Landscapes for People, Food & Nature in Africa

TERRAFRICA
REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

Landscapes for People, Food and Nature
An International Initiative for Dialogue, Learning and Action

Supporting African Landscape Objectives Through Local Landscape Governance

As landscape approaches to pursuing multiple social, economic, and environmental benefits in the same place gain favor, challenges in governing these complex systems arise (Brondizio et al., 2009). Landscape governance is concerned with the institutional arrangements, decision-making processes, policy instruments, and underlying values by which multiple actors pursue their interests in sustainable food production, biodiversity, ecosystem service conservation, cultural and heritage preservation, and livelihood security, resulting in multifunctional landscapes (Kozar et al., 2014).

State of Knowledge

A recent review of landscape governance (Kozar et al., 2014) finds an array of challenges including:

- multi-level and multi-actor systems complicate integrated landscape management;

- divergent values and interests of varied, multi-level actors;

- diverse views about what functions will be located where, who has rights to which resources, how rules should be enforced, and who is included in decision making;

- misalignment among ecologically defined landscapes and administrative and political (including national) boundaries;

- weaker emphasis on governance arrangements for 'natural' areas, which are critical for landscape integrity, than on governance of areas under active human use;

- power imbalances among institutional actors across levels, scales, sectors, and networks; and

- disempowerment of farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, forest dwellers, and other local land users.

Building effective, inclusive landscape governance systems requires (Kozar et al., 2014):

- knowledge of the existing institutional infrastructure in a landscape;

- metrics for assessing multiple desired outcomes from landscapes and viable trajectories for change;

- interconnected and complementary systems that deal with institutional arrangements at multiple scales and facilitate collective action through the use of social capital;

- capacity to handle complexity in the form of multiple actors, institutions, scales, and sectors and to accommodate landscape-specific characteristics, to formulate adaptive and scale-sensitive rules, and to test decisions toward desired outcomes; and

- management of technical and operational functions such as preparing, planning, assessing, sharing knowledge, implementing, and monitoring a set of actions designed to achieve multiple outcomes in the landscape.

Multiple new forms of governance and management are part of the experimentation and innovation around landscape governance, which has only recently been examined. In practice, fully realized forms of landscape governance are not common (Gorg, 2007; Olsson et al., 2004 in Southern et al., 2011; van Oosten and Hijweege, 2012). The Landscapes for People, Food and Nature initiative conducted a continental-scale review that documented 87 integrated landscape initiatives in 33 African countries, and all of these are experimenting with new forms and approaches to landscape governance. Several examples illustrate the wide range of models being developed across rural-urban gradients.

Landcare in South Africa and Uganda

Programs in South Africa and Uganda demonstrate different issues and lessons. Established in 1997 as a whole of government program, the South African National Landcare Programme built upon the grassroots Australian Landcare model. Governed by the Land Use and Soil Management Directorate within the Department of Agriculture, the South African Landcare implementation framework incorporates community-based initiatives within provincial structures, with a strong focus on private sector and civil society participation (Bosoga et al., 2009). Principles defined by the Government of South Africa specifically address governance issues including community based and led natural resource management within a participatory framework; the development of active and true partnerships between governments, landcare groups and communities, non-government organizations, and industry; and the blending together of appropriate upper-level policy processes with bottom-up feedback mechanisms (Prior and Maltitz, 2004). The governance of the landcare program in South Africa has been strongly aligned with policy agendas and oriented toward the potential of the program to link environmental conservation with income generation or job creation to make it relevant to local needs. Subsequently, funding for activities has been mainly derived from the government's poverty relief funds (Bosoga et al., 2009) and there have been some land management outcomes, such as employment programs to control non-priority weed species and increased stocking density on marginal land.

Conversely, governance of the landcare program in Uganda, particularly in Kapchorwa at the foothills of Mt Elgon, happens at a participatory grassroots level, enabled through the district government. Through facilitation of the African Highland Initiative project, the Kapchorwa District Landcare Chapter (KADLACC) was formed in 2003 (Tanui, 2005) and operates as a platform of smallholder groups with a shared vision for integrated natural resource management that has achieved significant production outcomes through collective action and vision (Otiende, 2013). Governance of KADLACC has been administered through a multi-stakeholder platform approach, with strong representation from the district government and community sector. KADLACC plans to ensure greater representation to ensure ownership of its activities, including from non-governmental organizations, religious leaders, private sector, youth, and the disabled community, while maintaining strict gender diversity representation (Kapchorwa District, 2014).

Northern Rangelands Trust in Kenya

The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) was established in 2004 with a mission to develop resilient community conservancies that transform people's lives, secure peace, and conserve natural resources through fundraising for conservancies, affairs management, capacity development, brokering with investment, and monitoring performance. The NRT focuses on community-led decision-making. Each conservancy has a Board of Directors that consists of 12 individuals democratically elected by the community and a number of ex officio members representing NRT, the Kenya Wildlife Service, the local administration, and, in some cases, Members of Parliament. The boards, more and more of which have female representatives, employ a manager, rangers, administrators, and others with the necessary skills for managing a successful conservancy.

Conservancies enter into memoranda of understanding with NRT, whose highest governing body is the Council of Elders. The chairs of the conservancies make up the majority and are joined by

institutional members representing county councils, local wildlife forums, Kenya Wildlife Service, and the private sector. The Council guides NRT policy and is responsible for drawing up the bylaws for its operation and administration. The Board of Directors includes institutional members, private conservancies, and two of the major donor organizations—The Nature Conservancy and Fauna and Flora International. Operational in Kenya as of January 10, 2014, one of the guiding principles of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 is the devolution of conservation and management of wildlife to local landowners and managers in areas. The law recognizes wildlife conservation as a form of land use, better access to benefits from wildlife conservation, and adherence to the principles of sustainable utilization.

African Model Forest Network

Model Forests (MF) are large, multifunctional landscapes governed by voluntary, public-private-civic partnerships that engage local and indigenous communities. Although every MF is uniquely adapted to local political, social, and economic contexts, all share a set of common principles: partnership, good governance, sustainability, long-term landscape-based program of activities, knowledge sharing, and networking. The three MF governance dimensions, or scales, include: local subsidiary platform and its actors and stakeholders; government or public policy; and creation of economic, social, and cultural wealth for the local community.

The African Model Forest Network was established in 2009 to facilitate: (i) establishment of a well-governed pan-African network that would work towards sustainable development of forested landscapes; (ii) consolidation of a local governance model; (iii) design and implementation of sustainable African policies and reinforcement of international cooperation; and (iv) shared learning about environmental responsibility, sustainable development and innovation, African unity, and international solidarity. With two Model Forests already developed in Cameroon, new MFs are being established; there are four in the Democratic Republic of Congo, one in Rwanda, one in the Central African Republic, and one in the Republic of the Congo. Initiatives are also advancing in Senegal and Ethiopia. MF platforms are established to assist in overcoming weak links among forest management units (e.g. logging concessions, protected areas, plantations, mining, community and council forests) and to mitigate conflicts between forest actors through establishing frameworks of good governance. The experience in Cameroon demonstrates that efforts by government alone are unlikely to result in sustainable forest management. Rather, it is based on bottom-up, local participation and model forest process (Jum et al., 2007).

Lessons and Challenges

Putting into practice viable landscape governance systems that account for multiple actors, scenarios, levels, scales, and sectors presents several predominant challenges. The following indicative lessons have been extracted from a global study (Kozar et al., 2014) and augmented with those from Africa-specific cases.

Negotiating What and Whose Landscape

- *Boundaries and Scales.* While sometimes ecologically and politically defined boundaries in landscapes coincide, more often they are misaligned with ecosystems crossing multiple jurisdictional units, including national borders. Actions for improved performance of

landscapes cannot be centered on only one scale when they are influenced by actors operating at multiple levels. Governance arrangements are closely correlated to the specific characteristics of the landscape, but also the social, political, historical, and cultural context of the landscape and nation (Janssen and Knippenberg, 2012).

- *Collaborative Planning, Adaptive Management and Decision-Making.* While there is no single spatial arrangement or constellation of governance arrangements that constitutes a more favorable structure for landscape governance systems, sustained leadership and sufficient levels of multi-stakeholder support and ownership are required (Forster and Getz Escudero, 2014). Adaptive collaborative management and holistic decision-making processes are needed to underpin complex and dynamic governance systems that evolve over time with changes in social-ecological systems.

Balancing Power Dynamics

- *Power Imbalances.* Landscape governance systems should value the interests of multiple actors, yet imbalances in power relations are ubiquitous. Governance is politically contested and addressing equity in representation and benefit sharing through various forms of new governance should lead, in the long term, to more stable and sustainable outcomes. Legal frameworks and associated regulations can help to support more equitable dialogue processes, first by recognizing real power imbalances among actors in the landscape and at larger scales, and second by creating opportunities for arbitration and compromise. These can serve to further protect the rights of weaker actors and guide or limit the behavior of powerful actors, ensuring some level of fairness in multi-actor proceedings.

- *Nested Governance.* Governance arrangements must span multiple levels. Local governments need focused and sustained attention if landscape governance structures, functions, and processes are to be institutionalized. At the same time, interactions among levels of government are more important drivers for decision-making than are regulations or financial transfers. Furthermore, landscape actors and practitioners need to consider how customary governance arrangements and ecosystem knowledge may be adapted in designs that consider the changing ecological and social scales brought about by new demands and new actors engaged with the landscape. Wide representation at the local level increases ownership and, in turn, increases the rate of achievement in impact and sustained results. Finding coherence and complementarity among roles and functions of state and non-state actors is essential. Addressing accountability and legitimacy requires that governance arrangements ensure rights over resources at multiple levels, and that actors with responsibilities to manage also have the rights to do so.

Resolving Governance Options and Metrics of Evaluation

- *Linking Knowledge Systems.* Accommodating different knowledge systems that diverse actors bring to the table and use to justify their individual actions is an important need and a strategic opportunity to construct landscape specific knowledge from multiple sources. Vertical (hierarchical) and horizontal (sectoral) integration mechanisms are paramount for enabling adaptive responses by multiple actors across scales and levels. Multi-sector coordination frameworks are useful policy instruments that bring together diverse

knowledge forms in a common vision. Bridging organizations hold unique positions, capacities, and legitimacy among multiple actors and can facilitate across actors with diverse values and knowledge for collaborative learning and action (Enengel et al., 2011).

- *Lasting Incentives.* The provision of legal land and resource rights to farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, forest dwellers and other land managers proves to be a pivotal incentive to protect and restore ecosystem services and to participate in landscape governance. Measures—such as tree registration and certifications that incentivize farmers to plant trees they will benefit from directly—demonstrate a form of benefit sharing that incentivizes engagement in making and enforcing rules for good landscape behavior. Similarly, linking meat markets and the building of accountability and risk- and benefit-sharing mechanisms to regeneration of grazing land can incentivize conservation. In the case of city-region systems, urban procurement by municipal institutions can serve as an important incentive and catalyst (Forster and Getz Escudero, 2014).

- *Harmonizing Policies and Landscape Governance.* Three key types of institutional structures have been found to be effective for multi-level and multi-actor governance: (i) networked and deliberative arrangements; (ii) vertical integration through, for instance, nested institutional arrangements; and (iii) multi-level boundary spanning and bridging organizations. While governments can support landscape governance and multifunctional implementation, national policies must be tested to ensure that they support landscape governance rather than create perverse or conflicting incentives.

Consensus Actions

There are numerous strategies for advancing the foundation for landscape governance in Africa:

Develop robust innovation systems that foster social learning and communication needed to nurture linkages, synergies across knowledge systems, negotiation support, and holistic decision-making to address the complexity of landscape governance. Landscape governance calls for negotiation support systems where diverse knowledge systems are understood across knowledge resource people and solutions are created in a cooperative manner based on experiential and scientific evidence toward desired outcomes.

Invest in a critical mass of agents and institutions with the capacities needed for co-designing governance systems that work. This includes institutional know-how for cooperation in the various dimensions of landscape design, adaptive management, holistic decision-making, and delivery of multiple performance outcomes that will play an instrumental role in collaborative management and mechanisms and metrics for evaluating transparency and accountability.

Promote landscape leadership capacity development for effective, multi-stakeholder governance of multifunctional landscapes. Develop guidelines and codes of conduct for good governance in integrated landscape management that draw upon successful examples in agriculture, environmental, and forestry sectors.

Develop a Pan-African Platform that brings together networks focused on forest, grazing, wildlife, and agricultural production at the landscape level. Facilitate the platform to synchronize the different views, institutions, and knowledge systems to enrich integration and expand successful landscape approaches (e.g. learning networks).

"Springboards for Action"

- Support integrated landscape initiatives already organized in Africa to document their experience, promote landscape dialogues and test innovations to further strengthen their governance approaches.

- Use existing platforms of landscape initiatives in Africa to accelerate learning and innovation around governance (e.g. through the African Model Forest Network, Landcare International, African Wildlife Foundation-supported Heartlands) and inter-link with/ through the Landscapes for People, Food and Nature knowledge sharing networks.

- Promote greater understanding of how landscapes support city-region food systems, invest in processes and capacities to account for the interdependencies between natural and built environments, and use leverage points associated with urbanization and regional planning to support landscape management.

- Incorporate landscape governance issues into the new CGIAR research programs in Africa and link to operational landscape initiatives.

- Build a landscape governance focus into the expanding work of the New Partnership for Africa's Development/TerrAfrica partnership.

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