

# Where's the Science

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# What are the goals?

- Development means
  - Accumulation of human capital
  - Accumulation of social capital
  - Accumulation of physical capital
  - Maintenance of renewable natural capital

## Bottom line .

- Development means increasingly productive, happy, self-governing people

# Starting point

- Goal is social and economic development for Northern Ontario.
- The current system has failed
- Community forestry is the leading contender
- International and Canadian evidence tells us community forestry will work
- There is no evidence that the current structures can work.

# There is no evidence that the current structures can work???

- The system is rooted in the colonial period and remains a colonial institution. It was designed to capture resource rents and channel them to the colonial capital.
- No one has presented anything resembling evidence that the current system in Ontario can become an effective way of promoting development.



- **There is no logical grounds for suggesting that conventional practice is superior to community forestry.**

# Why is it so resistant to change?

- Support for the current system is rooted in
  - Protecting established economic interests
  - Regulator capture
  - Inertia
  - Ignorance
  - Lack of imagination
  - Fear of change
  - Incumbent bias

# What is the science for?

- To give us a sound basis for choosing the general corporate structure for forest management in Northern Ontario.
- To identify specific features of a system that achieves our goals.

# Ask Oxford to define science

1. Knowledge acquired by study;
2. a recognised department of learning;
3. *a connected body of demonstrated truths or with observed facts systematically classified and more or less **colligated** by being brought under general laws,*
4. Natural and Physical Science



# So what kind of science would it be?

- Observed facts and demonstrated truths about **organizational forms**, including economic efficiency and measures of accumulation and depreciation, classified AND coligated
- Theory that evaluates different organizational forms.

# What is the state of the science

- Crummy.
- Mostly case studies.
- Large numbers of variables identified by Wade, Ostrum, and Baland, and Platteau
- Need huge numbers of case studies unless geographically restricted.
- Most studies US (very different from NO)
- Most studies LDCs (very different from NO)

# Impossibility theoryum

- Problem: in Canada the technology, markets, regulations, legislation, education and community structures have evolved to support the existing system
- it is foolish to compare a mature technology system with the immature system that will replace it. Landline-cellphone. Stereo-ipod.

# Three conclusions about research

- Generalizing about ideal forms from other countries is not much use
- Generalizing from existing Canadian examples is not very informative.
- A few more pilot projects will not help much.



# Three conclusions from research

- CF has worked
- CF is working
- CF will work

# Three warnings from research

1. Without real devolution of power, the goals of community forestry will be difficult to achieve
2. Governments generally resist decentralization except of burden
3. Local elites tend to capture any gains: Community forestry will not automatically solve poverty and inequality.

# Success, if it comes

- Will be the result of many attempts
- And many failures
- And much innovation
- And new technologies
- And new organizations
  
- And it will be unique to Northern Ontario