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ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMME PROCESSES AND PLANS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



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Assessment of National Forest Programme Processes and Plans in Southern Africa

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Acronyms

AFF	African Forest Forum
CBO	Community Based Organization
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
NFP	National Forest Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMSC	National Multi-Sectoral Committee
OIMES	Outcomes and Impact Monitoring and Evaluation System
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management

Executive Summary

Southern African forest ecosystems (both natural and exotic) provide a wide range of economic, social and ecological services and are under threat from various causes, hence the need to implement sustainable forest management (SFM) practices. SFM calls for the use of the National Forest Programme (nfp) process to develop, implement and monitor nfps. The latter are a mutually agreed portfolio of forest sector initiatives, and the nfp approach focuses on the involvement of key stakeholders in the process. Several Southern African countries are participating in the nfp process through the NFP Facility housed by FAO. However, progress made in implementing nfp driven plans varies with country. The objective of this study was therefore to understand constraints and opportunities in implementing nfp processes and plans; to facilitate the sharing of lessons among countries; and to produce policy briefs that advocate for improved nfp implementation. This paper focuses on Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe and is based on literature reviews; visits undertaken to the three countries; and feedback from a regional workshop attended by key stakeholders from southern and eastern African countries. Conclusions and recommendations are made in the areas of national forest programmes; forestry sector legislative and institutional reforms; profile of the forestry sector; and forestry resource use.

The nfp process emphasizes inclusivity which has been achieved through support from the NFP Facility to study countries. The process has however been constrained by the absence of full time coordinating units within forestry departments; and lack of jurisdiction of the coordinating units and their multi-stakeholder committees over emerging global issues such as green economies and monitoring of nfp implementation. The following is therefore recommended: establishment of well-resourced and institutionalized nfp coordinating units within forestry departments; alignment of nfps with other national and regional planning processes; and design and implementation of a robust M&E tool that addresses both process and conservation impact delivery.

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, study countries have reviewed their national policies and legislation to enhance law enforcement and embrace broader stakeholder participation in sustainable forest management. However, these well intentioned initiatives have yet to be effectively implemented. In fact there is a growing tendency to update forestry policies, legislation and institutional frameworks before they have been even implemented. It is therefore critical that appropriate measures are put in place to facilitate the implementation of available legislative and institutional reforms. The measures include building appropriate strength and capacities within forest departments; enhancing cooperation among law enforcement agencies; and availing adequate financial resources to the sector by government, the private sector and the international community since African forest resources are increasingly supplying global public goods and services.

The profile of the forestry sector continues to be low despite on-going forestry sector reforms and its strengthening over the years, for example through capacity building. This is due to poor packaging and marketing of the sector, partly because of the limited and dispersed nature of experienced foresters.

It is therefore recommended that this pool of expertise be collectively harnessed and challenged to champion the cause of the forestry sector by revitalizing/creating national forestry associations that could coalesce into regional forestry associations for broader reach. In the area of forest resource use and enhancement, the following observations and recommendations are made:

First, the smallholder natural timber harvesting, processing and marketing industry has virtually collapsed in favour of large scale operators who often illegally export unprocessed logs. However, the former have potential to play a more meaningful role in the industry once a sense of forest stewardship and custodianship is created within them and appropriate business incentives put in place. Consequently, existing smallholder timber associations should be strengthened through the provision of appropriate entrepreneurship skills and low cost capital to enable them to effectively participate in timber processing and marketing;

Second, the implementation of legislative reforms on community participation and benefit sharing from the forestry business has remained opportunistic and ineffective despite the existence of appropriate legislative reforms. There is therefore need to: establish and nurture local institutions for effective participation in SFM; and enhance economic benefits from SFM by embracing emerging financing opportunities such as those associated with carbon trading; and,

Finally, the exotic plantation forestry industry in Zambia and Zimbabwe is shrinking due to inadequate investment. There is therefore need for more secure land tenure arrangements to attract private capital.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATUS OF THE FOREST RESOURCE

Southern Africa has diverse forest ecosystems (Fig. 1) that pose unique management and financing challenges. In the case of Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, they include afromontane forests, miombo woodlands and mopane woodlands. In addition, Zambia and Zimbabwe have Zambezi teak forests; and Mozambique has mangrove forests. Commercial hardwood timber species are largely confined to the afromontane and Zambezi teak forests. The other forest types have limited merchantable timber species whose physical and mechanical uses are little known (Sitoe, *et al*, 2010). Timber rich forest ecosystems lend themselves to private sector investment unlike their timber poor counterparts. However, both categories of forest ecosystems provide global goods and services that include carbon sequestration and water flow regulation. Consequently, there is a strong case to continue funding the sustainable management of timber poor forest ecosystems by national governments and the international community. Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe have established exotic timber plantations (mostly pines and eucalyptus-Table 1) to reduce pressure on natural forests for various timber products. The exotic timber plantation industry is led by the private sector in Mozambique and Zimbabwe and by a quasi government institution in Zambia. It has achieved a high level of vertical integration into timber production, processing and marketing. Zimbabwe has the largest plantation area while Mozambique has the smallest. The plantation forest area in Zambia and Zimbabwe is in decline while that in Mozambique is increasing. Given the exotic timber plantation industry's long term nature, lack of land tenure security is a major cause of concern for private investors.

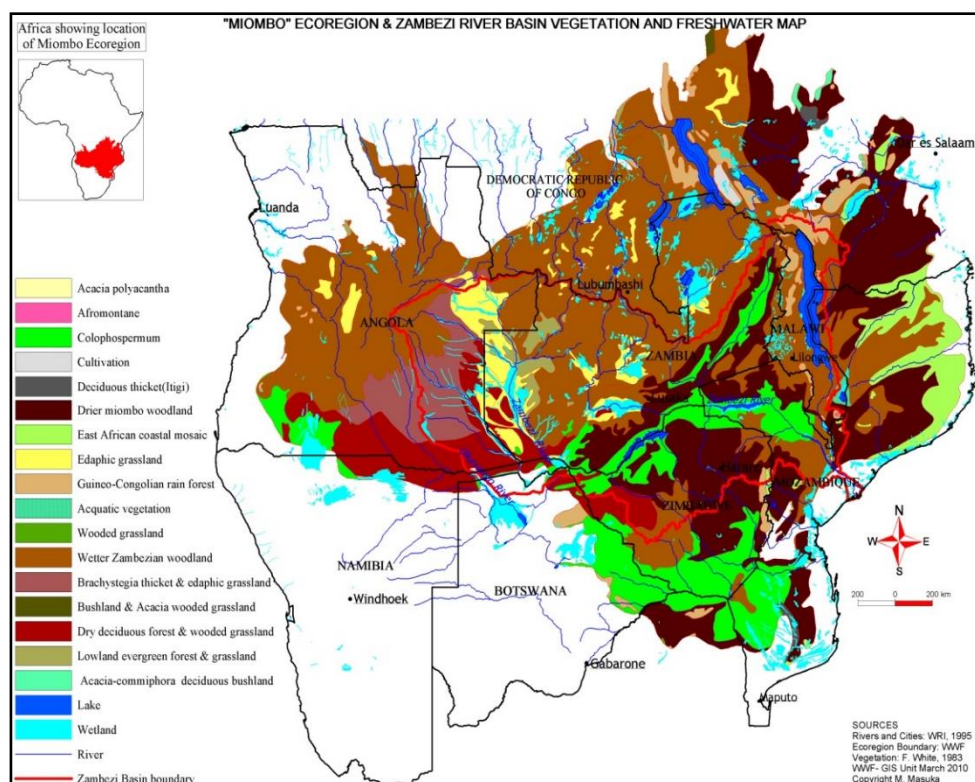


Fig 1: Forest ecosystems of Southern Africa

Forest cover (both natural forests and exotic plantations) in the three countries averages 53%. Mozambique has the highest forest cover of 69% and Zimbabwe the least at 45% (Table 1). Between 1990 and 2000, natural forests were being lost at an annual rate of 0.5% in Mozambique; 0.3% in Zambia; and 1.6% in Zimbabwe (FAO, 2011). However, for the period 2000-2010, this rate remained the same for Mozambique and Zambia but rose to 1.9% in Zimbabwe (*ibid*). Reasons for this include land clearing for agricultural expansion; illegal commercial timber harvesting and trade; and tree felling for wood energy and other non-timber forest products (FAO, 2001).

This scenario paints a gloomy picture for the future of the region's forest resource base and highlights the need for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). SFM is, among other things, about:

- Availing timely and accurate information for decision making at various levels;
- Creating an enabling policy and legislative framework and enforcing its provisions at local, national, regional and international levels;
- Providing appropriate incentives at different stakeholder levels; and,
- Maintaining environmental health.

SFM calls for the use of national forest programme (nfp) processes in developing, implementing and monitoring the implementation of national forest policies and plans. An nfp is a mutually agreed portfolio of forest sector initiatives. Although it is specific to the forestry sector, it incorporates other sectors that impact on the sector so that they can develop supportive policies. It represents a formalized system of forest management that incorporates rural development and livelihood support systems. The nfp process focuses on active stakeholder participation and facilitates the integration of SFM into poverty reduction strategies; the development of consensus on how to address forestry issues at national level; and the translation of commitments made at the international level into forest policy and planning.

Table 1: Forest cover for Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Country	Total land area (000 ha)	Area under natural forests in 2005 (000 ha)	Area under exotic plantations in 2009 (000 ha)	% forest cover
Mozambique	79 900	54 800	50	68.6
Zambia	75 300	42 452	75	56.2
Zimbabwe	39 000	17 540	141	45.3

Source: FAO, 2001; FAO, 2007

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY USED

The NFP Facility has been supporting the nfp process in a number of developing countries, including Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Facility is a trust fund that was launched in 2002. Its financial support has been catalytic and confined to the nfp planning process (e.g. legislative and institutional reviews and related studies) and not to implementing specific nfp plans and activities. Progress made in implementing nfp processes varies with country. It is against this background that the African Forest Forum (AFF) commissioned this study. The study focuses on assessing progress made in implementing nfps in selected countries of Eastern and Southern Africa. Its objectives are to understand constraints and opportunities in implementing nfp processes; to facilitate the sharing of lessons among countries; and to eventually produce policy briefs that advocate for improved nfp implementation.

The following methodology was used;

- Review of nfp processes and modalities through literature reviews;
- Conduct of country visits to discuss nfp processes and plans with key informants. A list of people met and key issues discussed are given as Annex 1; and,
- Presentation and discussion of draft reports with key stakeholders from Southern and Eastern African study countries at a regional workshop jointly convened by the AFF and NFP Facility in Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania. The NFP Facility shared its ten years of experience in implementing the nfp process and on the way forward for the Facility at the workshop.

This report summarizes key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the study based on the Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe country visits and feedback from the regional workshop.



*Photo © Dr. Enos Mutambu Shumba
(WWF, Southern Africa Regional Programme Office, Harare Zimbabwe)*

2.0 KEY FINDINGS

2.1 MOZAMBIQUE

2.1.1 *The National Forest Programme*

Mozambique has participated in two phases of the NFP Facility supported nfp process since 2004. The process facilitated a systematic engagement with non state actors on forest matters. In 1997 the country developed its National Forest Programme document. The implementation of the programme has been constrained by inadequate government funding. There is therefore need to raise the profile of and political support for the country's forestry sector so that government can allocate sufficient funds for programme implementation. The country is reviewing the programme document to incorporate emerging issues such as climate change and forest carbon trading. The review will be completed in November 2012. The NFP Facility process is managed through a National Multi Stakeholder Steering Committee consisting of representatives from government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector, the university and the international community.

The Committee reviews and identifies proposals (e.g. studies and community level capacity building initiatives) that qualify for funding. Unfortunately, letters of agreement for grant awards are written in English. This makes it difficult for the predominantly Portuguese speaking recipients to fully understand provisions of the grants and thus slows down grant implementation. In addition some of the grants are quite small (e.g. \$500). This, coupled with the many letters of agreement that are signed, make grants difficult to administer. Furthermore, the Facility does not fund tangible activities on the ground, hence communities lose interest in continuous nfp consultation processes. Notwithstanding, the Facility has helped to organize and capacitate some Community Based Organizations (CBOs) so that they can benefit from benefit sharing, legislation on timber concession revenues and fees. The nfp process is coordinated by Forestry Department personnel on a part time basis. With respect to monitoring the process, the country uses the Outcomes and Impact Monitoring and Evaluation System (OIMES) tool developed by the NFP Facility.

2.1.2 *Legislative and institutional reforms*

Mozambique has reviewed its forest policy and put in place pieces of legislation that promote SFM (Table 2). The country has a statutory instrument that promotes value addition to commercial timber by banning the export of unprocessed timber. In addition, its legislation that provides tax relief to exporters of processed timber. Notwithstanding, all species except those in the first class group can be exported in log form. Mozambique has also crafted legislation that provides for benefit sharing with local communities and other specified groups and has a code of practice for SFM. However, most of these well intentioned pieces of legislation have not been fully implemented due to weak law enforcement and limited financial and human resources. Consequently, illegal export of unprocessed timber continues unabated and most communities have yet to benefit from timber concession revenues as mechanisms required to implement this (e.g. the establishment and nurturing of CBO) are not yet fully functional.

Table 2: Selected legislative reforms in Mozambique

1. Legislation that bans the export of unprocessed timber with the exception of specified species was put in place in 2002.
2. Tax relief for the export of processed timber to promote value addition was legislated for in 2010.
3. Legislative provisions that promote benefit sharing as follows: a. That 40% of revenue collected from timber concession fees should be used to promote local level value addition to timber (2003). b. That 20% of revenue from timber concessions should go to local communities (2005); and. c. That 50% of revenue from penalties for illegal activities such as poaching should be channelled to the patrolling teams (2002).
4. Legislation that promotes SFM was put in place (1999).

2.1.3 Forestry resource use

Commercial timber harvesting is done under simple license and concessions. The former are issued to Mozambique nationals only. Until recently, holders of such license were not required to produce management plans. However, they are now compelled to produce five year forest management plans. This requires that capacities of license holders are enhanced; and monitoring mechanisms are put in place and their provisions enforced. Anybody, including foreigners can apply for a timber concession. Concessionaires are expected to observe normal provisions of their contractual agreements. Unfortunately, the capacity to monitor concessionaires is limited.

About 50% of Mozambique's forest cover is classified as productive forests; 24% as conservation forests; and 26% as multiple use forests (National Directorate of Lands and Forests, 2007). Some conservation forests are occupied by communities who are causing forest destruction and land degradation. A number of NGOs have been working with such communities on alternative livelihoods (e.g. beekeeping and afforestation projects) aimed at reducing pressure on natural forests. However, the efforts are constrained by limited economic benefits that accrue to communities from such activities. This has led NGOs to explore the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) as a way to increase the economic value of natural forests through carbon trading. Private companies have shown interest in implementing REDD+ projects in the country but rules for their operations are not in place. Furthermore, technical aspects of REDD+ implementation are not well understood by most stakeholders.

The exotic plantation forestry industry is driven by the private sector and the area planted to exotics is increasing. For example, between 2004 and 2009 the country granted more than 2.5 million ha of land concessions to investors. More than 1 million ha of this land went to foreign investors: 73% for timber plantations and 13% for bio-fuels and sugar (Hanlon, 2011).

2.2 ZAMBIA

2.2.1 The National Forest Programme

Zambia views the nfp process as a complimentary initiative that sharpens its national forestry plans and programmes by incorporating emerging forestry sector issues through systematic non state actor engagement. This is achieved by providing small grants for consultancies in nationally identified priority areas. The country launched its first and second phase of nfp processes in 2006 and 2009 respectively. Nine studies were carried out in the first phase and six during the second phase. However, some of the consultancy outputs have not been utilized due to lack of financial resources. Similarly, the implementation of the country's forestry programme document has been constrained by inadequate government funding. On a positive note, the nfp process has generated new information. For example, the Forestry Department established that the contribution of the forestry sector to the country's gross domestic product was in fact 5.2% instead of a figure of 1% quoted in the past. This confirmed the notion that the sector's contribution to GDP had traditionally been grossly underestimated. However, there is need to appropriately package this finding to improve the visibility of the forestry sector in Zambia. The country's nfp process is superintended over by a National Multi Stakeholder Committee whose membership is drawn from government, NGOs, the private sector and universities. The process is coordinated by Forestry Department personnel and the OIMES tool is used to monitor its implementation.

2.2.2 Legislative and institutional reforms

Zambia has undertaken a number of legislative and institutional reforms in the forestry sector (Table 3). The Forest Act was revised to provide for the establishment of a semi-autonomous Forestry Commission. This resulted in the laying off of forest guards who are critical for forest protection. Unfortunately, some provisions of the revised Act were not implemented partly because of their cost implications. Consequently, alternative structural arrangements are being explored. In this regard, a Forest Bill was produced in 2011. Its objective is to address the structural limitations of the Forestry Department without creating a semi-autonomous entity. A statutory instrument that bans the export of round logs and charcoal is also in place. Unfortunately, its enforcement has been weak as evidenced by the continued illegal export of the two products. This can be attributed to: the phasing out of forest guards in the Forestry Department's structure; limited government funding; and poor coordination of various law enforcement agencies.

Table 3: Selected legislative and institutional reforms in Zambia's forestry sector

1. The forest policy was reviewed and revised in 1998. It was further reviewed in 2010 and awaits Cabinet approval.
2. The Forest Act was revised and approved in 1999 but its provisions were not implemented. A Forestry Bill of 2011 was then crafted for presentation to Parliament. However, it has been referred back for re-alignment following a change of government in September 2011.
3. A statutory instrument that bans the export of round logs and charcoal is in place.
4. A statutory instrument on the promotion of Joint Forestry Management (JFM) was promulgated and seven gazetted forests were declared JFM areas in the country.

2.2.3 Forestry resource use

Commercial timber harvesting in Zambia is done under a pitsaw license (for nationals) and a commercial license (for both nationals and foreigners). Due to lack of investment capital, pitsaw license owners go into “unsanctioned” partnerships with commercial license owners who become the dominant beneficiary due to their ability to invest; extensive knowledge of the export market; and capacity to engage in the illegal export of unprocessed timber. The development has created some tension between the Timber Producers Association of Zambia (TPAZ) and the Forestry Department. Through the nfp process, TPAZ is carrying out some work to develop sector codes in partnership with the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission. The codes will provide guidelines for promoting citizen participation in natural forest enterprises, including timber logging, processing and marketing.

Zambia has 9.6 million ha of gazetted forests. Of this area, 7.2 million ha is classified as national forests; and 2.4 million ha as local forests. Some of the gazetted forests have been illegally settled by communities resulting in deforestation and land degradation. Participatory forest management is being piloted in some gazetted forest areas. However, the pilots are constrained by inadequate financial incentives to encourage communities to engage in SFM. The Forestry Department, with support from FAO, is implementing a REDD+ project that will provide valuable lessons for engaging in this mechanism at an operational level. In addition, one of the non-state actors in the nfp process is conducting a study on possible guidelines for community participation in carbon trading projects, including REDD+.

Zambia’s plantation forestry industry is led by government through a semi-autonomous company. Due to limited capital investments, the area under exotics in the country is in decline and the level of tree management has fallen. Consequently, there is an urgent need to entice the private sector through appropriate incentive measures.

2.3 ZIMBABWE

2.3.1 The National Forest Programme

Zimbabwe launched its nfp process in 2009 during a two day stakeholder consultation meeting. A work plan for implementing the process was then drawn up. A total of 13 key forestry issues were identified and ten studies around them were completed. Relevant inter-sectoral stakeholders were trained in participatory forest policy planning under the auspices of the FAO Country Office. The country has yet to produce a nfp document. The nfp process is overseen by a National Multi Stakeholder Steering Committee whose membership is drawn from government, non-governmental organizations, universities, timber producers and processors and local community organizations. The Committee’s work is constrained by irregular participation at meeting by members. The nfp process is coordinated by Zimbabwe Forestry Commission staff on a part time basis.

2.3.2 Legislative and institutional reforms

Table 4 highlights legislative and institutional reforms put in place in the country’s forestry sector. The amendment of the Forest Act enabled the Forestry Commission to shed off its commercial activities to a company wholly owned by government. This allowed the Commission to focus on regulatory functions while the company operates like any other private concern and generates income to support some of the Commission’s operations. However, the Forest Authority is yet to fully benefit from the company’s dividends. Consequently, its funding levels are tight. This constrains its ability to discharge its regulatory function and to retain experienced staff.

The draft Forest Based Land Reform Policy was intended to keep the exotic plantation forest estate intact by not parcelling it out for resettlement. This was in recognition of the need for economies of scale in the exotic plantation forestry industry. The policy provides for smallholder farmer participation in forestry business. However, it is yet to be adopted by government largely because land remains a sensitive issue hence the need for government to proceed with caution.

A statutory instrument on the ban of unprocessed log exports intends to promote local level value addition to timber products and to create employment. Its implementation is constrained by poor coordination among law enforcement agencies; inadequate funding; and personnel shortages.

Principles of participatory forest management were piloted in Mafungabusi, a protected forest area. Neighbouring communities were allowed to access NTFPs such as thatch grass in exchange for their contribution in the protection of the forest. However, it became apparent that participating communities were more interested in timber which had more economic value and in settling in the forest area. The pilot project was used to train staff on participatory forest management and resulted in the production of substantial training materials.

Table 4: Selected forest sector legislative and institutional reforms in Zimbabwe

1. Amendment of the Forest Act in 1999 provided for the separation of Forestry Commission activities into regulatory and commercial and allowed for the subsequent formation of a plantation timber company wholly owned by government in 2001.
2. Production of a draft Forest Based Land Reform Policy in 2002.
3. Gazettment of statutory instrument 112 of 2001 that banned the export of unprocessed and primarily processed indigenous timber
4. Testing participatory forest management principles in Mafungabusi, a protected forest area, in the 1990s.

2.3.3 Forestry resource use

Timber concessions are granted in communal and gazetted forest areas. Small business operators have organized themselves into a Hardwood Timber Association. Association members bid for timber concessions. However, they claim to have been driven out of business by an unfair timber pricing system that does not discriminate between prime timber (40% of harvest) and shorts (60% of harvest). In addition, they lack capital to invest in modern equipment and most of them fail to pay for tendered timber. They claim to have been driven out of business by the big and well established operators who have sophisticated timber harvesting and processing equipment. The small operators' predicament is worsened by statutory instrument 112 that banned the export of unprocessed and primary processed timber. This strained relations between operators and the Forestry Commission.

Some 3% of the country's land area is designated as gazetted forests. The forests are under threat from illegal settlers and neighbouring communities. Given the lack of a clear policy framework on participatory forestry management, there has been a stand-off between the settlers and the Forestry Commission. Consequently, deforestation and land degradation continue unabated.

The country's plantation forestry industry is driven by the private sector. However, investment in the sector, especially replanting, has fallen since the launch of the fast track land reform programme in 2000 due to land tenure insecurity. The draft Forest Based Land Reform Policy of 2003 was intended to address this concern but is yet to be approved by government. There is therefore need to address tenure concerns in this sector if the industry is to recover.

3.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 *The National Forest Programmes*

The nfp process has been driven by national multi-stakeholder committees (NMSCs) that include civil society organizations and the private sector. It has resulted in the production of inclusive nfp documents in Mozambique and Zambia while the Zimbabwe document is still under development. Nfps place heavy emphasis on inclusivity, including community participation in SFM. The value attached to the nfp process is demonstrated by the study countries' desire to:

- Participate in a possible third phase of the NFP Facility. However, they would like such a phase to provide small grants to implement community level activities such as beekeeping and tree planting. This can act as collateral for other investments; and,
- Visit Uganda where considerable progress has been made in enhancing civil society space in nfp processes.

However, participation of some members of the multi-stakeholder committees in nfp processes has been inconsistent largely due to their normal work related obligations. Furthermore, nfp coordination is a part time activity, as participating staff have other full time responsibilities within forestry departments. More importantly, NMSCs have largely functioned as a mechanism for coordinating the nfp process and not for reviewing the implementation of nfps and incorporating emerging issues such as Green Economies, REDD+ and Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) into the process. Rather, new structures/processes are being established to handle such emerging issues.

Some of the foregoing challenges can be minimized by providing for the establishment of full time nfp coordinating units within forestry departments that are institutionalized through national forest policy and legislation; and, exploring innovative mechanisms to motivate committee members. This requires that sustainable funding arrangements are put in place (e.g. dedicated forest funds or trust funds) so that donor funding becomes complementary/supplementary. Such funds include an endowment fund (e.g. Mountain Ark in Tanzania) and venture capital.

It is critical that nfps are aligned to other national planning processes (e.g. national development plans and poverty reduction strategy papers). There is also scope to expand the nfp process into regional/trans-boundary level forestry planning and programme implementation (e.g. fire, watershed and biodiversity management issues). The SADC Forestry Protocol provides modalities for such regional cooperation.

The nfp process in Mozambique and Zambia is monitored by the OIMES tool. The tool has 67 indicators and its effectiveness depends on the number, diversity and experience of people who respond to the tool. Unfortunately, the tool is only able to monitor the nfp process and not conservation impact as it lacks appropriate indicators. There is therefore need to add impact indicators to the tool so that it can monitor both the nfp process and nfp implementation. This will, however, require appropriate training of key stakeholders on the use of the tool.

3.2 *Forestry sector legislative and institutional reforms*

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 study countries have reviewed their forestry policies and legislation to enhance law enforcement and embrace broader stakeholder participation in SFM (Kowero, *et al*, 2003). The latter is in recognition of the fact that despite their weak political clout, most local communities are key actors in the management of natural resources as they live with and depend on these resources.

For example, while the colonial legislation limited local communities to subsistence use of forest resources, the new policy measures open up possibilities for local communities to derive benefits from timber and non-timber forest products either directly or by being part of a variety of benefit sharing arrangements. However, such well-meaning legislation is yet to be effectively implemented as illustrated by the following examples:

- Statutory instruments that ban the export of unprocessed timber have largely been ineffective due to weak institutional capacity to enforce them and limited cooperation among various actors in the law enforcement chain (e.g. forestry departments, the police and customs officials); and,
- Legislation on benefit sharing (e.g. from proceeds of timber concessions) has remained largely unimplemented in Mozambique. This is partly because its operationalization requires that beneficiary communities are organized into functional CBOs. Unfortunately most local communities have not been organized and capacitated due to financial and human resource constraints.

There is, in fact, a growing tendency to update forest policies and legislation before they are even implemented in Southern Africa.

Study countries have functional forest departments that have been in existence for some time and whose operational modalities continue to be reviewed to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. However, some of the institutions are constrained by inadequate staffing levels; limited technical capacity; and lack of political will to implement recommended institutional reforms as demonstrated by the following:

- The establishment of a semi-autonomous Forestry Commission in Zambia was abandoned due to lack of financial resources and uncertainty on whether such an entity would deliver, given that an institution established along similar lines in the wildlife sector had not yet delivered; and,
- The finalization of the Forest Based Land Policy in Zimbabwe is still pending despite its good intentions partly due to sensitivities around land issues.

The foregoing factors reduce the capacity of forestry departments to effectively provide oversight to the sector and to enforce forest legislation. Furthermore, the departments have not been able to meaningfully engage and work with other arms of government whose legislation and actions impact on the forestry sector. They include law enforcement agencies and customs departments in the case of illegal exports of forestry products. At local level they have yet to effectively engage communities as a key stakeholder in monitoring and enforcing forest legislation (e.g. illegal logging; and the prevention and control of forest fires). It is therefore critical that appropriate measures are put in place to facilitate the implementation of available legislative and institutional reforms. They include: building appropriate personnel strength and capacities within forestry departments; enhancing cooperation among law enforcement agencies; and availing adequate financial resources by government, the private sector and the international community.

3.3 Profile of the forestry sector

Despite the ongoing forestry sector reforms, forests continue to be regarded as a medium for development and not as an engine for national economic growth. This is reflected in low national budgetary allocations to the sector. Even in situations where the sector's real contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been elucidated, no serious steps have been taken to take advantage of the findings.

Failure to appropriately package, effectively market and influence the main streaming of the forestry sector into the national agenda partly lies in the inability of the sector's professionals to create and nurture effective evidence based lobby groups at national and regional levels. This is partly because foresters often lack appropriate communication skills given that forestry education has largely remained traditional (viz. a heavy bias on production and very little focus on sustainable development issues). Individuals who acquired such skills over time have left forestry departments for "greener pastures". Unfortunately, their expertise and experience has not been systematically utilized for the benefit of the sector. There is therefore need to collectively harness the available pool of forestry expertise in the study countries by revitalising/creating national forestry associations which can coalesce into regional forestry associations. In addition, there is scope to entrench the nfp process as an approach to forest planning by incorporating it into the technical and professional training curricula of foresters.

3.4 Forestry resource use

The smallholder natural timber harvesting, processing and marketing industry has virtually collapsed in favour of large scale operators (mostly foreign owned companies) who illegally export unprocessed logs. Small scale operators blame forestry departments for their predicament as evidenced by the mistrust between the parties. There is however room to improve the relationship between the parties; to build the capacities of the small operators; and to create a sense of forest resource ownership and custodianship among them within and across countries.

This entails the strengthening of existing national timber associations (viz. the Timber Producers Association-Zambia and the Hardwood Timber Association-Zimbabwe) by providing entrepreneurship skills and low cost capital to enable them to effectively participate in timber processing and marketing. In this regard, the development of sector codes for promoting citizen's participation in forest enterprises underway in Zambia should be closely monitored and adapted to country specific situations as necessary. Once functional, such issue based national associations can coalesce into regional associations that could regulate regional timber trade. The associations can be eventually linked to related initiatives such as the SADC Timber Association to enhance synergies and avoid duplication.

Legislative reforms in the study countries embrace the need for community participation and benefit sharing arrangements in SFM. However the implementation of such legislation has remained opportunistic and ineffective due to lack of local level support structures and limited incentives for communities to effectively engage in sustainable forest management. There is therefore need to:

- Establish and nurture local level institutions (e.g. CBOs) for effective community participation in SFM; and,
- Enhance the economic value of forests by embracing emerging mechanisms such as REDD+. The latter requires considerable training and coaching of the key stakeholders.

Exotic timber plantations reduce pressure on natural forests for certain types of commercial timber. Unfortunately the industry is in decline in Zambia and Zimbabwe due to inadequate investment. Consequently, the need for an enabling environment for private sector investment in exotic plantation forestry development (e.g. secure land tenure) cannot be overemphasized. However such investments should embrace community participation through smallholder out-grower scheme arrangements; and minimal community displacements and biodiversity loss through effective implementation of appropriate land use plans.

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Annex 1: People met and key issues discussed

Mozambique

Mr Mandrate Nakala, Deputy National Director, Directorate of Land & Forests
Mrs Alima Issufo Taquidir, NFP Coordinator and Head of Forestry Department
Mr Hilapio Akissa, Forestry Department
Mr Paulo Feniasse, Forestry Department
Mr Osvaldo Manso, Forestry Department
Dr Valerio Macandza, Head of Forestry Department, Eduardo Mondlane University
Mrs Carla Carla Cuambe, Forestry Officer-FAO
Mrs Berta Rafael, CTV
Mr Issufo Tankar, CTV

Zambia

Mr Bwalya Chendauka, NFP Coordinator
Mr Deteuronomy Kasaro, UN-REDD Coordinator
Mr Jackson Mukosha, Forestry Department
Mr Harrison Musitini, Forestry Department
Mr Abel Siampale, Forest Department
Mr Charles Masange, Vice President-Timber Producers Association of Zambia
Mr Mbewe, Timber operator
Mr Mlilo, Timber operator-handicrafts

Zimbabwe

Mr Darlington Duwa, General Manager-Forestry Commission
Mr Steven Zingwena, NFP Coordinator
Mr Armstrong Tembo, Forestry Commission
Mr M. Sebele, Forestry Commission
Mr Alex Chitiza, Chairman- Hardwood Timber Association
Mrs Linda Maposa, Environmental Officer-Umguza RDC
Dr Phosiso Sola, Programme Director-SAFIRE
Mr Malcome Smith, Chief Executive Officer-Timber Producers Federation

Key questions asked (especially to nfp Coordinators)

- a. When did the nfp process start in your country?
- b. Which organizations are members of your nfp Committee?
- c. What has the nfp process achieved so far?
- d. What have been the major challenges in implementing the nfp process in your country?
- e. How do you plan to address the challenges highlighted above?
- f. What capacities do you need to implement the nfp process?
- g. What key lessons have been learnt during the nfp process that you wish to share with others?

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