

Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project

Improving Lives through Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

Promoting emissions reduction through better management of Forest Reserves - Stakeholder engagement

Context

The Protected Forest Areas within Eastern Province are increasingly under threat of deforestation and forest degradation, contributing to the increased emissions of greenhouse gases in the Province. The baseline assessment of greenhouse gas emissions from Eastern Province has indicated that more than 71% of emissions are coming from the degradation of standing forests, 10% from conversion of forest to agriculture (forest loss), with 6% from poorly managed agricultural soils. The key drivers of these emissions relate to deforestation and degradation due to fuel wood use for household firewood, charcoal production and tobacco as well as degradation due to fires, deforestation for small scale and shifting agricultural expansion due to low productivity and poor land tenure systems, as well as loss of soil carbon through poor agricultural practices. Unfortunately, respect for protected areas is diminishing and the ability of the State to control these through law enforcement alone is challenging.



The **Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project (ZIFLP)** is a Government of Zambia initiative in the Ministry of Green Economy & Environment, supported by the World Bank and partners. Recognising the role that Government forest estates have in emissions reductions and considering the need for long term commitments both at national (REDD+ Strategy) and international (NDC) levels, ZIFLP is supporting the Forestry Department to engage local stakeholders and agree new strategies for management and restoration of protected forest areas. This includes a process of multi-stakeholder engagement and planning for both Local and National Forests which supports community control, use and management of forest areas in partnership with the Forestry Department.

Forest resource & community well being assessment

During 2019 and 2021, the Project supported the Forestry Department to undertake forest resource assessments, engaging surrounding local communities and their traditional leaders in order to develop plans for the better management of these critical resources of importance for local communities as well as of national interest. In addition, the project supported ZAMSTATS to undertake forest livelihoods and economic surveys with communities surrounding the forest reserves.

Engaging local leaders & other stakeholders

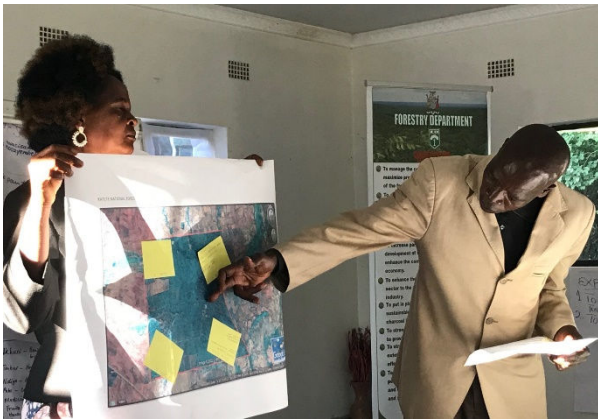
Traditional leaders were consulted and approvals to proceed with participatory land use planning across the landscape as well as in individual forests were granted by the Royal Establishments. During April and May 2022, local stakeholder meetings were held with community representatives, local organisations and other Government Departments to raise awareness of climate change issues, the sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the Province, sensitise on the policy and legal framework, the proposed collaborative planning approach, issues affecting the specific forest areas and exploring opportunities for a partnership for management.



Forest change & issues analysis

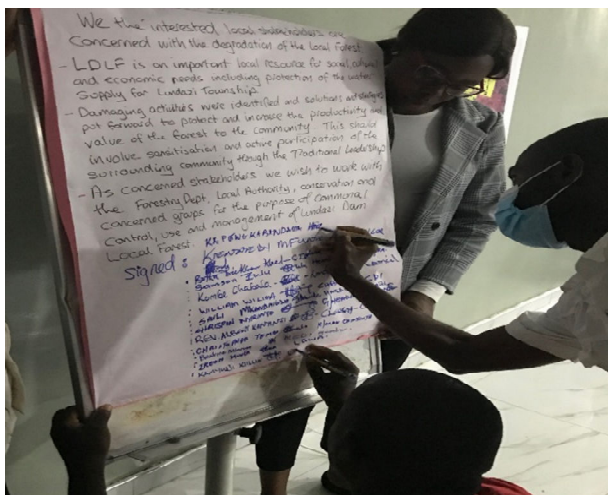
Stakeholders were requested to review the uses and users of the forest, the issues that are contributing to forest loss and forest degradations, but importantly to propose local solutions. Utilising forest cover imagery, participants were able to relate to the areas of forest and forest loss through agriculture and settlement across the forest and surrounding areas.

This was used to focus discussion on issues, identifying different zones of use and management, strategies and priorities as well as agreeing permitted and non-permitted activities within each of the identified zones.



Making a commitment to work together for change

As a statement of concern, but interest to work together with the Forestry Department, the Local Authority and Traditional leaders, stakeholders agreed the need to collaborate over the protection, sustainable use and management of the protected forest area and a declaration of intent was signed. The declarations confirmed that the protected forests are of importance for meeting local social, cultural and economic needs of the surrounding communities as well as of environmental importance, primarily through securing local water resources. In many cases, the stakeholders have requested to form community forest management groups to work with the Forestry Department through the community forestry process which allows for the transfer of rights and responsibilities for management.



Contribution to Emissions Reduction in Eastern Province

These interventions will directly address the need for emissions reductions through promotion of Sustainable

Forest Management which centres around expansion of community forestry and strengthening collaboration in the management of protected areas. ZIFLP is supporting the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment to develop a long-term results-based emissions reduction payment programme to incentivise and reward climate change mitigation actions to reduce emissions coming from the unsustainable land management practices of primarily rural communities and households in the Province. The Ministry is in negotiation with the World Bank for the purchase of verified emissions reductions through the BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes which will provide much needed funding to promote and scale up interventions that prevent deforestation and forest degradation, reduce agriculture emissions as well as through improved rural land-use planning and household energy generation.

Delivering sustained results

The expected outcomes of local stakeholder involvement in the management of protected forest areas will be to reduce emissions in the Eastern Province, while strengthening sustainable land and forest management practices, creating increased incomes and resilience of local communities. Conforming to national strategies to reduce the effects of climate change through mitigation and adaptation as well as aligning with international concerns and conventions, the proposed **Eastern Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Programme** is expected to attract interest, investment and access to climate financing and voluntary markets to ensure the sustained support to indicated emission reduction interventions. This is an innovative GHG emissions reduction programme which can provide a model for other provinces of Zambia, within the region and globally.

The **Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project** is a GRZ initiative which provides support to rural communities in the Eastern Province to allow them to better manage the resources of their landscapes so as to reduce deforestation and unsustainable agricultural expansion; enhance benefits they receive from forestry, agriculture, and wildlife; and reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

ZIFLP is a product of cooperation between the Government of Zambia, the World Bank & partners.



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