



WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



THE GOVERNANCE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Transparent, effective, accountable governance ensures that development benefits people and the planet. Incorporating governance into our work at the World Resources Institute (WRI) helps to protect the rights of poor, vulnerable and marginalized citizens who most sharply experience the brunt of resource constraints and environmental degradation. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen institutions to foster environmentally sound and socially equitable decision making.

THE CHALLENGE

Around the world, many communities face social and environmental injustices that could be prevented if they had a say in the development decisions that affect their lives and the resources they depend on. Marginalized groups such as women, the poor, and indigenous peoples are often disenfranchised in these instances because they bear more of the costs of development and receive a smaller share of the benefits.

OUR APPROACH | As a global leader on environmental governance, WRI's Governance Center of Excellence uses data, research, extensive networks, and innovative tools to integrate fundamental democratic principles—such as transparency, participation, and accountability—into decision-making policies and legal frameworks.

We believe that marginalized peoples' access rights lie at the heart of sustainable development outcomes. With this in mind, our work revolves around equity and inclusion. We focus on the economic wellbeing of the poorest and most disadvantaged people and the social and political factors that affect access to opportunities for participation in decision-making. We engage citizens, civil society organizations, governments, and the private sector to promote economic and political empowerment and strengthen

institutions in the pursuit of decision-making that achieves both environmental and social objectives.

Governance work in WRI increasingly uses novel tools and forms of analysis to develop environmental governance indicators, challenge received wisdom and practice on the ground, and scale up successful innovations. Our suite of tools includes **political economy analysis** so we can better address the question of who gets what, why, how, and when.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEMOCRACY INDEX

EDI is a new interactive platform and tool that allows users to track their countries' progress in protecting the public's rights to information, participation, and justice in environmental decision-making—principles that make up the foundation of environmental democracy. Developed by The Access Initiative (TAI), the Environmental Democracy Index (EDI) is the first tool to benchmark national laws that protect transparency, public participation, and access to justice in environmental matters. At present, the EDI assesses, scores, and ranks 70

countries' environmental democracy laws on an online platform that provides in-depth information on its scores, summaries of strengths and areas for improvement, and allows users to match scores to the laws and practices that support them. It also allows users to compare countries' performances at multiple levels and download data on environmental democracy measures.



► www.environmentaldemocracyindex.org

OUR WORK | The Governance Center is divided into five practice areas—climate resilience, environmental democracy, energy governance, natural resource governance and urban governance—where our work is concentrated on six priority issues: climate, energy, food, forests, water, and cities. The practice areas each have three elements at their core: a shared set of assets (partnerships, civil society networks), a robust method (tools and data analysis), and a systematic focus on results and outcomes.



CLIMATE RESILIENCE PRACTICE

The **Climate Resilience Practice (CRP)** seeks a world where development succeeds in spite of climate change. Building upon 2015's landmark progress on national climate commitments and global commitments, adaptation planning has become a priority for many countries. CRP works with citizens, civil society, cities, local governments, and global actors to integrate climate risk into their laws, policies, and development plans. Climate-resilient development outcomes will enable the poorest and most marginalized people to lift themselves out of poverty and be less vulnerable to a warming world.



NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

The **Natural Resource Governance Practice (NRGP)** works on strengthening the recognition of land and natural resource rights in law and practice. In cooperation with international partners, civil society, local communities, and the private sector, NRGP conducts research and advocacy on a range of issues including land tenure, land use planning, management of forest resources and benefits, and land-based investments. Using tools such as LandMark, the first online global platform of indigenous and community lands, and the Governance of Forests Indicator Framework, a research tool for practitioners to assess forest governance, NRGP can continue to empower people and institutions to foster sustainable and socially equitable decision-making over how forest resources are owned and used.



ENERGY GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

The **Energy Governance Practice (EGP)** promotes open, transparent, and accountable decision-making processes around securing a sustainable energy future. The practice works to improve the governance of sector planning, energy access, and service delivery. EGP draws on the Electricity Governance Initiative, a network of civil society and research organizations dedicated to good governance in sustainable energy program design, and other research and analysis tools to achieve these goals.



URBAN GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

The **Urban Governance Practice (UGP)** supports more inclusive, accountable, and sustainable cities through improved participation, transparency, and accountability. UGP relies on city-wide strategic engagement with key city stakeholders, including civil society, citizens, and local communities. Working on service delivery, land rights, institution and capacity building, this practice area diagnoses and builds capacity around urban governance institutions which will lead to better, more sustainable quality of life for urban citizens.



ENVIRONMENTAL DEMOCRACY PRACTICE

The **Environmental Democracy Practice (EDP)** works with civil society and governments to improve environmental laws relating to transparency, citizen engagement, and accountability. With over 250 members in over 60 countries, The Access Initiative is the world's largest global network dedicated to ensuring that citizens have the right and ability to influence decisions about the natural resources that sustain their communities. The Environmental Democracy Index is a biennial global index that measures national progress of environmental democracy laws and practices.

OUTCOMES | We seek to achieve practical outcomes, focusing on the role of governance in shaping decisions and resource allocations on climate and environment.

• **INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY IN REDD+:**

WRI developed a framework to analyze accountability in national REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) programs, resulting in recommendations for governments, civil society and donors for the types of standards and systems that should be developed or strengthened when designing these programs.

• **IN TANZANIA, PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY IN VILLAGES:**

Along with Tanzanian partner organizations, WRI worked with district officials in Kisaware, village councilors in Vilabwa and Kidugalo, and civil society members to develop gender-sensitive by-laws in Kiswahili. Kisaware District has now called for the other 64 villages in the district to adopt the bylaws and the national government is likely to encourage all 14,000 plus villages in Tanzania to develop policies around gender equity.

• **RESEARCH ON ADAPTATION FINANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES LEADS TO BETTER OVERSIGHT:**

With support from the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC) and WRI, the Philippines national legislature is now systematically monitoring adaptation funding flows. This will ensure that adaptation funding reaches the local communities that are most vulnerable to climate change.

• **INCORPORATING TRANSPARENCY INTO ENERGY ACCESS INVESTMENT:**

As part of the RISE (Readiness for Investment in Energy Access) External Advisory Board for the World Bank, WRI was a key player in the development stages of various RISE indicators, working to ensure that transparency was considered as a criterion for investment. WRI was especially active in advocating for the public availability of electrification plans, now included as an indicator alongside utility transparency, public annual reports, and public reliability measurements.

CONTACT

MARK ROBINSON

Global Director, Governance
mrobinson@wri.org

ABOUT WRI

World Resources Institute (WRI) is a global research organization spanning more than 50 countries, with offices in the US, China, India, Brazil, Ethiopia, Mexico, Europe, and Indonesia. Our more than 550 experts and staff work closely with leaders to turn big ideas into action to sustain our natural resources—the foundation of economic opportunity and human well-being.



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10 G Street NE, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20002, USA
+1 (202) 729-7600
www.wri.org

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