

Erik Nielsen

Ottawa, Ontario
CANADA

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Birth Year: 1972
Nationality: Canadian
Mother Tongue: English
Other Languages: Spanish (proficient),
Danish, French, Italian (basic)

PROFILE

Ten years of progressively responsible international development experience, with significant focus working at the nexus of environmental management, governance, and poverty reduction; including five years professional experience in developing countries. Demonstrated capacity to influence policy-making processes, develop innovative strategic partnerships and collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders. Skills include strategic outreach and policy advocacy, programme and budget management, and partnership engagement. Six years of inter-disciplinary advanced graduate level training focused on policy analysis, natural resource management, international development. Doctorate specialized in public policy and environmental governance.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

Programme and Project Management

Management experience at the local, national and international levels, providing technical support to projects and programmes in multiple developing countries. Focused on policy support to local communities, national governments and international organizations to provide improved access to and use of natural resources. Experience in strategic planning; impact oriented monitoring and evaluation; financial management and oversight of budgets; preparation of funding proposals and human resource supervision.

Alliance Building and Networking

Experience working in and managing inter-disciplinary teams from different backgrounds. Track record of establishing and maintaining diverse partnerships, while promoting and managing extensive networking with development agencies, civil society, research agencies, private sector and national government departments on multiple scales. Adept at dealing with ambiguity and frequently changing work environments, including in complex conditions. Enjoy and prefer working in teams.

Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Sharing

Experience designing and implementing complex advocacy strategies in diverse areas. Confident communicator to varied audiences. Experience utilizing a variety of mechanisms including multi-stakeholder dialogues and evidence based research to influence target audiences. Communication products include: information notes, policy briefs, academic papers, radio scripts, videos and training materials on diverse topics. Significant experience organizing high level international events.

EDUCATION

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT)

Doctor of Philosophy in International Environmental Policy

August 2003 to September 2007

Dissertation Title: Networked Governance: China's Changing Approach to Transboundary Environmental Management

Dissertation Focus: Environmental public policy field of specialization and research analyzes the role of non-state actors in the process of transboundary environmental management. Research specifically on transboundary environmental governance with emphasis on how non-state actors influence government decision-making over the management of shared natural resources. Eighteen months field research completed in China and Southeast Asia.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Research Fellow, Center for International Development, Kennedy School of Government

September 2005 to August 2007

Fellowship Focus: Advance basic understanding of dynamics of human-environment systems, to facilitate design and implementation of practical interventions that promote sustainability, and improve linkages between research and policy.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Masters of Science, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

August 1996 to August 1998

Major: International Development Communication (six months field research in Central America)

Double Minor: Community Development Education and Latin American Studies

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

Honours Bachelor of Environmental Science, Faculty of Environmental Science

September 1991 to April 1996

Major: Natural Resources Management

Emphasis: International Development

ESCUELA DE AGRICULTURA DE LA REGION TROPICA HUMEDA

Semester Exchange to Costa Rica to Study Tropical Agriculture

August 1994 to December 1994

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

- Joined the Federal Government of Canada via the Recruitment of Policy Leaders (RPL) program. RPL targets and recruits exceptional candidates into senior-level policy positions in the Public Service of Canada. Program designed to attract top-level professionals and graduates, from an array of disciplines, with the drive and potential to shape the future of Canada's public policy landscape

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT¹

Senior Advisor, Multilateral Institutions and Global Affairs Branch

February 2013 to Present

Ottawa, Canada

- Primary Branch focal point for all materials, policies and files related to governance; in process of leading development of new Branch strategy ensuring all programming funds committed to multilateral agencies promote good governance
- Primary Branch focal point for all materials, policies and files related to the Government of Canada's Americas Strategy
- Primary Branch focal point for managing all inputs into new CIDA civil society engagement strategy
- Manage and ensure compliance with all corporate due diligence requirements for over 30 agencies receiving funding from CIDA
- Manage annual analytical performance reporting for over 30 agencies receiving funding from CIDA

ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Senior Policy Analyst, International Affairs Branch, Climate Change International

November 2012 to February 2013

Ottawa, Canada

- Provided policy analysis and advice to senior management on Canada's participation, engagement and obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to advance Canada's position and interests, specifically for the Doha 2012 Convention of Parties
- Advised Canadian policy development to support, enhance and comply with UNFCCC provisions

ECOAGRICULTURE INTERNATIONAL

Senior Manager Knowledge Sharing and Policy Advocacy

May 2011 to September 2012

Washington D.C., USA

- Facilitated overall planning and implementation of the Landscapes for People, Food and Nature Initiative, a global innovative international programme to support sustainable agricultural production, sustainable rural livelihoods, climate adaptation and ecosystem conservation
- Led design and implementation of global advocacy strategy to influence and shape the future trajectory of agricultural development, including identification of initiative outcomes, targeting relevant audience, messaging and specific tactics for how messages can be best delivered; charged with translating knowledge of the nexus of food security, agricultural development, and climate change into effective advocacy to influence government and industry decision-making
- Executed strategic priorities including identification of landscape champions and social entrepreneurs, built constituencies and led advocacy coalitions, leveraged private sector partners, and collaborated with a diverse set of actors, including partnership engagement with nine major global environmental and agricultural partner organizations and 18 international advisory committee members; charged with identifying additional partners and relationships to promote Initiative's goal and objectives
- Designed and implemented complex international Forum in Nairobi, Kenya with over 150 participants from 40 countries to review, elaborate and finalize the Initiative's overall action and advocacy strategy
- Extensive collaboration and networking with diverse partners around the world, including foundations, international NGOs, research agencies, farmers organizations, and the private sector to build alliances that support and strengthen the goal and objectives of the Landscapes Initiative
- Supported research and development of funding proposals to various US Foundations

¹ Currently Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); new ministry to be created in 2013

- Advised EcoAgriculture Partners Policy Program on communications and advocacy strategies related to the organization's work on agriculture and climate change, food security and other themes
- Undertook extensive duty travel to Africa

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

Manager Country Based Programmes, Water Integrity Network (WIN)

May 2009 to April 2011

Berlin, Germany and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Developed WIN global country engagement and advocacy strategy to facilitate multi-stakeholder integrity programmes to combat corruption in water sector in selected countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia; create national programmes focused on multiple sub-sectors including: water supply and sanitation; hydropower, irrigation, and integrated water resources management
- Led design and implementation of qualitative and quantitative evidence-based water integrity studies in multiple countries to inform the development of comprehensive, transparent multi-stakeholder country water integrity programmes
- Strategically collaborated and built effective partnerships with civil society, government, private sector, bilaterals and other influential actors to promote more inclusive, transparent and accountable systems to manage and govern the water sector; significant focus on social entrepreneurship
- Crafted targeted policy advocacy and outreach efforts with government, civil society and private sector actors in country based programmes to shape public policy debate and implementation through development of innovative mechanisms including: small format video interviews, radio campaigns, multi-stakeholder policy dialogues and evidence based fact-finding research; combine research, analytical and advocacy strategies to empower people and strengthen institutions to deliver more transparent and accountable systems of water governance
- Mentored international and national professional staff at the Secretariat in Berlin and within country based programmes in a complex, frequently changing work environment
- Networked, coordinated and collaborated with colleagues, expert networks, members and stakeholders around the world to combat corruption in the water sector
- Supported management all project and programme budgets ensuring overall financial transparency, accountability and sustainability for a total annual budget of USD \$400,000
- Supported proposal development and administer all contracts for country based activities
- Supported the integration of programme coordination and financial management
- Undertook extensive duty travel to East and West Africa, Asia and Latin America

THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN)

Country Programme Coordinator

February 2008 to November 2008

Vientiane, Lao PDR

- Oversaw all country strategic programme and project planning, development, policy advocacy outreach, monitoring and reporting to IUCN, partners and donors
- Implemented IUCN Lao Sustainable Livelihoods strategic framework on Governance, Water, Protected Areas, and Agrobiodiversity
- Initiated multi-stakeholder Regional Water Dialogue Programme (Lao, Cambodia and Viet Nam components) designed to improve water governance by building government, civil society and business sector partnerships both nationally and regionally
- Oversaw development of Business and Biodiversity Programme with a special focus on collaborating with footprint industries such as the mining and hydropower sectors

- Assisted with design and implementation of a 'livelihoods and landscapes' forest governance programme designed to improve community livelihoods
- Provided technical support to programme staff and ensure quality control of all work undertaken by technical team, particularly within Water and Governance thematic areas
- Managed and mentored ten international and national professional staff
- Networked, coordinated and collaborated with IUCN colleagues, expert networks, members and stakeholders in Lao PDR, Asia and globally
- Managed all project and programme budgets ensuring overall financial transparency, accountability and sustainability for a total annual budget approaching USD \$1 million
- Undertook extensive travel in the Mekong Region

CONSULTANCIES AND DOCTORAL TRAINING

2003 to 2007; Please refer to other sections

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Networking and Natural Resource Conflict Management Officer

December 2001 to April 2003

Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, Rome, Italy

- Provided planning and implementation support to networking activities of the FAO Livelihood Support Programme; agency-wide initiative designed to enhance livelihoods of the rural poor in developing world
- As Team Leader oversaw and supported the implementation of Natural Resource Conflict Management Sub-programme, including implementation of fieldwork components in Ghana, technical backstopping, policy advocacy outreach, development of training modules for forestry, fisheries and land tenure; internal monitoring and evaluation
- Identified and selected partner institutions, extensive networking with civil society and government
- Facilitated overall communication within the Natural Resource Conflict Management Sub-programme and promoted interdisciplinary collaboration and networking on the theme within FAO
- Undertook extensive duty travel to Ghana and other West African countries

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Natural Resource Conflict Management Coordinator

March 1999 to August 2001

Community Forestry Unit (CFU), Rome, Italy

- Coordinator and creator of the CFU natural resources conflict management and consensus building programme at the global level; primary focus was to provide policy and advocacy outreach and support at local and national levels; programme recognized within FAO as among organization's most innovative
- Developed overall programmatic strategy and vision; development of regional funding proposals to donor agencies; conducted transparent management and administration of USD \$250,000 annual budget; conducted impact-oriented programme monitoring and evaluation; and supervised numerous international and national consultants
- Backstopped internationally recognized Forest, Trees and People Programme's (FTPP) conflict management and consensus building activities in Latin America, East and West Africa, and Asia; promoted intensive networking with conflict management organizations worldwide
- Initiated and backstopped multi-province, inter-agency forest resource conflict management programme in Southwest China; obtained USD \$400,000 from Ford Foundation to execute three year programme
- Coordinated with the CFU Information Officer to develop and implement a global communication and networking strategy for the CFU and the FFTP. Responsibilities included development and facilitation of regional communication workshops, electronic conferences and strategy papers

- Developed numerous resources such as training materials, concept papers, case studies and policy briefs
- Trained over 100 practitioners on community-based natural resource conflict management skills
- Significant international duty travel undertaken to East Africa, Asia and Latin America

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS and
CANADIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

Young Professional International Internship Programme

September 1998 to March 1999

Community Forestry Unit (CFU), Rome, Italy

- Facilitated the CFU natural resources conflict management programme at global level
- Coordinator and lead author of a comprehensive sourcebook on participatory forestry management
- Assisted the CFU Information Officer to develop a CFU global communication strategy

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Community Forestry Internship

May 1997 to January 1998

Community Forestry Unit (CFU), Rome, Italy

- Assisted with the conceptual development and organization of the Technical Satellite Meeting on “Integrating Conflict Management Considerations into National Policy Frameworks” at the XI World Forestry Congress
- Assisted with the development of a framework to evaluate CFU communication and publication strategy

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FARM RADIO NETWORK

Radio Script Researcher and Writer

June 1996 to September 1996

Toronto, Canada

- Independently researched and wrote radio scripts on diverse agricultural and environmental topics disseminated for use in rural areas of Latin America, Africa and Asia

CONSULTANCIES (completed during doctoral studies)

MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION/PADCO

July 2005; Lao PDR

- Provided technical assistance to the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to review how the Commission can play a more proactive role in the management of transboundary environmental resources and promote dispute prevention and conflict management in the Mekong Basin watershed
- Identified potential institutional and capacity options for MRC to strengthen its own capabilities in support of National Mekong Committees and other stakeholders in the region
- Prepared a summary report of conflict management priorities and activities across MRC programs to strengthen conflict management capabilities; and developed potential institutional and capacity options for MRC to consider in strengthening its own capabilities and other stakeholders with a linkage to public participation

REGIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY TRAINING CENTER

September 2004 to December 2004, Thailand

- Provided support with the organization and development of an expert consultation on regional forest governance
- Conducted an extensive review and revision of a toolkit for community forestry presentation materials, specifically modules related to conflict management, facilitation and participation

REGIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY TRAINING CENTER

May 2003 to August 2003, Thailand

- Developed a framework for an international expert consultation on good forest governance in Asia
- Facilitated a training course on role of decentralization and forest federations in good forest governance

ACADEMIC TEACHING EXPERIENCE

September 2006 to December 2006

Doctoral Instructor: Research Design for Policy Analysis and Planning (doctoral level)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning

September 2005 to December 2005

Doctoral Instructor: Introduction to Public Policy (undergraduate level)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning/Political Science

September 2004 to December 2004

Doctoral Instructor: Introduction to Planning (graduate level)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning

September 1997 to December 1997

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Mass Communication Writing for Environmental Science

Cornell University, Department of Communication

September 1996 to December 1996

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Participatory Video for Development

Cornell University, Department of Communication

SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND RESEARCH AWARDS

- Doctoral Research Fellow; Center for International Development, Harvard University (2005 to 2007)
- Center for International Studies, MIT (2007)
- Next Generation Research Grant, Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School (2005; 2007)
- Martin Family Society of Fellows for Sustainability Fellowship (2005/2006)
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellowship (2003 to 2006)
- MIT China Program Research Award (2004; 2005; 2006; 2007)
- Dissertation Research Grant, Hauser Center for Non-Profit Organizations, Harvard University (2006)
- Dissertation Research Grant, Center for International Development, Harvard University (2006)
- MIT Presidential Fellowship (2003/2004)

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Jacobson, M. and S. Mutono, E. Nielsen, D. O’Leary and R. Rop. Promoting Transparency, Integrity and Accountability in the Water and Sanitation Sector in Uganda, Water and Sanitation Program, World Bank and the Water Integrity Network. 2010.

Nielsen, E. Networked Governance: China’s Changing Approach to Transboundary Environmental Management, Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2007.

Castro, A.P. and E. Nielsen, Eds. Power, Participation and Protected Areas: Natural Resource Conflict Management Case Studies, Forestry Policy and Planning Division. FAO, Rome. 2003.

Means, K. and C. Josayma, E. Nielsen, V. Viriyasakultorn. Community-Based Forest Resource Conflict Management Training Package, Forestry Policy and Planning Division. Volumes I and II. FAO, Rome. 2002.

Castro, A.P. and E. Nielsen. Indigenous Peoples and Co-Management: Implications for Conflict Management, Environmental Science and Policy. Vol. 4, No. 4/5, August 2001. pp. 229-239

Kiiti, N. and E. Nielsen. “Advocate vs. Facilitator: What’s the Difference?”, The Art of Facilitation Participation: Releasing the Power of Grass Roots People, Shirley A. White, Ed. 2000.

Nielsen, E. Inter-Institutional Collaboration in Central America. Daring to Share: Networking for Social Capital Development, MS thesis, Cornell University 1998.

Steele, R.E., E. Nielsen, E. Mbozi. Facilitating Participation and Collaborative Learning in Pluralistic Environments, Association for International Agricultural and Extension Educators, April, 1998.

Steele, R.E., E. Nielsen, E. Mbozi. “Community Learning and Education in a Pluralistic Environment: Implications for Sustainable Forestry, Agriculture, and Rural Development”, Managing Pluralism for Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development, FAO, Rome. December 1997.

NON-REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Scherr, S., E. Nielsen, J. Milder. Landscapes for People, Food and Nature: Action and Advocacy Strategic Plan, Washington, D.C. 2012.

Nielsen, E. Transboundary Environmental Conflict Management: Opportunities and Constraints for the Mekong River Commission. October 2005.

Nielsen, E. Improving Environmental Governance through Soft Law: Lessons Learned from the Bali Declaration on Forest Law and Governance in Asia. Innovations in International Environmental Negotiations, Volume 13, Moomaw, W and L. Susskind, Eds. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. 2004.

Means, K and E. Nielsen. Training Course Report: Managing Conflict in Community-based Forestry. Regional Community Forestry Training Center, Training Report. December 2002.

Means, K and E. Nielsen. Training Course Report: Managing Conflict in Forest Resource Management. Regional Community Forestry Training Center, Training Report. December 2001.

Nielsen, E. Beekeeping – Part Two: A home for your bees. Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. Package 45, Script 5. July 1997.

Nielsen, E. Beekkeeping – Part One: Have you heard the latest buzz? Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. Package 45, Script 4. July 1997.

Nielsen, E. Stone Lines Reduce Erosion. Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. Package 43, Script 8. January 1997.

Nielsen, E. Use Half-Moon Ditches to Prevent Soil Erosion. Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. Package 42, Script 8. October 1996.

SELECTED ACADEMIC PAPERS

China and the Mekong Region: A Changing Relationship Paper presented at Mekong Management at a Watershed – IWRM in the Global Water Crisis Symposium. School of Global Studies, Gothenburg University, Sweden. October 2008.

Transnational Civil Society Advocacy: Influencing China's Domestic Daming Building Agenda Paper presented at Transborder Issues in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region International Conference, Ubon Rathchathani, Thailand. June 2005.

Dam it! How Transnational Civil Society Actors Influence Domestic Environmental Policy Making in China: A Case Study of Damming the Nu River Paper presented at the Eighth Annual Harvard East Asia Society Graduate Student Conference, Harvard University, USA. March 2005.

The Role of National and Transnational Civil Society in Environmental Policy Making in China: A Case Study of the Nu River Paper presented at the Fourteenth Annual Graduate Conference on East Asia, Columbia University, USA. February 2005.

Beyond Borders: Emerging Forms of Transnational Advocacy for Improved Transboundary Environmental Governance in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Paper presented at the Mobile Workshop on Land Use History in Mainland Southeast Asia, China/Laos/Thailand. January 2005.

How Transnational Civil Society Engagement Impacts Domestic Policy-Making in China Harvard Program on Negotiation, Harvard University, USA. October 2004.

Institutions for International Water Management (presented with Catherine Ashcraft) Harvard Program on Negotiation, Harvard University, USA. March 2004.

OTHER INFORMATION

- Founding Member and Advisor, *Food Tank: The Food Think Tank*, 2013
- Advisor, *Better World Coding*, 2013
- Director-at-Large, Ambassador Court Holdings Condominium, 2013
- Fellow, Martin Family Society for Sustainability, MIT
- International Member, Natural Resource Governance Reference Group, Transparency and Accountability Initiative, Open Society Foundation, London, 2010
- Board Member, Cornell Program on Environmental Conflict Management, 1997 to 1998
- Member, Camel Breeders Club, Cornell University, 1996 to 1998