Expert keynote. FORECOM opening conference, March 7, 2013. Kraków, Poland.

From observation to implication; developing land-use change scenario models

Eric Koomen

Department of Spatial Economics/SPINlab, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Most of the contributions to this conference focus on the observation of land-use change and the uncovering of the responsible drivers. The description of past trajectories in forest cover change is very useful to policy makers, but to make informed decisions they typically also need assessments of potential future changes and their expected impacts on policy issues such as biodiversity, carbon sequestration, water storage or soil erosion. Land-use change models are useful to help create future assessments that are relevant to the preparation, development and, to a lesser extent, evaluation of large-scale spatial plans and strategies. This presentation discusses the potential use of land-use models in spatial planning support and specifically focuses on scenario analyses that are useful for long-term studies that deal with a wide array of possible developments and their implied uncertainties. Examples from several policy-related studies will be presented that relate to climate adaptation and the implementation of new spatial strategies.