

Juan Pablo Sarmiento Barletti (CIFOR-ICRAF, Peru)

If you're not on the table, you're on the menu: Reflections on the inclusion of historically marginalised groups in multi-stakeholder platforms for sustainable land use

Most major efforts to address unsustainable land and resource use rely on multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs). This reflects, in part, a growing commitment to including historically marginalised groups—such as Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and smallholders—in land and resource governance. At the same time, deeply unequal histories of access to land and resources across much of the Global South, together with longstanding failures of mainstream politics to adequately incorporate local rights and concerns into environmental decision-making, place considerable expectations on MSPs. These platforms are often idealized as spaces of collaboration among equals, even though extensive research has shown that fostering equity within such “invited spaces” is far from straightforward.

Drawing on a global comparative research project on MSPs in Latin America, Asia, and Africa conducted with colleagues at CIFOR-ICRAF, this presentation synthesises key lessons on when and how MSPs can meaningfully include representatives of historically marginalised groups, while also reflecting on the limitations and challenges inherent to these platforms.