, 1998). Whilst the RFAs were meant to improve forest practices outside of reserves, there has been instead an intensification of timber harvesting in those areas and a failure to use plantation timber as a replacement for native forest.

4.5. Stakeholder participation

Although stakeholders were consulted early in the RFA process, the final agreements are only between the Commonwealth and the State. According to Dargavel (1998b) inherent difficulties exist in the RFA process in incorporating public participation in RFAs because it is essentially a Commonwealth-State political process with its own time table and intents which may not match with stakeholders characteristics. Stakeholder participation processes can be accessed and influenced by organised interests. Often advisory groups were established with a predominance of vested interest groups, appointed under the guise of some other interest group or plan to rid some groups from involvement (Pugh, 1998). According to Mobbs (2001), non-government groups were removed because they pursued issues that are not the core issues for other interest groups.

Non-government representatives felt betrayed by the NSW government’s limitation on opportunities for broad public consultation (Mobbs, 2001). Bickering between the State and the Commonwealth in negotiations over Eden (NSW) and a perception by the timber industry that they would be better off if conservationists were unable to keep an eye on proceedings led to interest groups being excluded from the Steering Committee (Pugh, 1998). A significant challenge for governments is to ensure broad, balanced participation by the public.

4.6. Indigenous issues

The land rights of aboriginal people have been watered down, with indigenous issues being restricted to indigenous cultural heritage in the RFA process. A combination of mistrust of governments; tight timeframes and traditional knowledge of sacred places held in confidence by aboriginal people have prevented adequate time for consultation (Dargavel, 1998b; Dargavel et al., 2000). The implications of the Native Title Act 1933 was largely ignored in the RFA process.

According to Dargavel (1998b) the RFA program failed to take advantage of what could have been a considerable opportunity to deal with the varied list of indigenous issues in a joint, comprehensive and integrated manner. Native title pits the indigenous people against other powerful lobby groups such as farmers and the timber industry. The lesser importance attached to native title reflects the weak political position of the indigenous people in forest controversies. Docker (1998) states that the comprehensive, adequate and representative conservation process was not designed to address Aboriginal rights in forested lands properly. Such issues were glossed over in the RFA process.

5. Concluding remarks

The RFAs were an attempt by the Commonwealth Government to control the bitter forest disputes witnessed since the mid-1970s. The RFA process
intended to establish a framework by which both environmentalists and forest industries would be satisfied with the protection afforded by a broad set of reservation criteria and industry targets. However, the implementation of the RFAs was still influenced by interest groups and bureaucratic predilections. The levels of reservation, under the CAR system were lowered on the guise of socio-economic development. This indicates that there is interest group pressure and rent seeking activities within the RFAs. There is concern over the scientific processes, the recognition of indigenous values and the socio-economic analysis used in the RFA process. The consultation process undertaken was little more than information dissemination, with the final agreement made between Commonwealth and state governments. The intergovernmental conflicts have not been eliminated by the RFA process. Queensland has defied the RFA signing agreements in contravention of the stipulated criteria. Conflicts with the community have not been mitigated as shown by the continuing disputes in Western Australia, Victoria and NSW.

The problems experienced indicate the difficulties in converting good policy into reality in the face of competing issues, changing political agendas and conflicting interests. To accept that the RFA process is flawed and incomplete, however, is not to suggest that the process is pointless. Partial though they may be, they can still help to instil principles of management and to establish the broadest of guidelines for the use of the forest resource. Conclusions on the relevance of Public Choice Theory principles to forest management must be based on the relative importance of the performance criteria of efficiency, responsiveness and equity. If the reading of the evidence is correct, it implies that we still have a long way to go in achieving these criteria in the forest sector. In the final analysis, however, good policies can be but one of the preconditions for balanced, efficient and equitable forest management in Australia.

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