Climate Change In African Forestry: The Broader Policy context

Godwin Kowero and Yonas Yemshaw
After almost 50 years of independence what has been achieved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1990-2000 Annual change rate in %</th>
<th>2000-2010 Annual change rate in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Africa</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State of World’s Forests 2011

Forest cover continues to decline in many African countries.
Main causes of forest area changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversion to small scale permanent agriculture</td>
<td>59 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion to large scale permanent agriculture and industrial plantations</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensification of agriculture in shifting cultivation areas</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion of shifting cultivation into undisturbed forests</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other causes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gains in forest area and canopy cover</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More resources (REDD+ money) to agriculture to improve productivity at forest margins?

Source: State of World’s Forests 2009
The issues

1. Almost half a century investment without significant gains on combating deforestation and forest degradation partly due to policy failures or absence of relevant policies in both forestry and related sectors (Look at policies and institutions again?)

2. Deforestation and forest degradation more rampant and accelerating faster in dry forests and woodlands (Eastern, Southern and parts of West Africa) than in the rain forests.

3. In both rain forests and dry forests the agents of deforestation are similar but with the industry more prominent in rain forests, while support to human, livestock and wildlife survival is more prominent in dry forests and woodlands (Eco-region specific approaches in CC?)

4. Biggest driving force is direct forest conversion to permanent agriculture (>80% of recent forest cover change). (shift CC debate to agriculture?)

5. Deforestation and forest degradation is not happening uniformly within sub-regions and countries. (Develop location specific plans?)

6. Among the rural poor, there are many concerns that are more immediate than tackling deforestation and forest degradation
The issues

7. African forests and trees support key sectors of the economies of many countries, viz. energy, crop and livestock agriculture, wildlife and tourism, water, employment and incomes for livelihood support to many.

8. Many societies in Africa continue to adapt to effects of climate change and variability. (lessons and their up-scaling?)

9. Not clear how forests and trees are adapting to climate change. This is a prerequisite to designing effective mechanisms for the sector to deal with climate change (forest information)

10. More attention and resources are currently on mitigation and not on adaptation. Adaptation is urgent, requires even more resources than mitigation. If people and the forests cannot adapt to climate change how can they build up the capacity to mitigate the same?

11. Much more attention and funding going to the Congo basin (180 million ha) as opposed to woodlands and other dry forests (460 million ha). Are we appreciably addressing poverty through forests in Africa? Are we addressing deforestation and degradation where it is more extensive and damaging to livelihoods and the environment?

12. The price of carbon is very low, it does not reflect the magnitude of the problem, the urgency to contain it, and the cost of supporting the ecosystem function. We price forest products and services, but not ecosystem functions that make those products and services available. A fundamental flaw!
The emerging picture

1. Deforestation and forest degradation are linked to overall national socio-economic development. *(Need for holistic approach to planning CC? Presently taking one sector at a time in CC debates?)*

2. Accept that REDD+ policies in specific forest types will have to address the allowable deforestation needed for socio-economic development including providing access for people who depend on these resources to enhance their livelihood. Incorporate the effects of extraction for livelihood in the emissions reductions objective.

3. Understand the complex set of proximate and underlying causes driving forest cover change in given location.

4. Establish trade-off between REDD+ and poverty reduction (..........how?)

5. Apart from increasing emphasis on better forest management through the four components, REDD+ expands the horizon for managing forests for multiple products/services and uses. REDD+ shoud be a tool for achieving SFM and reducing poverty.

6. Make better use of National Forest Programmes (nfps). Nfps are key to forest policy formulation, planning and implementation.
The emerging picture

7. Promote policies and actions for SFM. SFM is key to containing deforestation and forest degradation. Including reducing emissions in forest management should be promoted as a normal forestry practice, with or without financial incentives.

8. Improve efficiency in harvesting, processing and use of forest products (e.g. fuelwood, timber, and non-timber products)

9. Increase the supply of forest and tree products and services (e.g. plantation forestry, conservation agriculture with trees, agroforestry) Create/develop markets for environmental services, like carbon.

10. Build/enhance the capacity to assess forests. This includes their ability to maintain or increase human resilience to climate change and for the forest to enhance its resilience to climate change.

11. Strengthen forest governance (include rights of indigenous people and marginalised groups)

12. Significantly increase support to existing initiatives and programmes. (e.g. nfps, international agreements and conventions like CBD, UNFF-NLBI, UNCCD)
The way forward

• In Africa, it is critical that climate change measures are pro-poor because they are the ones affected and will continue to be affected more seriously.

• Availability of reliable and sufficient and timely information is crucial, and this is actually one of the big constraints in climate change work.

• More political will is needed to make the current level of awareness of the climate change challenge impact on policy.

• It is important to ensure that policies at all levels recognize and result in mechanisms that promote sustainable forest management and encourage the sustainable use of renewable resources and their substitution in various uses.

• Forests should not only be viewed as carbon sinks, but their relevance should also include their role in the socio-economic lives of the African people, as well as the ecosystems services they provide.
The way forward

• The Clean Development Mechanism restriction to afforestation and reforestation as defined under the Kyoto protocol has not benefited many African countries.

• This is due to, among others, the complex CDM modalities and procedures, that hinder development of qualified CDM projects.

• To improve on REDD+ initiatives it is necessary to learn from the failings of CDM.

• The scope of REDD+ is limited and needs to be expanded to cover all types of land uses including agriculture, agroforestry and other land uses (AFOLU).

• REDD+ must not be seen as a sector specific issue, but must be integrated into overall national development planning, while remaining consistent with overall global mitigation strategy.
Thank you

Reference: