



## **Sectoral and Inter-sectoral Integration of Biodiversity in Zimbabwe**

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## ***1. Introduction***

Zimbabwe<sup>1</sup> (2010) reported that the economic survival of various productive sectors and of the people depending on those sectors for their livelihoods is intrinsically connected to the conservation use of biodiversity. Mainstreaming of biodiversity into national, regional and international development strategies and frameworks entails the articulation of maximizing the benefits of biodiversity and minimizing its loss through all productive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism and mining. Mainstreaming also relates to biodiversity consideration in poverty reduction plans and national sustainable development plans.

Current national and regional development plans for Zimbabwe have made limited achievements in mainstreaming biodiversity. Despite this challenge, Zimbabwe's pioneering work on the ecosystems approach has contributed to an integrated approach to biodiversity management.

The report highlights some of the achievements that the country has made in mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and cross - sectoral policies, legislations and programmes.

## ***2. National frameworks for mainstreaming biodiversity***

There are a number of national frameworks that serve as entry points for mainstreaming biodiversity into the country's economic, political, and cultural and development matrices. These include:

### **The Zimbabwe constitution**

The country is currently undergoing a constitutional reform process. This creates opportunities for the inclusion of environmental issues into the country's supreme law. The current constitution lacks a clear articulation on how the country is to conserve, use and share the benefits arising from the natural resources. The National Environmental Policy and the Environmental Management Act contain instruments that facilitate the sustainable management of natural resources at the local, national levels. It is therefore anticipated that the new constitution would incorporate environmental issues as articulated in the National environmental Policy and the Environmental Management Act.

### **National Environment Policy**

The National Environmental Policy recognizes guiding principles to biodiversity conservation, use and sustainable management. These include the following:

(a) That the biodiversity of Zimbabwe is the foundation of the natural heritage of the country.

(b) The conservation of biodiversity in all its forms is more likely to be sustained if there are economic incentives arising from the use of that biodiversity by those people living closest to the resource.

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<sup>1</sup> Zimbabwe (2010). Zimbabwe's Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management, December 2010, 92 pp.

(c) As a major component of Zimbabwe's natural heritage, and as an economic resource, plant diversity and the ecosystems of which it forms part must be protected, conserved and used in sustainable ways.

(d) The many economic, environmental, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic functions and values of forests and woodlands need to be maintained, both for their intrinsic worth and for the contributions they make to human welfare.

(e) The best custodians of wildlife and other natural resources are those landholders, including local communities, who are able to benefit directly from the use of the wild life on their land.

(f) The conservation of biodiversity and other natural resources requires a multi - faceted approach including the establishment of protected areas.

(g) Collaboration between countries over shared transboundary natural resources ensures more effective sustainable development.

### **Environmental Impact Assessments**

Environmental impact assessment is a tool that aims at minimizing adverse environmental impacts arising from human activities. These include productive sectors like mining, agriculture, industry, and energy provision. These productive sectors have been responsible for the loss of biodiversity, thus undertaking environmental impact assessments has significantly contributed to conservation to biodiversity throughout the various economic sectors. Implementing EIAs is a major tool to mainstreaming biodiversity issues.

### **National and local environmental action planning**

Under the National Environmental Policy, the country has committed itself to the development of National Environment Action Plan (NEAP), Local Environment Action Plan (LEAP) and Environment Management Plans (EMP) in accordance with its commitments made under the Rio Convention on Environment and Development (Agenda 21). The purpose of national level environmental planning is to promote and facilitate the consolidation and coordination of strategies, plans and activities developed at different levels (provincial, district and community) and in different sectors across the country.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

Women are the major custodians of biodiversity especially those residing in the rural areas. Understanding their roles in biodiversity conservation, use and management is a key strategy in the sustainable management of biodiversity.

### **Multilateral Environmental Agreements**

Zimbabwe is signatory to a number of Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) which have a bearing on the overall implementation of biodiversity programs. Key among these instruments is the UNCCD, CITES and UNFCCC. The implementation of these instruments is contributing to the overall mainstreaming of biodiversity into national development programmes.

## **The Millennium Development Goals**

Zimbabwe has adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as set out in the UN Millennium Declaration of 2000. Goal 7 of the MDG sets out targets and indicators to be achieved by 2015. Among the various indicators being monitored under this goal, two indicators are relevant to biodiversity conservation. These are (i) the proportion of land area protected to maintain biodiversity (protected areas) and (ii) the proportion of land area covered by forest. Thus the millennium development goals are a key platform for mainstreaming biodiversity into national strategies.

### ***3. Sectoral policies***

There are a number of sectoral policies that are designed to effectively mainstream biodiversity into national development strategies, plans and programmes. These include:

#### **Wildlife based land reform policy**

The overall objective of the policy is to maximize the livelihoods options for resettled farmers particularly those living in areas where crop production has limited potential by ensuring profitable, equitable and sustainable use of wildlife and other resources. The specific objectives are to:

- Ensure more equitable access by the majority of Zimbabweans to land and wildlife resources and to the business opportunities that stem from these resources
- Maintain a proportion of land outside protected areas under wildlife production
- Promote a diversity of land uses through wildlife production and to develop, and implement appropriate institutional arrangements from wildlife based land reform.

#### **Forest based land reform policy**

The Forest Based Land Reform Policy ensures that the forest development plans are integrated with the overall land use plans and supports the development of environmental sustainable small scale industries including out grower schemes, furniture manufacturing and wood carving. In addition the policy ensures strict control of invasive alien species encroaching from plantations into natural forests, cultural heritage sites, and protected biodiversity zones

#### **Draft national agricultural policy**

The Zimbabwe National Agricultural Policy aims at facilitating and supporting the development of a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector that assures food security at national and household level and maximizes the sector's contribution to GDP is currently being finalized. The policy encourages the promotion of crop and animal diversity of species as a strategy of reducing vulnerability of households to drought induced food insecurity due to mono cropping.

#### **National energy policy**

The Zimbabwe National Energy Policy promotes the development of alternative sources of energy (solar, wind and hydro) as a way of reducing demand for wood fuel, subsequently enhancing conservation of

forest biodiversity. The policy recognizes that a significant population will continue to use biomass energy and for this reason it seeks to put in place measures to address sustainable utilization of the biomass energy.

### **Water and sanitation sector policy**

The Water and Sanitation Sector Policy's promotes the sustainable, efficient and integrated utilization of water resources for the benefit of all Zimbabweans.

### **Environment education policy**

A knowledgeable and well - informed public on environmental issues is essential for effective environmental conservation and management. Establishing environmental education centers from communities upwards to improve the effectiveness of existing education programmes by promoting the inclusion of both scientific and indigenous knowledge practices in formal and informal and nonformal teaching, learning, training and extension programmes as proposed in the Zimbabwe Environmental Education Policy, is one way of raising awareness in all sectors of the population.

### ***4. Cross - sectoral programmes and strategies***

There are various sector programmes that contribute in meeting the three objectives of the CBD.

### **The integrated conservation plan for the fast track land reform programme**

The Integrated Conservation Plan for the Fast Track Land Reform Programme represents a direct reactive response to the increasing land degradation that is becoming a threat to resources in resettlement areas. The programme is a retrospective strategy meant to prevent environmental degradation in newly settled lands. The main objective of the plan is to impart environmental awareness and develop a culture of resource management in resettled areas.

### **National fire protection strategy**

The strategy outlines how fire incidences can be reduced and controlled. Forestry Commission and EMA are undertaking fire awareness campaigns in different parts of the country and have established fire committees in the communities. Progress made but more resources needed to effectively implement the National Fire Protection Strategy also in collaboration with EMA the establishment of Fire Brigade and involvement of Traditional Leaders.

### **Poverty reduction programmes**

Although Zimbabwe has not adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP) a number of projects highlight the need for crosscutting poverty reduction activities. One of the key initiatives on poverty reduction is the community based natural resource management concept where communities are encouraged to conserve, sustainably use and equitably share the benefits derived therein. A successful case is the CAMPFIRE programme under which the rural people are granted the authority to manage their wildlife and other natural resources for their own benefit.

### ***5. Cross - sectoral projects and programmes***

There are a number of cross - sectoral projects and programmes being undertaken by government, private sector and civil society to enhance biodiversity conservation, utilization and sustainable management. A database of these projects is being developed under the GEF Small Grants Project.

#### **Regional cooperation and transboundary initiatives**

Zimbabwe is cooperating with its neighbors on a number of transboundary natural resource management projects. Examples of such projects include the following:

- SADC Protocol on Shared Water Resource,
- Fisheries
- Wildlife
- Transfrontier Parks (Great Limpopo (GKP), KAZA, ZIMOZA, Shashe - Limpopo, Mapungubwe etc.)

All these are intended to expand the area of biodiversity conservation.

- Southern Africa Biodiversity Network (SABNET) and the Southern Africa Biodiversity Support Programme (SABSP)
- Zambezi Basin Wetlands Conservation and Utilization Project and SADC Regional Wildlife Training Project
- SADC Rhino conservation project
- Global water partnership Southern Africa chapter
- SADC Plant Genetic Resources project
- SADC Food Security Programmes
- SADC Forestry database
- SADC Miombo Woodland management project
- SADC Tree Seed Centre Network project

Zimbabwe has made significant progress with in establishing TBNRM with its neighbors. There are however significant challenges in establishing TBNRM areas, including issues of sovereignty and national security, the harmonization of policies, legislation and law enforcement in the countries concerned, determining what kinds of joint decentralized management arrangements are best, particularly those related to sustainable use and equitable sharing of resources and the benefits arising from them, and how to strengthen existing or establish new local institutions to govern these arrangements.