



Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project

Improving lives through Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

Promoting shared management & restoration of protected forest areas: Mpomwa Local Forest - Practice brief #2 Engagement with Traditional leaders

Summary

Protected Forest Areas (PFAs) within Eastern Province are increasingly under threat of deforestation and forest degradation. Unfortunately, respect for protected areas is diminishing and the ability of the State to control these through law enforcement alone is challenging. This includes tackling entrenched encroachment and settlement within key PFAs.



Context

The Policy and Legal framework in Zambia recognises the threats to forest areas and challenges being faced across the country and therefore directs more local control and community and traditional leadership participation in the management of forest areas, including establishing incentives and benefit sharing mechanisms. Practical solutions are required to support local management and control with a view to reducing and reversing forest degradation and deforestation in general and in Local and National Forests in particular. Opportunities are available through the mechanisms of the Forest (Community Forest Management) Regulations, Statutory Instrument #11 of 2018, following the National Guidelines for Community Forestry in Zambia.

Piloting new approaches

The Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project (ZIFLP) is a Government initiative in the Ministry of Green Economy & Environment, supported by the World Bank and partners. The project is supporting the Forestry Department to engage local stakeholders and agree new strategies for management and restoration. This includes a process of multi-stakeholder engagement and planning in order to develop a strategic plan for Mpomwa Local Forest which supports community control, use and management of the

protected forest area in partnership with the Forestry Department. This is the second **Practice Brief** that shares approaches and learning from the pilot in Mpomwa Local Forest.

Mpomwa Local Forest is a challenging test site as it cuts across 3 Chiefdoms (Jumbe, Chikuwe and Mishoro) and 3 district boundaries (Mambwe, Chipangali and Kasenengwa). Being at the periphery of the administrative and customary areas has resulted in illegal activities including encroachment and settlement. This can only be addressed through stakeholder engagement and building a consensus for tackling the issues and agreeing a way forward.

Consultation with Chiefs to seek approval for the multi-stakeholder planning process.

While the community forestry process requires consent from the Chief of the area at time of application, early consultation with traditional leaders helps set the basis for subsequent stakeholder engagements. This provides opportunities to discuss local impacts of deforestation, wider impacts of climate change and share key relevant policies and national strategies. Key elements of the community forestry approach should be highlighted as a process to negotiate and agree on rights of access and use including economic benefits in return for obligations of protection and controlling access and use. The process follows closely the steps of the **National Guidelines for Community Forestry in Zambia, 2018** with adjustment for the strategic planning and shared management responsibilities.



Importantly the session should seek the views of the Chief on the Protected Forest Area (concerns, issues, vision) and seek consent to proceed, ensuring to confirm next steps in the **community forestry** process.

Engaging local leaders

This involves conducting meetings of local Indunas to sensitise on the policy and legal framework applying to the collaborative management of protected areas, the proposed strategic planning approach, issues and exploring opportunities for a partnership for management of Mpomwa.



Higher level issues to raise include climate change mitigation, the need to reduce GHG emissions, the role of trees and forests and therefore the need to reduce deforestation and promote forest restoration. Relate to GRZ strategies such as the National Strategy to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, 2016.

Secondly, highlight the role and function of Mpomwa Local Forest, the original reasons for reservation and process followed in the consultation and agreement of traditional leadership at the time. Mpomwa was reserved in 1958 being the source of a number of perennial streams and important for poles for local supply. This was available in the FD files. Relate this to the present purpose of a Local Forest (according to Forests Act, 2015, sect 19).

19. Subject to the other provisions of this Act and any other written law, all land comprised in a Local Forest shall be used for the conservation and development of forests for—

- (a) the security of forest resources;
- (b) the protection of ecosystems, particularly the protection of land and water supplies of local strategic importance;
- (c) the utilisation of forest resources at the local level; and
- (d) meeting the social, cultural and economic needs of the local community.

This helps build understanding of the reason for the Local Forest and its intention, therefore its role and function in the landscape. Through discussion with the local leaders it was confirmed that a number of the streams that used to flow all year round, were now dry and there are water supply issues in the surrounding communities. Through exploring issues such as these, consensus for action can be built: –

“Local forest, for local needs, with local issues, require local solutions”.

The meetings should achieve a series of outputs including the following:

- Agreement to proceed with the next steps, nomination of representatives to participate in next multi-stakeholder meeting between Chiefdoms;
- Understanding of community dynamics, relationships, issues relating to the forest area, willingness to be part of a multi-stakeholder process;
- Understanding of customary laws or traditions that relate to the local forest area;
- Understanding of potential conflicts and actions required to mitigate or resolve at any stage;
- Understanding of the rights and responsibilities approach of Community Forestry.

Strengthening capacity & roles

ZIFLP is assisting the Forestry Department to better carry out their functions including management of selected forest reserves in Eastern Province for which they are responsible. This includes undertaking forest resource assessments, engaging surrounding local communities and developing plans for the shared management of critical resources for local communities and of national importance.

The steps and learning are documented through a series of further **Practice Briefs**. Please contact the address below for further details and copies.

Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project is a five year initiative which aims to provide support to rural communities in the EP 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.

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



BioCarbon Fund
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