

POLICY BRIEF

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RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

A CALL FOR A MORE HOLISTIC APPROACH

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GCCA TANZANIA

This policy brief is based on the experiences of five climate change adaptation projects in Tanzania, financed under the EU-funded Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) and implemented in the period 2015 to 2019. The GCCA projects are located

in different agro-ecological zones. This policy brief outlines the successes achieved and challenges encountered in improving rangeland management in pastoralist areas. It provides key messages and policy recommendations for sustainable management of these rangelands.

The five GCCA Tanzania projects are:

- **Community Forests Pemba** – Scalable Resilience: Outspreading Islands of Adaptation (WETE, Pemba Island)
- **EcoACT** – Eco-Village Adaptation to Climate Change in Central Tanzania (Dodoma)
- **ECOBOMA** – A Climate Resilient Model for Maasai Steppe Pastoralists (Arusha)
- **IGUNGA ECO-VILLAGE PROJECT** (Igunga)
- **Integrated Approaches for Climate Change Adaptation in the East Usambara Mountains** (Muheza)

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TANZANIA



KEY MESSAGES

- Tanzania has no rangeland policy at national level respectful of the specific needs of transhumant pastoralists.
- Rotational grazing and mobility are key characteristics of transhumant pastoralist society and are becoming all the more important with increasing droughts caused by climate change.
- Balancing water availability with fodder availability is key in rangelands to avoid overgrazing.
- Absence of a clear regulatory framework recognising grazing lands and transhumance corridors often provokes conflict with other competing land uses.
- The conventional land-use planning procedures are based at village level and do not consider the specific situation within rangelands, in particular the need for mobility across large landscapes.
- Strong involvement of pastoralist communities, including traditional leaders in participatory rangeland and water management is key to promoting sustainability and reduce conflicts.
- Enforcement of by-laws related to rangeland management is generally weak due to the limited capacity of district and village authorities, and requires alternative approaches.
- There is a lack of information on rangeland status. This can be addressed through participatory monitoring approaches involving community members (youth).

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- As part of climate change adaptation measures, rangeland related policies should promote the establishment of community forests that can serve as drought refuges and the use of live fencing of bomas to reduce tree cutting.
- Landscape Level Planning should be promoted where resources such as grazing areas are shared across village boundaries.
- Engagement of village authorities, livestock keepers' associations and traditional leaders in rangeland management programmes should be mainstreamed to increase the sustainability of the rangeland ecosystem.
- Livestock water infrastructure guidelines for rangelands should give more attention to the importance of balancing water and fodder availability and to participatory processes and capacity building for the effective operation and management of the infrastructure.
- Stronger legal backing of traditional grazing lands, transhumance corridors and major stock routes should be supported.
- More participatory approaches for enforcement of rangeland related by-laws should be adopted in policies and programmes, such as engaging youth as Village Game Scouts.
- Deployment of participatory rangeland monitoring systems in major pastoral communities should be encouraged to increase information on rangeland status and improve planning processes.

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania has no specific pastoralism policy at national level respectful of the needs of transhumant pastoralists. The National Livestock Policy (2006) aims to improve range management and utilization in order to support sustainable productivity of livestock and improvement of pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods. However, the policy has no clear statements on participatory rangeland management, strong ecological monitoring and advisory services to pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, nor does it provide specifics on how to link water infrastructure to rangeland management in pastoralist areas.

The Land Use Planning Act of 2007 directs the District Councils as District Planning Authorities to collaborate with other stakeholders to prepare district land use framework plans and coordinate village land-use planning activities. The conventional land-use planning procedures are based at village level and do not consider the specific situation within rangelands, in particular the need for mobility across landscapes for the nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralist communities.

The livelihoods of pastoralists in dryland areas, such as the Maasai, depend entirely on the availability of fragile ecosystem services. In the Maasai Steppe, there is clear evidence that climate change has already dramatically affected the ecosystem. With water resources becoming increasingly scarce, it leads to high concentrations of livestock, causing overgrazing and soil degradation.

Within the GCCA Tanzania programme, it is in particular the ECOBOMA project, based in Arusha, that has worked on strengthening the capacity of vulnerable Maasai Pastoralists to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. The challenges and recommendations listed below are primarily based on their experience and lessons learnt.

CHALLENGES

Climate change extreme weather impact

Prolonged drought periods in 2016 and 2017 within the ECOBOMA project area (Arusha and Meru districts) led to a severe crisis with depletion of grazing resources and subsequent massive livestock movements outside the project area. The severe and prolonged drought also forced some beneficiaries to complement their income through unsustainable practices such as charcoal production and harvesting firewood to sell.

Conversely, extreme rainfall events in 2018 led to floods and damage to water infrastructure that was rehabilitated by ECOBOMA, showing that climate change impact has many dimensions.

Involving traditional leaders in development activities

In Maasai society traditional leaders play important multiple roles in the community. Engaging these leaders (men and women) in the project was initially a challenge for ECOBOMA because the project team did not have the cultural status to engage in a peer-to-peer way with the traditional leaders. Cultural aspects also meant it was difficult to get women involved in some project activities, e.g. as members of dam management committees.

Through engagement of senior citizens and highly respected local mediators ECOBOMA managed to overcome this challenge and to improve communication between the traditional leaders and local government authorities. These mediators opened up dialogue, answered questions in a credible way and mediated, when needed, to reduce conflict between target communities.

Lack of landscape level land plans for pastoralists

The Land Use Planning Act, 2007 aims to improve local access to and control of natural resources. The act provides the procedure for village planning processes by establishing the Village Planning Authority, which is the Village Council, and the procedure for preparing village plans. However, in pastoralist areas, planning at village level does not do justice to the scale of the landscape that pastoralists use to herd their livestock. It requires planning at landscape level scale, with the landscape broadly defined as the rangeland resources that the pastoralists frequent throughout the years in search of pastures and water.

Low enforcement of by-laws for rangeland management

Rangelands continue to suffer from illegal tree cutting and grazing due to low enforcement of by-laws. District and village authorities need to enforce by-laws to protect the rangelands, but have limited resources (human and financial) to do so. For ECOBOMA this challenge was addressed by training youth from the villages as Village (Game) Scouts, in close collaboration with the district authorities. These scouts have the mandate to ensure compliance with agreed by-laws, such as prohibiting charcoal making.

Lack of proper coordination and guidelines for management of resources in pastoral communities

The coordination between actors from Livestock, Agriculture, Forest, Water, Land and Wildlife sectors is minimal, which negatively affects the sustainable implementation of activities for rangeland management, including design and management of water infrastructure for livestock.

The ECOBOMA project learnt that the success of livestock water infrastructure like earth dams was determined partly by good technical knowledge but mostly by good and strong community led management. Yet, the government guidelines mainly focus on technical design and do not consider the management side.

Lack of information on the rangeland status

Good and up-to-date information on rangeland status is required to ensure optimal planning and use of the grazing resources for pastoralist livestock systems. Such information is however largely lacking in Tanzania.

ECOBOMA has addressed this challenge by setting up an ecological monitoring system which is designed to be used and implemented by the pastoralists communities themselves, allowing them to make informed decisions on the management of their rangelands. Such monitoring information can also be used as input for landscape level planning in large rangeland areas.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Promote community forests and live fencing

With increased climate change related droughts, it becomes important to set aside specific areas in the rangelands as refuges where grazing is only allowed in exceptional drought situations. Such areas can be designated as Village Community Forests with by-laws spelling out the criteria for their use and protection.

Pressure on forest resources can be further reduced by promoting planting of Commiphora or Euphorbia tirucalli as live fencing

around bomas, instead of using cut branches that regularly need to be replaced.

Ensure engagement of local leaders in rangelands management

The EcoBoma experience shows that engaging traditional leaders in all processes is vital to ensure sustainability of project initiatives. It also helps reduce conflicts over natural resource utilisation particularly during the dry season and increases the levels of trust and collaboration between the traditional leaders and local government authorities.

One of the main successes for ECOBOMA in this respect has been the close collaboration established between the Village Game Scouts Teams and the District Game Officers.

Promote joint landscape level land planning

Northern Tanzania rangeland resources are shared among multiple communities, which requires land use and resource planning at a landscape level scale rather than at village level. The National Land Use Planning Commission supports actors in promoting landscape level Joint Land Use Planning and granting Customary Certificates of Right of Occupancy to communities. The national livestock and land policies should recognise such landscape level planning and particularly joint village land planning in areas where resources, such as grazing areas, are shared across village boundaries.



Facilitate enforcement of rangeland management by-laws

District and village authorities do not have enough resources to effectively ensure enforcement of by-laws for sustainable use of rangelands. ECOBOMA addressed this problem by working with the district authorities to support the set up and training of a team of Village Game Scouts drawn from the youth in the villages. Such successful participatory approaches to effective enforcement of by-laws should be promoted through national policies and development programmes.

Improving coordination and guidelines for livestock water management in rangelands

Management of water and pasture resources must be coordinated and integrated, both locally and at rangeland landscape level. By improving collaboration between all actors in pastoral areas, there is an opportunity to optimise the water management in rangeland areas, contributing directly to the overall health of the rangeland ecosystem.

Livestock water infrastructure guidelines for rangelands should better reflect the importance of balancing water and fodder availability and emphasise the importance of participatory processes and capacity building for the effective operation and management of the infrastructure by the communities, e.g. through dam committees such as those supported by EcoBoma. Technical guidelines for dam construction should also consider the likelihood of increased heavy rainfall and floods due to climate change.

Promote participatory ecological monitoring

The lack of information on rangeland status hampers effectively planning for sustainable rangeland management. A participatory rangeland monitoring system that involves community members and involvement of local authorities could be useful in monitoring rangeland conditions, and provide locally adapted solution to address observed challenges. The system developed and implemented by ECOBOMA can be used as a reference model to improve ecological monitoring across Tanzania's rangelands, leading to a better understanding of the status of rangelands and the challenges affecting it that need to be addressed.

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