

# Governance that considers the environment: How to bring science into policy making to promote better land use

**Gabrielle Kissinger**

*Principal, Lexeme Consulting, Vancouver*

Global pressures on ecosystem services and land are expected to increase dramatically in the future, yet our governance and market institutions are ill-equipped to respond to the challenge. Each sector's pressure on land and resources in the future will be significant, and will likely have greater pressure on related sectors. By 2030, the global demand for freshwater is projected to exceed supply by 40%, with dramatic implications for agriculture and municipal drinking water. It is estimated that 80% of deforestation and forest degradation is related to agriculture. A record 29.7 million hectares of tree cover was lost in 2016, which was about 50% higher than 2015, and largely attributed to fires clearing forest for pasture and for palm oil production, as well as El Niño effects. Ninety-three percent of countries seeking to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) are aware of and identify weak forest sector governance and institutions as key underlying drivers of deforestation and degradation. However, it is conflicts outside the forest sector that will have greater impact on forests, yet REDD+ countries are lagging in identifying policies and interventions to address these pressures.

How can our governance systems and economies better take the issues into consideration? How can we bring science into policy making to better equip ourselves to face future challenges? This seminar explores success stories and failures in both developed and developing countries, particularly from pan tropical forest areas.

Gabrielle Kissinger is Principal of Lexeme Consulting, based in Vancouver. She is an advisor to UN agencies and developing country governments seeking to reduce GHG emissions from the forest and agriculture sectors. She holds a Master's degree in Environmental Policy from Tufts University, and is currently working on a PhD at Wageningen University in the Netherlands.