Managed citizenship: global forest governance and democracy in Russian communities

Maria Tysiachniouk & Laura A. Henry

To cite this article: Maria Tysiachniouk & Laura A. Henry (2015) Managed citizenship: global forest governance and democracy in Russian communities, International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology, 22:6, 476-489, DOI: 10.1080/13504509.2015.1065520

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2015.1065520

Published online: 14 Aug 2015.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 84

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Citing articles: 1 View citing articles
Managed citizenship: global forest governance and democracy in Russian communities

Maria Tysiachniouk\textsuperscript{a,b} and Laura A. Henry\textsuperscript{c,*}

\textsuperscript{a}Environmental policy group, Wageningen University, Hollandseweg 1, Wageningen, KN 6706, The Netherlands; \textsuperscript{b}Department of Environmental Sociology, Center for Independent Social Research, Russia; \textsuperscript{c}Department of Government and Legal Studies, Bowdoin College, 9800 College Station, Brunswick, ME 04011, USA

(Received 6 January 2015; final version received 17 June 2015)

In this study, we examine the political implications of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and its requirements for participatory governance by focusing on three case studies in Russia and drawing upon qualitative research data from 2002 to 2014. We argue that one of the unintended by-products of forest certification is the advancement of a specific type of citizenship – what we refer to as ‘managed citizenship.’ In managed citizenship, local communities are empowered by new rights endowed to them by a global governance generating network (GGN), such as the FSC. Through the GGN, local stakeholders may become involved in long-term initiatives that provide new opportunities to participate in democratic governance. However, citizens’ involvement is cultivated, directed, and circumscribed by actors from outside the communities, such as environmental and certification experts who educate local residents about their stakeholder status. We also find that the persistent weakness of social interests, as opposed to environmental, within the FSC and the effects of economic instability and weak democracy domestically contribute to the challenges of engaging local communities.

Keywords: FSC; certification; citizenship; democracy; Russia; governance; sustainability; forests

1. Introduction

Is it possible to foster democracy – or a new form of stakeholder citizenship – through the transnational supply chain? How might global governance regimes, particularly regimes that promote corporate social responsibility and product certification, serve as governance structures parallel to state institutions for citizens in specific localities, as well as for transnational corporations (TNCs), business associations, NGOs, unions, and other organized groups? In this study, we identify and explain the broader political implications of product certification and its requirements for participatory governance.\textsuperscript{1} We argue that, while stakeholders such as NGOs at the global, national, and regional level may easily become involved in this participatory process, it is more challenging to bring local residents into supply chain governance. One of the unintended by-products of global forest certification is the advancement of a specific type of stakeholder citizenship – what we refer to as ‘managed citizenship.’ This phenomenon is especially stark in a semi-authoritarian regime such as Russia, where citizens are endowed with stakeholder status by transnational networks but are not necessarily accustomed to exercising their citizenship rights domestically.

Global governance arrangements that are often non-state and market-driven have emerged due to the simultaneous desire of TNCs to add value to their product and efforts by environmental and social actors to improve the sustainability, safety, and equitable outcomes of production. Long supply chains that stretch across borders have increased the distance between the sites of production and consumption. To be competitive, TNCs have to build trust in their brand and products among consumers; transnational stakeholders in turn demand that products be produced legally and sustainably. These motivations have led to numerous global initiatives to monitor environmental and social standards at the production site and to use independent ranking systems or certificates as ‘trust markers’ for consumers in sensitive markets in Europe and North America – from ‘fair trade’ products to eco-labeling (Cashore et al. 2004; Auld & Gulbrandsen 2010; Marx & Cuypers 2010; Tysiachniouk 2012a, 2012b, 2013). In pursuing these goals, however, GGNs also may have profound local effects by remaking ideas about governance, the social contract, and citizenship at sites of production.

Managed citizenship may result when local communities are empowered by the rights endowed to them by a global governance generating network (GGN), such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC; Tysiachniouk 2012a) and become involved in long-term initiatives that provide new opportunities to participate in governance on a particular issue or territory. These rights often are unfamiliar and are made available to certain categories of resident based on whether they live in an area where GGN standards are implemented. Public participation in the GGN is cultivated, directed, and circumscribed by actors from outside the communities, such as environmental NGOs and expert certification consultants who educate local residents about their...
stakeholder status. Whether these new patterns of governance ultimately have a democratizing effect depends not only on the principles and motivations that undergird the global initiative, but also on how they resonate with local norms and practices – reinforcing or contradicting existing ideas about rights and participation.

In this paper, we examine how the FSC certification process shapes public participation and mechanisms of decision making in local communities in Russia. This inductive study complements theorizing about the denationalization of citizenship and the growing complexity of multilayered citizenship. The FSC promotes sustainable forest management worldwide, allowing firms that meet certain criteria to market their products as FSC-certified and to use the FSC label. The FSC establishes rules requiring TNCs to involve an array of stakeholders and communities located at the harvesting site in decision making, demanding that companies pursuing certification not only enhance the sustainability of forest management but also foster democratic forest governance in the country of production. However, in Russia stakeholders’ understanding of their role in governance is often limited and the initiatives tend to involve only community ‘elites’ – the local intelligentsia drawn from institutions such as schools, libraries, and cultural centers. In this context, NGOs play a key role as mediators, shaping the impact of governance on the ground and environmental NGOs have played a much more influential role that relatively disorganized social interests. In addition, FSC rules intersect with expectations fostered in the Soviet era as well as in the current semi-authoritarian regime. As a result, the type of citizenship cultivated by global governance is empowering within narrow limits, but is quite constrained, engages relatively few local actors, and may not be durable beyond the initial certification process.

Methodology

This article adopts an explanatory case study approach (Yin 1994). Each case study represents the site of implementation for a transnational network, linking global and local actors and initiating new governance arrangements on the ground. The forested territories studied are all located in northwestern Russia and all experienced the process of FSC certification during the same period. Two cases examined are model forests established in Russia in 1996 (Model Forest Priluzie) and 2000 (Pskov Model Forest). In these forests, foreign assistance for an NGO–state partnership (Priluzie) and NGO–company partnership (Pskov) facilitated FSC certification, including the involvement of citizens as stakeholders, in order to construct a model of sustainable forest governance. The third case is a forest territory managed by Investlesprom that underwent FSC certification in the mid-2000s as a result of market incentives and was not facilitated by foreign funding. The longitudinal study employs qualitative methodology. Data collection was based on semi-structured, open-ended interviews conducted at three research sites with local, national, and transnational stakeholders from 2002 to 2014 (see Table 1), as well as participant observation at the research sites. Interviews were coded to highlight local citizens’ involvement in sustainable forest management. An analysis of FSC, NGO, company, and state documents was used to understand the strategic plans and intention of various actors.

Table 1. Interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Pskov Model Forest</th>
<th>Model Forest Priluzie</th>
<th>Investlesprom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of interviews</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational corporations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational sawn wood buyers, publishers, and retailers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granting agencies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian NGOs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of certification bodies</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of different state agencies, federal representatives in the regions and regional offices</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of local administrations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local state forest management unit representatives</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community activists and ordinary citizens</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of local museums</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of houses of culture</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Managed citizenship: a theoretical framework

The question of whether new forms of citizenship, as an aspect of global governance initiatives, can take root in varied local contexts brings together diverse literatures on democracy, state-based citizenship, and global governance. There is a well-developed literature on global environmental governance broadly (Young 2002; Lemos & Agrawal 2009; Hauser & Young 2009; Gulbrandsen 2010; Hale & Held 2011; Dauvergne & Lister 2012), and non-state market-driven governance such as certification specifically (O’Rourke 2003; Cashore et al. 2004; Auld et al. 2008; Auld & Gulbrandsen 2010; Malets 2014), but less attention has been paid to the local effects of product certification and other governance arrangements over time. In our examination of the FSC as a governance-generating network (GGN), we follow Auld and his co-authors, agreeing that, in regard to certification schemes, ‘studies need to look beyond the instrument itself to understand the positive and negative unintended consequences, spillover effects, and longer-term and slow-moving effects that flow from the emergence of the certification innovation’ (Auld et al. 2008, p. 205; see also; Meidinger 2003). Revised notions of citizenship at the local level may be one such consequence, as new rights and responsibilities – disassociated from the state – are developed for certain categories of people.

The scholarship focused on declining state sovereignty and global citizenship formation explores questions related to how transnational activity changes the quality and practice of governance. Beck and Sassen, for example, examining issues ranging from migration to cosmopolitanism, argue that the meaning of citizenship is eroding in an era of globalization (Beck 1999; Sassen 2008). Beck argues, ‘Politics is no longer subject to the same boundaries as before, and it is no longer tied solely to state actors and institutions, the result being that additional players, new roles, new resources, unfamiliar rules and new contradictions and conflicts appear on the scene’ (2005, p. 3–4). Sassen examines the ‘denationalization’ of citizenship as the institution is ‘partly destabilized through current developments associated with globalization’ (2003, p. 16). Yuval-Davis refers to this as multilayered citizenship – ‘citizenship in collectivities in the different layers – local, ethnic, national, state, cross- or trans-state and supra-state’ (1999, p. 122). Citizenship has long been multilayered, but new complexities have arisen as the result of globalization. The proliferation of entities with authority at different levels of governance increases the number of multiple, overlapping citizenships, each more or less institutionalized. As new centers of authority emerge, citizenship becomes ‘a normative project or an aspiration’ rather than a fixed category (Sassen 2003, p. 17).

Institutions and networks of global governance empower certain groups of people by endowing them with rights and responsibilities that comprise a type of citizenship. Empirically, we still have little information about how mechanisms of participation and deliberation actually function in systems of global governance. Hall and Biersteker outline the authority of non-state private actors in global governance: ‘They set agendas, they establish boundaries or limits for action, they certify, they offer salvation, they guarantee contracts, and they provide order and security. In short, they do many of the things traditionally, and exclusively, associated with the state. They act simultaneously both in the domestic and in the international arenas. What is most significant, however, is that they appear to have been accorded a form of legitimacy’ (2002, p. 4). Global governance networks set new rules that define new spheres of legitimate political action. Scholars debate whether the effects of this intervention are more or less democratic. By emphasizing transparency, representation, and participation, global governance may have democratizing qualities (Meidinger 2010, p. 416). At the same time, global governance serves the interests of some actors more than others and is not inherently democratic; as Lipschutz and Fogel argue, ‘Without some sort of countervailing movement to open up these projects to scrutiny and public participation, the results are likely to be even more undemocratic than is currently the case’ (2002, p. 125). In addition, local actors have ‘vastly different capacities to participate’ (Boström & Hallström 2010, p. 52), and some will be better equipped to take advantage of these new rights than others.

The networks that play a crucial role in the development of global regulatory initiatives are referred to here as GGNs. The three major components of these networks are (1) nodes of global governance design, (2) forums of negotiation, and (3) sites of implementation (see Figure 1). Nodes of global governance design are transnational centers that bring together stakeholders from around the globe working on new regulatory strategies and tools for global governance. These nodes are not affiliated with a particular state or place, despite the fact that the network may have a geographically bounded coordination center (Tysiachniouk 2006a, 2006b, 2008a, 2012a).

The regulatory standards that are developed in the node of design are translated, transferred, adopted, and adjusted to the sites of implementation. Sites of implementation are the concrete territories where global regulation is introduced and enforced and is adjusted to local circumstances. Local political, socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural conditions provide both opportunities and barriers to the institutionalization of new global rules. For example, in countries with high levels of corruption and poorly enforced national legislation, it may be difficult to implement global rules; global standards also are difficult to implement when they contradict national legislation (Tysiachniouk 2008b, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2012a). Global standards that require consultation with stakeholders and
intersectoral dialogue are more difficult to institutionalize in countries undergoing a transition to a market economy, where old patterns of economic decision making persist, or in semi-authoritarian or hybrid regimes, where citizenship rights may be weakly institutionalized. Finally, forums of negotiation sit between the nodes of design and sites of implementation. Forums are arenas for dialogue and contestation where stakeholders who have different and often opposing views toward global regulation participate in and debate the evolution the global governance network. These forums may play a role in all phases of the governance process, from standards development, framing and translation, to adoption and implementation (Kortelainen et al. 2010; Tysiachniouk 2012a).

We suggest that GGNs theoretically can foster a new form of citizenship in local communities at the sites of implementation. However, only through empirical research can we determine what type of governance and citizenship may result from this intervention. What is the quality of citizenship that is being promoted, directly or indirectly, by a GGN? How does this citizenship interact with local conditions and shape opportunities for participation and governance? When are citizens able to utilize their rights and responsibilities within the GGN? Inevitably, this type of ‘stakeholder’ citizenship differs from citizenship at the national level because it is not centered on elections and it does not enshrine voting as a political right. Citizenship in a GGN is closer to a variety of deliberative democracy that emphasizes community dialogue and other forms of participation (Tysiachniouk & Meidinger 2007; Meidinger 2010). This form of ‘GGN citizenship’ is defined by several characteristics. First, citizenship rights are endowed through the private or market-driven governance of a global supply chain. These rights are new and additional to existing national rights, often unfamiliar to local residents. Second, within a GGN citizens often acquire rights that are tied to their social or professional identity – as a member of an indigenous community, for example – or place of residence. Individuals with a different social profile or geographic location may be excluded from these rights, even if they are in other ways similar to the GGN citizens. Third, these rights and opportunities generally are limited to a single governance issue – forestry, fishing, or a...
manufacturing process, for example. Finally, the exercise of this citizenship is not merely optional, but in some cases active participation by local residents is required to fulfill the requirements of the GGN. Indeed, companies’ need to demonstrate local engagement contributes to the ‘management’ of local residents as citizens.

3. FSC certification: embedding democratic rules in global governance networks

The FSC is a particular example of a GGN. The FSC represents a multilevel, multi-actor network with a democratic form of governance. It is coordinated from Bonn, Germany where the FSC director-general and staff are located and includes national and regional FSC offices. National offices are located in states that have large forest territories or that are important players in the global forest products supply chain, such as Russia, Canada, the United States, Mexico, and China. FSC activities in other states are coordinated by regional offices, including FSC Europe, FSC CIS, FSC Latin America, FSC Central Africa, and FSC Asia.

The legislative body of the FSC, the General Assembly, held every three years, is the largest forum of negotiation and the main strategic driver of the FSC. In the General Assembly, FSC members participate in decision making, determining how the GGN will develop and whether FSC standards will change over time (Pattberg 2005; Chan & Pattberg 2008). Smaller forums associated with the assembly include working groups, conferences, chamber meetings, and inter-chamber discussions as well as permanent Internet forums. FSC members are divided into three chambers – economic, environmental, and social – that mimic the tripartite principle of sustainable development. The institutional structure is designed to encourage dialogue and negotiation among members who act not as representatives of a particular country, but as representatives of one of three broad interest groups and as global citizens who are stewards of the world’s forests. The three chambers develop policy and standards that are discussed at the General Assembly and voted on by the entire membership.

The FSC has attempted to embed democratic governance in the overall design and structure of the FSC network beyond the General Assembly. Transnational stakeholders who participate in FSC forums include NGOs and experts who are engaged in promoting, criticizing, or opposing FSC certification. NGOs, researchers, and local residents are all stakeholders, as are state forestry bodies, even though states are not represented in the FSC’s three chambers; these parties are involved in standards development and monitoring (Tøllefsen et al. 2008). All FSC members and stakeholders have the opportunity to send motions to the General Assembly, which are then discussed and voted on. In practice, however, transnational NGOs like Greenpeace or large business associations are more likely to have the resources to attend assemblies and skills to pursue their goals at the international level than are local stakeholders (Henry 2010b). In addition, while the FSC attempts to achieve equal representation of all three chambers, the economic and environmental chambers have more members and are more influential than the social chamber (Boström & Hallström 2010, p. 50–51; Pinto & McDermott 2013, 25). The environmental chamber is populated by many established NGOs and the economic chamber contains a number of large TNCs as well as certification bodies, many of which are for-profit organizations. Social chamber members are more diverse, focusing on an array of social issues (Boström & Hallström 2010). For example, trade unions attempt to advance workers’ rights while a large number of indigenous peoples’ associations advocate the maintenance of traditional practices. The social chamber also contains a disproportionate number of individual (as opposed to organizational) members who have less ability to influence the FSC’s final decisions. As a result, the goal of ‘equal’ representation across all three chambers has been difficult to achieve.

The national FSC offices are organized similarly, consisting of social, environmental, and economic chambers, with the goal of equally representing all three interests. The primary purpose of these offices is to develop national standards. While FSC principles and criteria for certification are developed globally, indicators and verifiers against which firms are evaluated are determined nationally in order to adjust the global standards to particular environmental, social, and political contexts. Domestic political factors undoubtedly shape the work of the FSC. In general, in undemocratic or weakly democratic states, it may be more difficult to involve domestic actors to serve as stakeholders and to engage them in a constructive dialogue about national standards development. However, over time the FSC has expended significant effort to encourage and enable domestic actors to participate in forest governance (Newsom & Hewitt 2005). If FSC national standards have been accredited, then the national FSC offices oversee adaptation.³ National FSC offices are likely to organize forums of negotiation that include domestic actors, including the members of three FSC chambers. The national offices also may organize forums at the local level where the standards are transformed into concrete practices at the site of implementation. In these forums, local stakeholders can participate, though NGOs and transnational actors often dominate the process. In that way, FSC attempts to inject arenas of democratic decision making despite the nature of the political regime at the national level.

4. Russia’s timber industry and FSC certification: global and local

The history of FSC certification in Russia illustrates the challenges of cultivating stakeholder participation. Environmental NGOs, among the first actors to become internationalized in post-Soviet Russia, were the first to
engage as stakeholders in the FSC process (Henry 2010a). During Russia’s economic transition in the late 1980s and 1990s, companies in the forest sector did not have experience with non-state governance and generally did not interact with NGOs. In May 1998 WWF-Russia (a branch of the international World Wildlife Fund) invited other NGOs, including Greenpeace-Russia, the Socio-Ecological Union, and the Center for Biodiversity Conservation, to work cooperatively to promote forest certification. Following the meeting, Greenpeace sent information regarding FSC certification to 5000 forest producers and forest enterprises in Russia. At that time, only 10 of the 5000 companies expressed interest in certification and requested more information (Tysiachniouk 2006a). Later in 1998, WWF-Russia organized the first Russian multi-stakeholder conference on FSC certification in Petrozavodsk in the Republic of Karelia; WWF intended to start a dialogue with forest companies and to demonstrate the value of voluntary certification to the Russian government. Only a few companies attended the conference, which was dominated by NGO representatives and scientists. Companies’ lack of participation was partially due to ongoing conflicts between the Karelian forest industry and environmental NGOs, including a Greenpeace-led consumer boycott of wood from the region. However, some government representatives participated and therefore the conference represents the first intersectoral dialogue on forest certification in Russia. In the years that followed, WWF continued to disseminate information about forest certification through a series of conferences and promoted FSC through several model forests. At the conferences, company representatives usually participated as private individuals rather than in their official capacity, preferring to keep their interactions with NGOs informal. Overall, interest in certification by the majority of the forest companies remained very low in the 1990s (Tysiachniouk 2006b).

NGOs drove the development of certification in Russia, but engaging other stakeholders proved to be challenging (Malets 2013). The process of forming and accrediting the Russian National Initiative (later the national FSC Russia office) was lengthy, in part due to difficulties, similar to those at the transnational level, related to the equal representation of interests in the economic, environmental, and social chambers. FSC staff members found it difficult to involve indigenous people and social organizations in the chambers. Many of these organizations had either survived from the Soviet period and were not accustomed to engaging transnationally or they were small groups focused on narrow goals. In addition, Russian social organizations tend to specialize in the problems of a specific population group, such as the homeless, the disabled, people infected with HIV, or drug addicts. These groups generally were not interested in issues of sustainable forest management (Tysiachniouk 2006a). Social NGOs can be credited with developing the standards related to the designation of socially valuable forest (high conservation value forest (HCVF) 5–6 category), an important lever of community empowerment. However, this aspect of FSC certification in Russia lagged behind other requirements, and was only implemented consistently as of 2007. Even now the designation of socially valuable forests is frequently neglected in the certification process due to unclear methodology or an excessively narrow interpretation of the term by companies and FSC auditors. After years of preparation, the Russian National Working Group was accredited by the FSC in June 2006, and became the Russian National FSC office in 2011. The National Working Group has held six major face-to-face FSC conferences; the largest was held in April 2013, followed by annual online conferences in 2014 and 2015. Over time, the FSC has become a dynamic multi-stakeholder network in Russia with many interest groups engaged in dialogue about how to adapt transnational norms of sustainable forestry to specifics of the Russian context.

Specific sites of FSC certification and model forest initiatives can be analyzed fruitfully using the GGN concept. In the case of the model forests, the networks included private foundations that provided funding in an effort to support the implementation of FSC certification as well as broader goals of sustainable forestry. Thus, the GGN involved in establishing model forests drew from several overlapping networks, including the FSC and a broader donor network that had its own agenda related to citizen engagement and that channeled resources through WWF. In a sense, the model forests were designed to demonstrate an idealized vision of what sustainable forest management could achieve and, as a result, emphasized the importance of stakeholder participation – and citizenship – to an even greater degree than other cases of FSC certification. However, model forests that are based on foundation funding may ultimately be less sustainable that other instances of FSC certification that depend upon market incentives for their durability. The case studies below demonstrate common features across both types of certification.

Logging communities in Russia

Forestry in the Soviet period was characterized by paternalistic relationships between logging enterprises and communities. State-owned logging companies (lespromkhоз) were established in many existing forest villages (lesnye poselki). These logging companies also constructed temporary settlements where workers might live for several decades, harvesting the surrounding timber; logging settlements attracted workers from across the USSR who relocated to these new communities with their families. The settlements’ long-term ‘temporary’ status meant that the infrastructure, such as housing, did not necessarily meet normal building standards and the local economy was not developed or diversified, but focused exclusively on logging. Over time, however, these logging communities began to take on a more permanent character. In both traditional and temporary forest settlements, state-
owned logging companies were the primary economic actors, and served as welfare providers, supporting community infrastructure, housing, schools, kindergartens, libraries, and cultural events (Pipponen 1999). Teachers, librarians, and employees of the Soviet-era ‘houses of culture’ worked closely with state-owned logging companies to holding cultural events for forest workers and their families, glorifying their role in the Soviet economy.

In the 1990s, the privatization of forest enterprises gradually severed the ties between companies and local communities. Many logging companies began to focus narrowly on profit; others collapsed or were re-registered and handed over to new owners. Community infrastructure became the responsibility of the state, although privatized companies responded to the expectations of local communities by continuing their support for logging settlements to a lesser extent (Tulaeva & Tysiachniouk 2008). As firms in the timber sector were aggregated into larger holding companies, formerly autonomous logging enterprises became subject to new policies and procedures, further rupturing established relationships between companies and local citizens. Logging enterprises that become subsidiaries of TNCs no longer had discretion over their financial management, and were unable to provide support for local communities unless the funds were approved at higher levels.

Disengagement from communities also resulted from the modernization of forestry in Russia. Companies began to contract with mobile logging brigades instead of providing employment to local workers (Tysiachniouk 2012a). Many workers were dismissed, although the salary of those workers who remained tended to increase. Local communities were affected differently, depending on their size and economic diversity. Logging settlements where the local forest enterprise closed were the worst hit. In these cases, the local population was left without employment or support for infrastructure maintenance. Communities where local people were still employed at the company, even in reduced numbers, faced a somewhat easier situation. Larger regional centers had greater leverage to require federal state intervention in implementation of forest rights. Teachers, librarians, and employees of the Soviet-era ‘houses of culture’ worked closely with state-owned logging companies to holding cultural events for forest workers and their families, glorifying their role in the Soviet economy.

The disruption of logging company–community relationships, combined with the disintegration of the Soviet welfare state, resulted in extremely disadvantaged, forest-dependent communities. These communities shared a reliance on logging companies to provide for basic needs, such as heating, schools, and hospitals. In all of these communities, after the end of the Soviet regime and the privatization of forestry enterprises, the Russian state technically took over responsibility for infrastructure and services; however, local residents still expected community support from forest companies. In practice, local residents experienced a sharp decline in public goods, leading to disappointment with both the logging companies and the government.

Engaging local citizens through FSC: three case studies

Obtaining FSC certification requires the engagement of stakeholders from the local community in forest management. Certification requirements stipulate that a company should be proactive in ensuring public engagement in FSC processes, such as public consultations about forest management plans and the designation of HCVF. Companies pursuing certification must also acknowledge the community’s rights under FSC, including those connected to access to forest resources. Russian certification standards require consultations to be organized where the public is informed about current and future forest management activities and whether logging activity might hamper other kinds of forest utilization. In discussions about designating socially valuable HCVF (categories 5 and 6), community members are asked to list a variety of local uses of the forests – such as gathering non-timber forest products like mushrooms or berries – that contribute to the subsistence of local residents. Local residents can also identify historically valuable territories, including WWII battle sites and cemeteries. Local people can further designate territories used for traditional livelihoods, such as hunting or fishing. During public consultations, the company is also required to collect complaints and requests from the population and to develop procedures for resolving complaints.

Many Russian certificate holders meet FSC requirements by doing a minimal amount of public engagement. They formally invite local residents to public hearings through newspaper advertisements, attracting only a few attendees. Instead of actively participating in forest management, these attendees use the hearing to express their grievances regarding damaged roads, degraded village infrastructure, high prices for sawn wood, and the lack of firewood. The company may or may not respond, occasionally by improving certain aspects of community infrastructure. The company then shows the protocol of these community meetings to FSC auditors in order to technically satisfy the requirements. Local residents often perceive FSC-related projects in Russian communities as coming ‘from above’ – something outside and unfamiliar. However, with significant effort local residents may be incorporated into the FSC process as stakeholders.

The section below describes how FSC requirements influenced stakeholder interactions at several sites of implementation – local communities and villages in forested territory. The strategies used to engage local residents and the challenges to their involvement are illustrated by two WWF-sponsored model forest projects in Russia and then by the activities of a certified timber company in Karelia. These examples can be considered ‘best case scenarios’ for promoting participation and an expansion of citizens’ rights, since they encompass the
sustained commitment to demonstrating the value of FSC in Russia through the model forests and the decision to hire a social expert to facilitate community engagement. As exemplary cases, they reveal some of the obstacles to expanding citizenship as part of democratic forest governance in Russia. The WWF model forest projects served as educational sites to demonstrate how sustainable forest management schemes could work in Russia. The Model Forest Priluzie involved state agencies as a means to overcome government resistance to forest certification in the Komi Republic. The Pskov Model Forest, implemented through the WWF–Stora Enso partnership, developed conservation and intensive forest management plans. Both model projects engaged stakeholders and involved local citizens in forest management as a requirement of FSC certification and a goal of their funding agencies, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), which promoted the idea that market development has to go hand in hand with local democratic development. These two cases, explored in more detail below, illustrate how difficult it is to engage the public and overcome expectations from the Soviet period as well as to reach beyond the local intelligentsia to encourage the participation of average citizens. The case of Investlesprom, a forest holding company, illustrates a different approach—employing experts in community organizing in order to comply with FSC requirements.

**Model Forest Priluzie**

The Model Forest Priluzie (MFP) was a project initiated in the Republic of Komi by the NGO Silver Taiga Foundation (a WWF branch until 2002), in partnership with regional and local state agencies, and with funding from the SDC, to create a model of sustainable forest management. The project lasted from 1996 to 2006. Prior to the start of the model forest, WWF-Switzerland partnered with Silver Taiga in Komi on nature protection in the Pechora Ilichsky nature preserve. Their goal was to increase local awareness of the value of old growth forests by organizing courses on forest ecology. In the course of this work, the focus of Silver Taiga/WWF-Komi gradually shifted toward sustainable forestry.

The MFP promoted FSC certification for companies active in the territory of the former Priluzie state forest leskhoz (the local state forest management unit). FSC forest certification requires that companies inform the public about forest management plans and consider community interests in territories affected by logging. In accordance with this requirement, when companies operating on MFP territory applied for a lease, MFP project implementers invited experts from the St. Petersburg NGO ECOM to conduct training workshops for Priluzie community activists and convened public hearings. An activist from an NGO ‘Committee for Saving Pechora River’ became responsible for outreach to local communities in Priluzie. The community activists in turn made an effort to explain to company representatives that a high level of community participation in public hearings could help them avoid future conflicts and benefit both the company and the community.6

During the initial public hearings, the local population generally did not raise issues related to forest management; instead attendees expressed concern about services such as the delivery of firewood to the community or made requests, including that the company purchase a computer for the local school or musical equipment for the local House of Culture. Only occasionally were the community requests more focused on land use and forestry. Once representatives of a community asked the company to build a new road from the village to the main road; in another case, community members proposed that 80% of the company’s employees be hired from the local community, requests that initially were accepted but never fulfilled.7 When public hearings became regular events in the area of Priluzie, the public lost interest and many hearings took place without much community input.8 Community organizing continued to be critical for successful public participation in forest governance.9 During the period 1999–2002, the WWF’s small grant program supported multiple citizen initiatives related to environmental education in schools, libraries, and clubs; grants were also distributed to allow graduate students to conduct research in Priluzie. These grants helped to maintain community interest and involvement.

In 2004, the MFP created a Forest Council to organize and moderate public participation in forest governance. The Forest Council developed guidelines for local residents’ firewood supply that were approved by both the state administration and the logging company and were put into practice.10 The Forest Council also initiated a project to build a recreational site and tourist attraction called ‘The Meadow of Brides’ that was built by community volunteers and supported by small businesses.11 Although the Forest Council was an interesting experimental group, participants saw it as fragile and unstable. One stated, ‘When someone active leaves the community or there is no funding for certain issues, the project dies like a flower without water.’12 However, the council did serve as an arena for consultation with local stakeholders. MFP used the Forest Council in Priluzie as a model and created a similar council in the Udora district in order to gather stakeholders to discuss issues related to old-growth forests.

Another major effort to initiate stakeholder dialogue around forest issues was through a club in the Priluzie district called Shuvgy Parma (meaning ‘the sound of wind through the taiga forest’ in the Komi language). The MFP’s goal in creating the club was to accustom stakeholders to democratic dialogue about important local issues.13 The club’s first meeting was in April 1999; the club then met more than 30 times in villages throughout the Priluzie region. The meetings included various members of the local public, leskhoz workers, scientists, and
the Priluzie administration. At the meetings, participants discussed forests and their uses, including non-timber forest products, and forest politics in the Komi Republic as well as the importance of forests in traditional Komi culture. Attention to cultural concerns provided a link to local residents interested in revitalizing the Komi cultural traditions. While the discussions generally did not result in concrete decisions, the club was a tool that allowed various stakeholders to understand each other’s values and opinions.

Limited attendance at the Shuvgy Parma meetings demonstrated a barrier to the model forest’s efforts to encourage public participation, however. A large majority of those participating were either people already connected to the model forest, the elderly, or members of the local intelligentsia such as ‘teachers, librarians, journalists, members of people’s councils’ – but ‘there were very few workers coming to the club.’ One participant complained that some club attendees were skeptical towards the MFP and were resistant to education and innovation in sustainable forestry. She said, ‘They don’t believe people will ever do things differently.’ Several of informants believed that this skepticism is linked to growing up under the Soviet system of forest management. One said, ‘We have the logic from the old times that the boss is always right. Years need to go by before the situation is changed.’ Over time, funding for community events diminished, gasoline prices rose, and meetings of the club became rare, although in 2009 Shuvgy Parma was able to revitalize itself under the auspices of the Forest Village project, sponsored by another donor, the Ford Foundation.

Working with youth was also a part of the MFP’s efforts to encourage public participation. Familiarizing young people with forest management issues was a way to improve the effectiveness of stakeholder participation in the future. One such effort was the discussion club Beta Volna (‘Beta Waves’), which met in regional libraries and villages in Priluzie. This effort to educate and inform youth confronted obstacles similar to those faced by Shuvgy Parma. According to a coordinator of this project, media announcements were not effective in recruiting participants so she went through personal contacts to find interested youth. As a result, she recruited ‘young specialists, engineers, doctors, and teachers’ – the region’s future intelligentsia. The model forest again struggled to engage ‘ordinary’ people. The coordinator of the discussion club tried to work around this limitation by purposely targeting young workers and young families. This targeted approach focused on attitudes towards nature rather than forest management issues in order to maintain interest. According to the club’s convener, ‘We were worried about discussing forest issues with them,’ fearing that these issues were too polarizing or simply not of interest.

Representatives of MFP then faced the difficult task of turning an appreciation of nature into active citizenship roles in the political, economic, and social realms.

### Pskov Model Forest

The Pskov Model Forest (PMF), a project that ran from 2000 to 2009, was financed by three transnational actors – SIDA, Stora Enso (a timber company based in Finland and Sweden), and WWF-Germany. The project was managed by WWF-Russia and the implementing team was based at the St. Petersburg Forestry Research Institute. During the project, WWF collaborated with Stora Enso in assisting its subsidiary STF-Strug through FSC certification. The goals of the project were to intensify forest management practices and to demonstrate how sustainable forestry could be implemented in Russia. One of the objectives of the PMF project was to include the public in forest management decision making since it is a requirement of certification, and foreign experts and visitors to the model forest were interested in questions of public participation in forestry-related decision making. As one participant commented, ‘In the West, it is a favorite subject. They come and immediately inquire whether our public is involved in the decision-making process.’ Involving the public, however, was challenging for several reasons.

Public participation, as defined under the international certification norms, should preempt conflict, but this ideal was hard to achieve in practice. The PMF tried to create widespread interest in managing the forests; however, local residents generally became involved only when they had some kind of grievance. For example, the PMF implementers made an effort to involve hunters in developing logging plans in areas where the STF-Strug company was active, but they received little input. Hunters later complained after the logging plans were published and their hunting areas were threatened. Even PMF staff members in charge of implementing a sustainable forestry project were themselves skeptical about public participation. One stated, ‘Maybe it is important to involve the public in Western countries, but here we have a different mentality.’ Some felt that, despite the FSC requirements, public involvement was unnecessary for sustainable forestry. One informant asked, ‘What can non-specialists do anyway?’

Despite these concerns, in order to maintain public involvement in discussions about forest issues, PMF staff organized a Forest Club, an idea borrowed from the MFP. The task of the Forest Club was to inform the population about the implementation of the project and answer questions – or to give the appearance of doing so. One of the PMF’s implementers said: ‘When visitors ask the question, “How is the public involved?” we know the drill. We have a Forest Club, and so when these people come we refer them to the Forest Club and they are happy because we have involved all the possible stakeholders.’ The club was led by the PMF project implementation team who attracted members, in part, with a small grants program designed to assist in community development projects related to education, culture, health, and other issues. For example, a local teacher received a grant to create an ecological trail through the forest. She said, ‘This was a
long-standing idea, but it was very hard to do without money. I received the grant and realized my dream. The same teacher later became president of the Forest Club. One of the strategies of the grant program was to enhance the quality of existing community activities while steering grants towards support of the model forest. A summer camp run by the Ecological-Biological Center received financial assistance to improve the camp’s environmental education program by inviting expert forest scientists and paying salaries for teachers and increase the camp’s attendance by providing food and lodging for children from outside the area. In another instance, the local museum curator who received a small grant to create a brochure about the village of Strugy-Krasnie’s cultural and natural history became an active supporter of the PMF’s efforts, hosting a display of the major activities of the PMF in the museum. In an interview she said, ‘We will be sad when they [PMF project implementers] leave. We have a lot of sympathy for them.’ However, the popular support for PMF elicited by the grant program was limited in that it only engaged the most mobilized citizens. As a result, most links with the PMF were forged with a narrow group of local leaders, not the community broadly.

In the initial stage of the project (2000–2004), the average PMF Forest Club meeting, held four times a year, involved 30–45 people, mostly those who were involved in the small grant projects or forestry units, as well as experts, scientists, and regional and local government representatives. Members of the local intelligentsia and some retired people also attended. Logging company representatives often were present, but they never played an active role. For example, the director of STF-Strug attended meetings but had no enthusiasm for interaction with other stakeholders. He said, ‘I don’t like to talk with them, but I sit there to know what is going on.’ The meetings sometimes generated heated discussions. The project had introduced new timber harvesting to the area and represented an unfamiliar model of forestry. Local residents were hostile toward these changes and they had a number of questions, which they tended to address not to the PMF project representatives but to the village administration. Attendees wanted answers to basic questions, including who had cut the forests, why they had been cut, where the wood was taken, and how the harvesting was organized in the region. Their questions also concerned firewood, sawn wood, the removal of waste, and related issues. One club member recalled, ‘At the beginning, there was a lot of talk because everything was unclear and it gave rise to a lot of questions concerning forest management in our region.’ In the second stage of the project (2004–2008), the club held biannual meetings that became more routine over time. In 2007, the director of PMF noted, ‘At present, there are fewer questions than before, because all is clear now – what the functions of the model forest are, and what those of the STF-Strug and Stora Enso are. People come here for information.’ Eventually, the Forest Club became a space for information exchange between the PMF implementers and the stakeholders. The final meeting of the Forest Club took place in December 2010, at which time the booklet ‘Intensive Forest Management for Russia: Innovations of the PMF’ was presented to all interested stakeholders.

Despite the activities of Forest Club members, a significant effort to involve the general public in actual decision making about sustainable forest management – as opposed to holding information sessions – was made only once over the lifetime of the project. This occurred when public hearings were held to discuss a forest management plan during the state forest inventory process in 2002. The PMF used a ‘scenario method’ developed as a pilot project by the World Bank to introduce residents to different harvesting options on the Karelian isthmus. The decision-making process was ‘managed’ to a degree in that some of the harvesting scenarios presented were quite extreme and unlikely to be chosen, which had the effect of steering participants toward a few options. The hearings resulted in a plan that represented a compromise between economic goals, on the one hand, and environmental and social interests on the other. Participants selected the more environmentally oriented scenario of the two most reasonable management options which emphasized ecological interests, such as preservation of wood grouse mating areas.

Ultimately, replicating the lessons learned working with the local population within the PMF project in other timber communities proved difficult. The scenario approach used in the project’s public hearings could not be applied on most other forest territories, since the evolution of rigid federal regulations in forest management limited the range of possible scenarios that the public can now consider. In addition, to reproduce participation of an interested stakeholder community along the lines of the Forest Club would require the resources and commitment by staff members and donors that are not available in other places. In that sense, the stakeholder engagement in the model forest cases is exceptional.

**Investlesprom and FSC certification**

In 2006–2007, while pursuing FSC certification, the Investlesprom forest holding company initiated public consultations in the Republic of Karelia. These consultations were carried out in conjunction with experts in facilitating companies’ compliance with FSC requirements from the Center for Independent Social Research (CISR) in St. Petersburg. In 2008 and in 2010-2012, Investlesprom and CISR representatives conducted further consultations on the company’s newly acquired leased territories. Consultations were organized to establish a constructive relationship between the company and local residents and to identify key stakeholders from local institutions such as schools, libraries, and village administrations. The results of this type of community engagement were mixed – varying over time, depending on the tools
and resources brought to bear and the general economic context.

In 2006, after its initial FSC certification audits, the Segezha Pulp and Paper Mill, a lease-holder belonging to Investlesprom, was issued several ‘corrective action requests’ related to the social aspects of the FSC requirements. These requests prompted Investlesprom to ask consultants from CISR for assistance. Guided by CISR experts, the company used several strategies to build a relationship with local communities and more actively involve citizens. The company sponsored a small grants program to support local initiatives including cultural activities, awarding grants to projects including the revival of a traditional Karelian village, folk festivals in Segozherie, a historical museum in the Valdai logging company, the development of a historic ‘partisans’ trail’ and an eco-trail, and other projects. Another tool for facilitating the relationship between the company and the local population was the creation of a social fund, money allocated voluntarily by the company for community development. Initially, the company contributed 10 rubles per cubic meter of harvested wood. The funds were transferred to the local municipal government, which then decided how to distribute them. Special arrangements also were made to supply firewood for the community at reasonable prices. These programs promoted the population’s confidence in the company’s activities and prompted a wave of public participation, a necessary condition for certification.

In 2008, due to the effect of the global economic crisis on the forestry sector and the collapse of prices for sawn timber, Investlesprom’s social fund allocation was cut to 2 rubles per cubic meter of harvested wood, and later ceased entirely. The small grant program also was closed. Local residents were disappointed by these losses, and even more by the loss of affordable firewood for the community. However, as a result of earlier efforts to build a relationship between the company and residents, community members were emboldened to reach out to the company. For example, in 2008 the population of the Padany settlement approached the company with a letter of concern for the safety of a small spawning river located close to the village in a water protection zone where the holding company was allowing the thinning of timber. In response to the letter, the company suspended felling in that area and suggested that the community members identify an expert who could submit an opinion on whether thinning would be harmful. The company promised to consider the results of the expert’s report and to resume felling only if it was deemed harmless. This relatively constructive interaction ultimately had little effect, however, as the local community did not find an expert and the question was left unresolved. In 2009 and 2010, the company, local communities, and other stakeholders interacted intensively over proposed logging near the village of Tunguda. Investlesprom had allocated logging plots prior to public hearings to designate socially valuable HCVF – a violation of FSC rules. Village residents were joined by the Karelian NGOs Trias and Young Karelia and by seasonal residents from Moscow who owned a house in Tunguda in their effort to protect the forest near the village from harvesting. The conflict could have grown in size, but the company appointed a social expert from the CISR to mediate among the stakeholders. Ultimately, the issues were resolved by the designation of the territory as socially valuable HCVF.

Local participation compared

FSC certification, both in the model forests and in a market-driven process, had not yet provided any measurable material benefits for the local populations at these sites of implementation during the research period, but it has expanded the rights of community members to participate in forest governance. In that sense, this study confirms the findings of Pinto and McDermott that ‘the most prevalent social impacts of certification were improved communication and conflict resolution with stakeholders, neighbors and communities’ (2013, p. 27). FSC certification has stimulated a degree of local engagement in governance and intersectoral dialogue has emerged in some local settlements, practices that indicate a small shift toward greater participation and democratization. Many local citizens are aware that they have the right to participate in forest management and know of opportunities to participate, although they may not choose to do so. Due to FSC certification requirements, local residents can assist in designating socially valuable forests and consult on forest management, roles that were previously the prerogative of experts. However, the interest and ability of local residents to exercise their new citizenship is limited in a variety of ways.

The type of engagement in forest governance that emerged is closer to ‘managed citizenship’ than participatory democracy. Participation was engendered through significant effort by project implementers, donors, or outside experts and often occurred in response to the incentives of small grants programs. These outside actors effectively engaged only a limited subset of the local community, the local intelligentsia – individuals who were already community organizers in some sense. Participation also is limited only people who live in the immediate vicinity of harvesting or industrial activity; adjacent communities often are not given similar new rights to participate in forest governance. When local residents do become involved in certification, they often were more inclined to air grievances or to seek services or community support from forest companies, and less engaged in the questions of forest management or the designation of HCVF, in that sense returning to patterns of enterprise–community engagement from the past. Community participation in decision making happened only in one instance in a ‘scenario method’ that required significant outside preparation and supervision by experts. Moreover, the community engagement that did occur was often deemed unsustainable in the absence of grants programs and other incentives – a problem that appeared particularly acute in the model forests. In the end, the
local communities’ economic problems and low level of community activism limited their ability to take advantage of new rights under FSC.

5. Russian Citizens to Stakeholders: Managing Local Engagement in Forest Governance

At the broadest level, one could argue that FSC’s intervention in the global supply chain of forest products transformed the residents of some timber communities from citizens solely of the Russian Federation to citizens of a global GGN engaged in a process of forest governance under which they have new rights and opportunities for participation. FSC certification has had a range of impacts as it attempted to introduce a new model of democratic governance and citizenship in Russia. Prior to certification, the terminology of ‘stakeholder’ was virtually unknown, as was the conception that new rights and responsibilities for citizens, additional to domestic rights, could be endowed by a global initiative. The FSC-GGN has fostered new varieties of public engagement and new models of governance in Russia. Beginning in the late 1990s, the FSC encouraged intersectoral dialogue between NGOs and business – dialogue that had not previously existed. Requirements for FSC certification, combined with NGO pressure and donor funding, have compelled companies to interact with local communities in ways that go beyond their Soviet-era support of local services and infrastructure and that attempt to empower local residents to participate in decisions that shape the territories where they live.

Practically, local residents’ opportunity to exercise this new and unfamiliar form of citizenship in the FSC-GGN was cultivated and shaped by networks of NGOs, donors, and experts involved in promoting sustainable forestry and FSC certification. Environmental NGOs, such as WWF and Greenpeace, with branch offices and staff members within Russia were well positioned to take the lead in promoting FSC at sites of implementation. They were joined by environmental NGOs operating at the local or regional level. Social interests, which require ordinary citizens acting as stakeholders, were less mobilized and less engaged in the FSC certification process. Social NGOs’ role was marginal as compared with environmental NGOs, and they did not play a significant role in representing community interests. Grant programs were employed to stimulate certain kinds of community projects that either supported the goals of model forests or fit the profile of public participation promulgated by the FSC. Local residents were instructed in their right to designate socially valuable forests or consult on forest management, but the broader context in which these rights were created and revised was not accessible to local participants. In the end, this participation was quite limited.

In general, NGOs had a greater capacity to participate effectively as stakeholders than did local community members due to a variety of barriers to successful citizen participation in decision-making processes on forest governance in Russia. There is a widespread sense of disempowerment and apathy, a sentiment that lingers from the Soviet period and the chaotic years of rapid economic changes and the withdrawal of the state. Many communities located adjacent to harvesting sites are impoverished; residents focused on daily survival had few resources to advance their interests. Another obstacle exists in the pre-existing public expectations that timber companies will provide for significant community infrastructure, a role that derives from the fusion of the state and private sector under Communism. Finally, the modernization and restructuring of the forest industry has reduced company’s needs for local employees, leading to disengagement between forest companies and local residents. Given these challenges NGOs and experts are necessary mediators of local participation. These factors combined to blunt the results of the FSC’s effort to expand citizenship and democratic governance.

One of the most notable aspects of this engagement in the Russian context was that the government, generally the dominant actor was absent. Government interests were just one of many stakeholders in the FSC process at the local level rather than the primary decision maker. The collision of global and local largely bypassed the national political sphere and national level rhetoric about post-Soviet Russia politics, but it nevertheless presented a challenge to the state’s hegemonic discourse by injecting global norms and procedures into political discussion at the local level. Ultimately, new ideas about citizenship – and the right of local residents to participate in forest governance – remain in tension with existing conceptions of forest companies’ obligations to communities and with the role that the Russian state sees for itself in forest governance. This tension may undermine the sustainability new models of local participation over time.

A closer look at the FSC-GGN shows that its operation represents a combination of several governance arrangements taking place simultaneously, with top-down and bottom-up connections among actors. FSC members and experts can participate in both global and national standard development across different scales of action, and ideally bring concerns from local sites of implementation to the global arena. However, although the overall system is democratic, the FSC-GGN cannot totally avoid top-down hierarchical arrangements in its own processes or circumvent pre-existing domestic patterns of engagement. The deliberative process that the FSC cultivates is a kind of ‘managed citizenship’ based on membership and stakeholders, where transnational actors play a superior role and the majority of local residents may not be included. Ultimately, transnational stakeholders operating in the node of design and forums of negotiation are global rule makers; they have more freedom to exercise their citizenship than do national and local stakeholders who have to
comply with already established rules of the game in their
domestic arena and do not have the capacity to enter
transnational arena and become transnational stakeholders.
However, NGOs and experts continue to foster new forms
discourse among civil society actors in Russia, and thus
may be enhancing the development of democratic initia-
tives in rural communities and democratic decision-mak-
ing processes within forest governance.

Disclosure statement
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes
1. Funds provided by the National Council for Eurasian and
East European Research (NCEEER), under authority of a
Title VIII grant from the U.S. Department of State, partly
supported the work leading to this publication.
2. Ironically, the Putin administration at one point labeled its
regime ‘managed democracy’ to describe the mix of formal
rights and freedoms along with significant centralization of
state authority that have evolved in the post-Soviet period
(Surkov 2008).
3. In 2011, National Initiatives were renamed as FSC offices.
The new scheme was introduced in order to facilitate shar-
ing financial resources between FSC International and FSC
initiatives within states and regions.
4. Promotion of FSC certification in Russia continued through
a WWF–World Bank Alliance project and later through
WWF partnerships with IKEA and in cooperation with
regional forest business associations.
5. During the period of the MFP’s implementation, the num-
ber of companies leasing the forest varied from 12 to 17.
These represented a diverse business community with dif-
ferent kinds of relationships with leskhoz, the local admin-
istration, TNCs, Silver Taiga, and local communities.
6. Interview with a Saving Pechora Committee expert, March
2006, Siktifkar.
7. Interview with a local community organizer, April 2005,
Obyachevo.
8. Since the introduction of the new Forest Code in 2007, the
leasing of forest territory occurs through auctions and the
public has less opportunity to participate in leasing pro-
cedures.
9. Interview with a community activist and participant in
many public hearings, March 2006, Siktifkar.
10. Interview with a journalist, Forest Council member, April
2006, Obyachevo.
11. Interview with a teacher, Forest Council member, April
2006, Chernish.
12. Interview with a local community organizer, October 2005,
Chernish.
13. Interview with Silver Taiga staff, 2002, Siktifkar.
14. Interview with Shuvgy Parma organizer, December 2002,
Obyachevo.
15. Interview with a teacher, December 2002, Chernish.
16. Interview with a club participant, December 2002,
Obyachevo.
17. Interview with the coordinator of the discussion club,
December 2002, Obyachevo.
18. Interview with Silver Taiga staff, 2002, Obyachevo.
19. Interview with the coordinator of a youth discussion club,
2002, Obyachevo.
20. Interview with a coordinator of youth discussion clubs,
2002, Obyachevo.
21. Interview with a participant in the project, October 2002,
Strugi Krasnie.
22. Interview with a social expert in forest certification,
October 2002, Strugi Krasnie.
23. Interview with a member of PMF staff, October 2002,
Strugi Krasnie.
24. Interview with PMF staff, October 2002, Strugi Krasnie.
25. Interview with a PMF implementer, October 2002, Strugi
Krasnie.
26. Interview with the president of the Forest Club, October
2002, Strugi Krasnie.
27. Interview with the director of the Ecological-Biological
Center, October 2002, Strugi Krasnie.
28. Interview with the museum curator, Strugi Krasnie
November 2007, Strugi Krasnie.
29. Interview with a local school teacher and Forest Club
activist, October 2002, Strugi Krasnie.
30. Interview with the director of STF-Strug, June 2002, Strugi
Krasnie.
31. Interview with an activist of the Forest Club, November
2007, Strugi Krasnie.
32. Interview with an activist of the Forest Club, November
2007, Strugi Krasnie.
33. Romanyuk, B. D. ‘Pskov Model Forest: Public
Participation in Forest Planning,’ published by the WWF
34. Interview with the research director of the project, March
2008, St. Petersburg.
35. Interview with the research director of the Project, St.
Petersburg, March 2008, St. Petersburg.
36. One author of this article, Maria Tysiachniouk, served as an
expert during this period.

References
schemes and the impacts on forests and forestry. Annu Rev
Environ Resour. 33:187–211.
Auld G, Gulbrandsen LH. 2010. Transparency in nonstate certi-
fication: consequences for accountability and legitimacy.
Global Environ Politics. 10:97–119.
Avant D, Finnemore M, Sell SK. 2010. Who governs the globe?
New York: Cambridge University Press.
Boström M, Gartsen C. 2008. Organizing transnational account-
ability. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
Boström M, Hallström KT. 2010. NGO power in global social
and environmental standard-setting NGO power in global
social and environmental standard-setting. Global Environ
Politics. 10:36–59.
Cashore B, Auld G, Newsom D. 2004. Governing through mar-
kets: regulating forestry through non-state environmental
Chan S, Patteberg P. 2008. Private rule-making and the politics of
accountability: analyzing global forest governance. Global
Environ Politics. 8:103–121.
Dauvergne P, Lister J. 2012. Big brand sustainability: governance
prospects and environmental limits. Global Environ Change.
22:36–45.
Gulbrandsen L. 2010. Transnational environmental governance:
the emergence and effects of the certification of forest and
Hale T, Held D, editors. 2011. Handbook of transnational