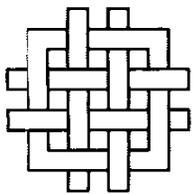


PJ-ABX-174
ISN 97 104

NEW ROOTS Institutionalizing Environmental Management in Africa

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WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

September 1995

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ISBN 156973-037-7
Printed on recycled paper

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Acknowledgments

This report is the synthesis of seven country studies prepared as the result of research conducted on Institutional Mechanisms for Environmental Management in Africa. Sponsored by the World Resources Institute (WRI) in collaboration with the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, the studies were conducted in collaboration with members of the Policy Consultative Group (PCG), based at WRI. The team consisted of Michael Furst (Mali), Peter Veit (Uganda), Allan Hoben (Ethiopia) and Frederick Gilbert (Tanzania). The studies in The Gambia and Botswana were undertaken jointly with Veronica Clifford, Daniel Gustafson, and George Honadle from the Implementing Policy Change (IPC) project.

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable support and encouragement provided by Thomas Fox, Director of WRI's Center for International Development and Environment (CIDE) and Professor Abdoulaye Sawadogo, Coordinator of NESDA, during the study itself and while this report was in progress. Many people at WRI, NESDA and

the African countries profiled also contributed to the success of the research in general and this report in particular. However, special thanks go to Ms. Ndey-Isatu Njie, The Gambia; Salif Kanoute, Mali; Bernard Bakobi, Tanzania; S. D. Liphuko, Botswana; and Tewolde Egziabher of Ethiopia. I also thank many NESDA members and others both inside and outside government in Africa for sharing information and opinions with us. Besides the WRI staff already cited, I want to thank those who were involved in WRI's thorough internal review process: Christine Elias, Dan Tunstall, Walter Reid, Kathleen Courier, Hyacinth Billings, and Mike Berdan. The USAID missions in the study countries were invariably helpful.

Finally, I wish to recognize the support staff at WRI and NESDA, in particular Lauren Morris, Elizabeth Schandelmeier, and Cynthia Chamberlain (WRI) and Julia Gibson and Ebi Boko at NESDA. Their logistical and administrative support is greatly appreciated.

C.D-A.

Foreword

Responding to damages inflicted on its environment by such driving forces as population pressure and deforestation, Sub-Saharan Africa is attempting to tap its immense human and material strengths to meet these sobering challenges. Several countries in the region are making real strides in political, economic, social, and environmental reform. More than thirty are developing some form of environmental management plan—but many of these initiatives are falling short of meeting their goals.

In an attempt to better understand the dynamics of this shortfall, the World Resources Institute and the Abidjan-based Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), with the invaluable advice of the Natural Resources Policy Consultative Group, analyzed nine case studies detailing the experiences of countries that were among the first to set environmental planning processes in motion. In *New Roots: Institutionalizing Environmental Management in Africa*, Clement Dorm-Abzobu, formerly a WRI Senior Associate and now the Coordinator of NESDA, outlines key issues that African governments must weigh in laying the institutional groundwork for effective environmental management.

The value of any environmental management strategy lies in its results, so Dr. Dorm-Abzobu points out how even without donor funds national governments can narrow the gap between such strategies' high promise and the reality of what it will take to carry them out. In designing implementation agendas, the author notes, gov-

ernments can enact judicious domestic policies, allocate resources prudently, and rank priorities wisely. Also key is ensuring that the lead agency charged with carrying out the environmental management strategy can spur cooperation among government ministries and departments, private sector groups, NGOs, and local institutions since successful outcomes depend on how well all these players can work together. Finally, governments must remain staunch advocates of environmental planning and implementation as integral to socioeconomic progress lest environmental strategies fall by the wayside.

New Roots emphasizes that environmental planning processes provide unique opportunities to coordinate national policies and actions and integrate donor activities into those actions. As more countries begin carrying out their environmental strategies, coordination will be increasingly key. The success of the planning process will have an enormous impact on how well the strategy is carried out—and therefore on the health, welfare, and well-being of millions of local resource users throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

The analyses and recommendations presented in *New Roots* extend those set forth in such WRI studies as *Lessons from the Ground Up: African Development that Works*, which analyzes a different set of Sub-Saharan case studies, and *Policy Hits the Ground: Participation and Equity in Environmental Policy-making*, which focusses on participatory environmental policy-making in Latin America.

but offers insights and how-to tips that will lend themselves to adaptation in various Asian and African societies as well.

Both NESDA and WRI would like to thank the United States Agency for International Development for underwriting the research reflected in

New Roots. We are deeply grateful for the Agency's foresight and support.

Jonathan Lash
President
World Resources Institute

Executive Summary

Ever since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (the Stockholm Conference), Sub-Saharan African countries have participated in various environmental and natural resources management activities, the most recent (and common) of which are National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs). With over two decades of experience, it has become increasingly evident that institutional structures and interrelationships are essential to the efficient implementation of sustainable development programs. As a result, many African governments and international donors now integrate institutional development programs into their overall development activities.

This analysis of the institutional mechanisms of environmental management in Africa is based upon nine country case studies and numerous interviews and consultations with a host of African and international experts and practitioners. Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of these strategic planning exercises, the author comes up with specific recommendations for improving environmental planning and its implementation.

The prevalence of weak and inadequate institutions and their interrelationships (called "institutional arrangements" here) stem from many factors, including a serious shortage of skilled manpower; the absence of adequate training facilities; insufficient staff incentives and salaries; and, perhaps most important, counterproductive government policies and legislation. Compounding these obstacles, some donor policies actually

hinder or discourage local institutional development and capacity development in general.

Not surprisingly, the unique cultural, political, and economic dynamics of each country determine how that country will organize itself to meet a particular challenge. Given the diversity of environmental conditions and concerns, differences in focus and priorities are also inevitable. Consequently, a wide variety of institutional and administrative structures has evolved over the years. These include separate ministries of the environment, departments of environment within a line ministry, and semi-autonomous environmental management and coordination authorities. The appropriateness of each in any particular case thus needs to be considered in light of the quality or strength of a government's inter-departmental cooperation and its capacity to interact with grassroots groups effectively. Also vital to success is a conspicuous, government-wide consensus on institutional objectives and pronounced and sustained political commitment by national and local-level leaders.

Key findings in this analysis include:

Institutional choices: A key role that environmental strategies are expected to play is to establish a precedent and continuing basis for effective cross-sectoral coordination in managing the environment. In all nine countries, this entails finding an effective lead institution and preventing inter-institutional conflicts. Specific recommendations include: national policies for the environment

(which are cross-sectoral in nature) should be coordinated at a level higher than that of the line ministries; the institutional structure must allow for effective coordination and consultation outside of government, especially with the private sector and civil society; and, though the optimal institutional arrangement will vary by country, experience to date suggests that a lead institution with a semi-autonomous status that is positioned above the line ministries and ruled by an inter-ministerial advisory/policy board provides the best prospects.

Political support: Political support is the most important prerequisite in the quest for sustainable development. Government commitment to strategic planning, comprehension of the issues at stake, allocation of resources for institutional development, and the general involvement of the political leadership all determine the success of any planning exercise. Every effort must thus be made to ensure support at the highest level, not only for the planning exercise, but for the whole notion of environmental management. That support must also be truly cross-sectoral and come from government, the private sector, and civil society.

Local and sub-national participation: Another key issue is to effectively include NGOs, indigenous institutions, and concerned individuals in the planning process. Major considerations include decentralization policies, national "ownership" of the planning process, NGO participation, and planning and implementation instruments. An effective strategic plan for the environment should include commitments to strengthening the role of "sub-national" government organizations and increasing their responsibility and should

call for constant interaction with community and other stakeholder groups. NGOs often play a useful, even essential role in facilitating such participation.

Donor support: An important element in most planning exercises is the role of donors, which includes the provision of technical assistance, the coordination of activities, and the imposition of conditionalities. Donors must take pains to ensure that their role helps to strengthen the country's (and its institutions') sense of ownership of the strategic planning process and elevates the importance of environmental management in general.

Capacity development: Obviously, a determinant of any national environmental strategy's ultimate success is the relative capacity of the institutions and structures that sustain it. The strategic planning process needs to strengthen the capacities of these institutions and the individuals who staff them through training and other activities.

Implementation: Strategic plans have little value unless they are consulted and implemented. To help ensure that this happens, an implementation agenda must be designed as part of the planning process. The key elements of such an agenda are ensuring that a central coordinating institution is in place; facilitating that institution's attempts to build bridges with other organizations; conducting a training needs assessment; adopting innovative approaches in the use of policy instruments; monitoring the performance of the planning and implementation process; and developing public awareness and education programs.

List of Acronyms

ARN	—	Agriculture and Natural Resources	NEMC	—	National Environmental Management Council
DE	—	Department of the Environment	NESDA	—	Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa
ELO	—	Environmental Liaison Officer	NGO	—	Non-Governmental Organization
EPA	—	Environmental Protection Agency	ONE	—	Office National de l'Environnement
FY	—	Financial Year	PACD	—	Plans of Action to Combat Desertification
GERMP	—	Ghana Environmental Resources Management Project	PCG	—	Policy Consultative Group
GTZ	—	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Cooperation)	TFAP	—	Tropical Forestry Action Plan
IUCN	—	World Conservation Union	UNCED	—	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
NCS	—	National Conservation Strategy	UNEP	—	United Nations Environment Programme
NCSSD	—	National Conservation Strategy for Sustainable Development	UNSO	—	United Nations Sudano—Sahelian Office
NEA	—	National Environment Agency	USAID	—	United States Agency for International Development
NEAP	—	National Environmental Action Plan	WRI	—	World Resources Institute
NEMA	—	National Environmental Management Authority			

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Ever since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 (The Stockholm Conference), Sub-Saharan African countries have participated in a variety of activities related to environment and natural resource management. That participation received additional impetus from a number of natural disasters that heightened awareness of the need for comprehensive environmental agendas. Drought and desertification in the Sahel, for example, encouraged the preparation of desertification-control plans throughout West Africa. Elsewhere on the continent, national conservation strategies were formulated in response to global concern about natural resource depletion and environmental degradation. In addition, the energy crisis of the 1970s undermined the economies of many countries and thus encouraged efforts to use natural resources judiciously and manage the environment conscientiously.

Among the more prominent of these activities was the creation of national environmental ministries. Unfortunately, however, many such ministries were started in an effort to comply with international pressures, rather than as part of a calculated policy aimed at efficient environmental management. The emphasis on completing a planning process has taken precedence over the need to complete a plan that allows for effective implementation. As a result, cross-sectoral policy coordination has not received proper consideration.

The primary strategic planning processes adopted in many African countries in recent years are National Conservation Strategies (NCSs), National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs), Tropical Forestry Action Plans (TFAPs), and Plans of Action to Combat Desertification (PACDs). Initiated in 1987, NEAPs have become particularly significant. Of the 21 countries in the world that had completed NEAPs before September 1993, ten were from Sub-Saharan Africa.¹ Within a year, two more Sub-Saharan African countries had finished their NEAP and an additional 25 were working on theirs. One major imperative addressed by all strategic planning processes (and the NEAPs in particular) is the need for institutional mechanisms—organizational structures, governmental and non-governmental, at national and sub-national levels, with responsibility for general planning.

Study Objectives and Focus

Environmental and natural resource management systems and procedures, though relatively new to most African countries, have assumed increasing importance. Since the task of environmental management itself is quite complex, the need to share information on procedures and options, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the systems devised through strategic planning processes, is urgent.

The main goal of this study is to determine the extent to which the various long-term strategic planning processes address the short-term

problems resulting from the lack of a coherent national and sub-national institutional framework and an implementable agenda for addressing complex, cross-cutting environmental issues. The focus is on national institutional structures whose general responsibilities include environmental and natural resource management policy, legislation, planning, implementation, monitoring, assessment, and coordination within the overall framework of sustainable development. The specific emphasis is on the administrative structures or organs responsible for inter-ministerial or inter-agency coordination and/or the nature of the inter-organizational relationships they foster. (See Box 1.) In this assessment, institutional framework refers to formal and informal organizational structures that existed in each country before the strategic planning process was introduced and to those that were recommended, created, or reconstituted to formulate and execute approved plans and strategies. Recent rises in environmental consciousness at the international and national levels undergirded the conviction that an inter-sectoral and inter-institutional approach is required to address environment and natural resource management problems.

1.2 Countries Studied

As of 1995, more than 30 African countries have embarked upon various forms of environmental management planning. Although these countries are at different stages of plan preparation and implementation, there is a clear pattern in the choice of approaches. Desertification-control plans, for example, predominate in Sahelian West Africa. National Conservation Strategies are more common in Eastern and Southern Africa where IUCN has regional programs. National Environmental Action Plans are the most common in those countries that have carried out economic reform programs under the auspices of the World Bank. The selection of countries for study was therefore guided by the following criteria.

(i) *Representation of different approaches to the strategic planning process*

An attempt was made to reflect the various approaches currently being adopted in environmen-

tal management. Thus, first-generation sector-based plans that were poorly integrated into existing social and economic programs, if at all, were considered alongside more recent approaches, such as NEAPs and NCSs which have stronger vertical and horizontal linkages to such programs.

(ii) *Various levels of experience in plan preparation and implementation*

An attempt was made to select countries with different levels of experience in the planning process. The pioneers in the NEAP process—Madagascar, Mauritius, Lesotho, and Ghana—have already begun implementing their plans. Others, such as Guinea and Mali, are still preparing plans.

(iii) *Availability and accessibility of institutions and experts*

In response to the numerous studies undertaken by local and foreign consultants, government officials have grown weary of “people coming to gather information” to produce reports that do not improve working and living conditions. It was therefore considered useful to work with countries in which some sustained cooperation could be ensured. Previous studies and networking activities had provided the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA) with institutional and personal contacts in some countries, so during the project’s design phase lead institutions and experts in these countries could be identified.

(iv) *Geographic and linguistic balance*

Regional balance is crucial in studies such as this since political geography is a major determinant of how social and economic affairs are managed. This is especially true where strategic planning has come to be identified with certain types of plans—e.g., desertification-control plans in West Africa, conservation strategies in Southern Africa. In addition, the *de facto* division of Africa into Francophone, Anglophone, and Lusophone countries creates its own set of differences. The countries were therefore selected to reflect the geographical and linguistic divisions throughout

Box 1. Study Methodology

This study of institutional mechanisms for environmental management in Africa was designed as a collaborative activity between the World Resources Institute (WRI), the Natural Resources Policy Consultative Group for Africa (PCG), and the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA)—an African initiative housed at the African Development Bank in Abidjan. The World Resources Institute, a private environmental policy and research institution, serves as the secretariat for the PCG through a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The PCG's mission is to strengthen environmental policy initiatives in Africa. The quality of analysis on issues affecting the formulation, implementation, and reform of NESDA's activities include supporting national-level environmental and natural resource planning processes in Africa (on a demand-driven basis), national-level capacity building and development, and the formation and effective utilization of a network of African environmental management experts.

As part of overall project design, a desk study undertaken at WRI—a review of NEAPs, NCSs, and PACDs—provided useful insight into the status of the environmental management process in various African countries.

Following the selection of countries, field studies were undertaken in The Gambia (December, 1993); Mali (February/March, 1994); Ethiopia (April, 1994); Uganda (May, 1994); Botswana (July, 1994); and Tanzania (August,

1994). Study visits were also made to Guinea and Ghana at different times during the period, while the Madagascar study was undertaken within the context of an earlier WRI/USAID mission to that country.

The visits focussed on the institutional arrangements in each country, especially institutional linkages, operations, constraints, and effectiveness. The insights of both government officials and private individuals were solicited. Donor agencies and USAID country missions in particular were contacted to assess their individual and collective involvement in the national environmental planning processes.

The individual country reports—which constitute the material for this synthesis document—were based largely on the documentation available in those countries, at NESDA in Abidjan, and at various institutions in Washington, D.C. These were supplemented with observations and comments gathered during the country visits. Finally, drafts of this report benefitted from a review process within WRI; with the Policy Consultative Group; and, most important, at a three-day NESDA workshop in Addis Ababa in March 1995.

This synthesis report does not summarize the individual country reports; they are published by NESDA under separate cover. (See *Annex I* for case study summaries.) Instead, it brings together the lessons learned and offers general recommendations on improving environmental and natural resources management in Africa.

Sub-Saharan Africa. In broad terms, Western, Eastern, and Southern Africa were all represented, as were both Francophone and Anglophone countries. For mainly logistical reasons, it was not possible to include any Lusophone countries.

Based on the above key criteria (and the fact that political turmoil ruled out visits to some places), Botswana, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Tanzania, and Uganda were selected for the case studies.² In

addition, information from other countries (e.g., Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire) has been incorporated.

Notes

1. Egypt was the only other African country to have completed a NEAP.

2. Rwanda was also selected, but had to be dropped because of the country's political situation.

2. Institutional Arrangements for Environmental Management

2.1 Progress Toward Environmental Management in Africa

The euphoria that accompanied political independence across the African continent in the 1960s has mostly disappeared. In its place, a number of African nations are being haunted by the three-headed specter of political, economic, and ecological collapse. Recent UN and other reports have confirmed the process of disintegration in Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Some of these countries are being eviscerated as a result of bad government while others have become the victims of ethnic violence. Pictures of Rwandan refugee camps in Eastern Zaire and the destruction of reserved forests and game parks in Uganda and Liberia as a result of "bush wars" and the near-total collapse of basic infrastructural services testify to the chaos that prevails in many African countries. Although the human cost of these tragedies has received substantial international attention, the staggering environmental degradation remains unquantified.

Science and technology can do nothing about the human determinants of these disasters. But just as people choose to inflict chaos and destruction upon themselves and their environment, so too can they choose to protect that environment. All that is needed is a realistic, demand-driven approach to natural resource management and the political will to make it happen.

The international community—spearheaded by the United Nations, lending and donor agencies, and NGOs—has sensitized African governments to the need to convene international conferences, negotiate international conventions, impose conditionalities on credits and grants, and promote strategic plans. As a result, most African governments have now embarked on strategic planning in one form or another.

However, these developments are new, and commitment to environment and natural resources management as a national policy is relatively weak. For example, while many national policies originate in constitutional provisions, references to environmental policy in the constitutions of African countries are rare, and, where they do exist, indefinite.¹

2.2 Integrated Planning Experiences in Africa

Most of the integrated planning for social and economic development undertaken in Africa in the past four decades has been done in connection with international donor support programs. For example, integrated rural development plans promoted by the World Bank in the 1960s became the focus of planning in many newly independent countries. Other countries prepared elaborate five- or seven-year development plans emphasizing public sector activities. All promoted economic "growth poles" in selected centers to encourage overall social and economic development.

Table 1. Status of Strategic Planning Activities in Sub-Saharan African Countries

Country	STATUS*						Strategy Type
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Angola							No information
Benin					X		NEAP
Botswana					X		NCS
Burkina Faso					X		NEAP
Burundi						X	NEAP
Cameroon				X			NEAP
Central Africa Republic							No information
Chad				X			PNLCD
Congo				X	X		NEAP
Côte d'Ivoire			X				NEAP
Eritrea		X					NEAP
Ethiopia						X	NCS
Gabon		X					NEAP
Gambia						X	NEAP
Ghana						X	NEAP
Guinea			X				NEAP
Guinea-Bissau		X					NEAP
Kenya				X			NEAP
Lesotho				X			NEAP
Madagascar					X		NEAP
Malawi				X			NEAP
Mali					X		PNLCD (NEAP)
Mauritania					X		PNLCD
Mauritius					X		NEAP
Mozambique		X					NEAP
Namibia	X						NEAP
Niger	X						NEAP
Nigeria					X		NEAP/NCS

Table 1. (continued)

Country	STATUS*						Strategy Type
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Rwanda						X	NEAP
Senegal		X					NEAP
Seychelles					X		NEAP
Sierra Leone		X				X	NEAP
Somalia						X	No information
South Africa	X						NEAP
Sudan							No information
Swaziland							NEAP
Tanzania				X			NCSSD
Togo		X					NEAP
Uganda					X		NEAP
Zaire						X	No information
Zambia					X		NCS/NEAP
Zimbabwe					X		NCS

A Entry Phase C Strategy Awaiting Adoption E Implementation Phase
 B Initial Development Phase D Formal Adoption F Strategy Stalled

Strategy Type	Summary of Status	No. of Countries
NCS		3
NEAP		29
NEAP/NCS/PNLCD		3
PNLCD		2
NCSSD		1
No Information		4
TOTAL		42

Source: IUCN. "Strategies for Sustainability: Africa, Vol. 1 (Review Draft), 1994, plus updates and additional information from the author.

In addition to these integrated planning activities, many African governments participated in numerous projects designed to solve problems in agriculture, forestry, and other sectors. Some of these plans were linked to international conventions that the countries had signed to attract international funding for plan implementation.

Generally speaking, these early initiatives strongly emphasized public sector leadership and direction, and relied heavily on external funding for implementing programs and projects. Environmental considerations were not usually explicit in program and project activities, though some agricultural and forestry projects included environmental management components. As international concern rose in the 1980s, African governments began to put in place institutional, economic, political, and technical conditions to meet the challenge of sustainable development—that is, of meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The goal of sustainable development planning was given a major boost by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, and was incorporated in *Agenda 21*, which grew out of that meeting. Although many governments accept the concept of sustainable development and the importance of environmental management, most contemporary planning misses the mark. Many environmental management processes are erroneously equated with sustainable development processes. Tanzania's NCS, for instance, has been redesignated a National Conservation Strategy for Sustainable Development (NCSSD).

NEAPs and NCSs

NEAP and NCS processes constitute an improvement on earlier planning initiatives in both approach and content. Both attempt vertical and horizontal linkages in integrated planning, policy, legislative, and institutional reform; and both are based on information generation, synthesis, and dissemination and on increased public participation. Positive change can be discerned throughout Africa—certainly at the national and,

to a certain extent, at the local level as well. As part of the general socio-economic reform process that has swept through Africa in the aftermath of the Cold War, most countries have effected changes in democratic governance, moving toward political pluralism and decentralization, opening up of economic systems, and increasing participation of the private sector, NGOs, and local communities in the overall process. Partly as a result of these developments, NEAPs in particular have been described as being “in-country, demand-driven and participatory” in nature (Fal-loux and Talbot, 1993). In reality, however, they have been introduced, encouraged, and largely funded by the World Bank as part of economic assistance packages.

In spite of the conspicuous donor involvement, NEAPs and NCSs have provided important forums and context for national debates on environmental management and for the formulation of policy and action programs. Although they have yet to represent all stakeholders, the preparatory processes have involved an encouraging cross-section from government, academic institutions, NGOs, and local communities. The planning processes have also helped build consensus, especially among technical experts, and a lot of attention has been paid to information searches. For example, in addition to the normal practice of hiring foreign consultants to prepare reports, policies, and plans, many of the countries have turned to groups of national experts. Indeed, a major benefit of strategic planning to date has been the development of new institutional capacities required for managing the process.

Institutional issues were identified during the study as a major constraint in the preparation and implementation of national strategic plans. In many instances, the institutions responsible for environmental management before the strategic planning process began were essentially sector-based. They had a broad mandate to lead and coordinate cross-sectoral plan preparation and implementation. Only in a few countries—The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda did national institutions provide the leadership required in planning.

Since the mid-1980s, it has become increasingly evident that the efficient implementation of development projects depends upon the availability and strength of institutional structures and arrangements (Baum and Tolbert, 1987). Many donor agencies have therefore increased contributions to institutional development as part of aid packages. Strategic planning processes create opportunities to move from a sectoral to a cross-sectoral approach in planning and implementation, a goal that is achieved through the design of an effective institutional framework for coordinated, cross-sectoral environmental management. However, since traditional government structures based on sectoral ministries and departments are well entrenched in Africa, no "model" exists.

That said, effective environmental institutions are a necessary precondition for building an effective environmental policy framework. They formulate and implement policy; carry out legislative reform; propose environmental programs and projects; advise and support political decision-making processes; set standards; collect data; evaluate the environmental consequences of policies, decisions, and projects; educate the public; and coordinate and support the work of government institutions, NGOs, and civil society. In

light of the crucial role that institutions play in natural resource management, many African countries have become genuinely concerned with overcoming existing institutional capacity constraints and are increasingly addressing them when dealing with such cross-sectoral issues as environmental management.

Table 1 summarizes the status of strategic planning activities in Sub-Saharan African countries. Countries with "no information" have not embarked on strategic planning activities mainly due to internal political upheavals. The NEAPs are at different stages of preparation, with about 50 percent at the implementation stage. NEAPs are often combined with other processes because countries had to redesign previous planning activities to conform to the NEAP format to qualify for World Bank credit.

Note

1. The new constitutions of Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya are the rare examples that make any references to "environment," "natural resources," and "sustainable development."

3. Key Issues in Institutional Arrangements

The key issues identified in the country studies are discussed below. Although every issue was noted in each study, the relevance varies with each country's perceptions and priorities. As a result, issues are not discussed in any particular order, and they are not mutually exclusive; in fact, close relationships can be discerned among several. (An example is the link between institutional choices and local-level participation.)

3.1 Issue One: Institutional Choices

All environmental management strategies are expected to establish a precedent for effective cross-sectoral coordination. But in most African countries, responsibility for environmental matters has been allocated to a number of government administrative systems, creating problems of coordination and management. All the countries studied have, therefore, been searching for an appropriate and effective institutional arrangement—whether by creating, strengthening, or re-organizing a national body or agency with full responsibility for environmental matters. This search has not been easy—witness the frequent changes in the “institutional home” of environmental institutions and the various designations assigned to these agencies

Options for Development of an Institutional Framework

The importance of the choice of institutional arrangements cannot be overemphasized. Each

type should be considered from at least four points of view: the quality or strength of inter-departmental cooperation, the consensus on institutional objectives, the political commitment of leaders, and their capacity to effectively communicate and link up with grassroots groups. The country studies indicate that inter-departmental cooperation and consensus-building are crucial to environmental management activities because various line ministries and government departments are inexorably involved in the process.

A wide variety of institutional and administrative structures have evolved in African countries (Furst, 1993). Their wide-ranging responsibilities came about through either jurisdictional right or legislation. In general, line ministries formulate policy and allocate funds, while government departments and other public and private organizations usually implement projects. This division of responsibility must be changed so that sub-national level stakeholders can become involved in policy formulation as well as project implementation.

With respect to the formulation and implementation of environmental management policies within the context of overall national development, however, existing institutional machinery is often inadequate. As indicated above, this shortcoming usually stems from conflicts generated between traditional and new management systems, especially with respect to underlying values and responsibilities. Institutional jealousies arise because the departments and agencies that implement environmental projects

generally receive more funds, especially from donors. In addition, some personnel in the line ministries and government departments lack the managerial skills required to interact effectively with other ministries, departments, NGOs, and the private sector on cross-sectoral issues.

Given the prevalence of inadequate financial and human resources, it would have been better to gradually build capacity in existing institutions rather than create new ones. However, the creation of new institutional frameworks has continued to dominate the strategic planning process in most African countries, and many such frameworks cannot handle the task of environmental management with which they are charged.

In the evolving history of environmental management in Sub-Saharan Africa, numerous institutional options have evolved. (See Box 2.)

(i) *A Ministry of the Environment*

The designation of a separate Ministry of the Environment started in Stockholm in 1972 and gathered momentum after 1992 in Rio.¹ By establishing separate ministries for the environment, some governments hope to display their belief in and commitment to the environmental agenda. The decision may also result from international pressure to designate such a ministry. In reality, however, this arrangement tends to create obstacles to environmental management.² Earlier experiences in Kenya, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire suggest

that creating a line ministry for the environment does not yield fruitful results since environmental issues are basically multi-sectoral. The current trend is to link the environmental ministry with, for example, science and technology (Ghana), natural resources development (Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, and Uganda), or with natural resources and tourism (Tanzania).

As has been observed in Ghana, Mali, Tanzania, and Uganda, the most serious consequences of an independent ministry of environment are unproductive bureaucratic administrative procedures and petty jealousies between ministries. Environmental functions and responsibilities tend to lose out in competition with line functions in the same ministry, especially for resources. The problem generally begins when the other ministers recognize and refer to the Minister of the Environment as "our colleague." This double-edged show of deference actually implies that the environment ministry is viewed and accepted as an equal and is therefore expected to handle all environmental matters without interfering in the affairs of other ministries.

(ii) *A Separate Environment Department within a Ministry*

In Tanzania and Uganda, responsibility for environmental management has been vested in the Department and the Directorate of the Environment (DE), respectively, within the line ministries for the environment. In both countries, controver-

Box 2. Institutional Structures and Related Functions							
Institutions	FUNCTIONS						
	Policy	Legislation	Planning	Monitoring	Assessment	Public Awareness	Coordination
Ministry	X	X	X			X	X
Dept. in Ministry	X	X	X				
Semi-Autonomous Authority	X		X	X	X	X	X

sies have broken out over roles, responsibilities, and spheres of influence. In Tanzania, the DE Director is much lower in rank than the Deputy Ministers and Permanent Secretaries—the level at which coordination for effective decision-making and action in other line ministries ostensibly occurs. Moreover, as a newly created government department eager to assert its authority, the DE has already created a wedge between itself and the institutions—especially the NEMC—with which it must collaborate. In Uganda, the creation of both an Environment Directorate with a Department of Environment and the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) creates fertile ground for duplication of functions and mandates between these rival bodies. The creation of two other institutions along with the Office National de l'Environnement (ONE) in Madagascar led to similar problems there (Talbot, 1993).

(iii) *A Semi-Autonomous Environment Management Authority*

Some countries have established an inter-sectoral, semi-autonomous environmental management and coordination authority, generally located under a non-sectoral body, such as the Ministry of Finance and Planning or the office of an authority, such as the president or prime minister.

The merit of this type of institutional arrangement lies in the investment of vital coordination functions in a body capable of bringing ministries and agencies with diverse interests together in common cause. The semi-autonomous agency also has the potential to avoid the inter-ministerial and inter-agency conflicts and petty jealousies that plague other arrangements.

In the countries surveyed, these agencies are highly visible and many have commendable performance records, especially for young institutions. Most of the institutions are well endowed with human and material resources, especially those located in the office of the highest administrative authority (e.g., the office of the President in The Gambia). In Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania for example, the national institutions have recruited and trained a cadre of well-quali-

fied and well-motivated staff. The institutions themselves are well structured to perform the complex functions related to coordination, standard setting, monitoring and assessment, education and awareness and, above all, advising the government.³ (See Box 2.)

But even under the seemingly attractive circumstances described above, the respective institutions have witnessed several changes in status, mandate, and resource allotment that have taken a toll on their overall performance. These reversals have been brought about by political changes (Ghana and The Gambia), policy shifts (Tanzania and Ghana) and by internal intrigues. Most of the semi-autonomous institutions surveyed during this study are relatively new and have not been around long enough to have established a track record.

3.1.1 What's in a Name?

Most environmental ministries are responsible for or linked with other important economic sectors. Indeed, collectively, the countries studied had many a Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. Also common are "national" councils, agencies, or secretariats that "protect" or "manage" the environment. For example, The Gambia has established a National Environment Agency, Ghana has an Environmental Protection Agency, Nigeria has a Federal Environment Protection Authority, Kenya has a National Environment Secretariat, and Tanzania has established a National Environment Management Council.

The choice of name can be significant, reflecting as it does the power that the institution wields within the government's administrative framework. Debates in some countries regarding the name to be adopted, have been heated. Currently, designations such as "agency" and "authority" are preferred over earlier choices such as "secretariat" and "commission." For example, Ghana's 20-year-old inter-ministerial Environmental Protection Council was recently renamed the Environmental Protection Agency and given additional enforcement powers.

3.1.2 Institutional Location

Coupled with the search for a powerful institutional name is the sometimes tortuous search for a location for the agency. Ghana's former Environmental Protection Council was located in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, then in the Ministry of Health, and then in the Ministry of Local Government—before finding its present home in the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology. The National Environment Secretariat of Kenya was originally in the office of the president but relocated to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. If

the current proposal to create the Kenya Environment Agency is accepted, the NES will be absorbed into the new agency. And the Cellule Provisoire de Suivi, d'Evaluation et de Planification (CSEP) of Mali was moved among three different ministries from 1989 to 1993, mainly because of its "provisional" status.

Various environmental planning documents have recommended the establishment of semi-autonomous institutions while some African governments have created separate environmental ministries. (See Box 3.) In Ghana, Tanzania, and Madagascar, new ministries were created where

Box 3. Institutional Options Adopted in Selected African Countries			
Country	Pre-NEAP/NCS Institution(s)	Recommended Institution By NEAP/NCS	Remarks
Botswana	Ministry of Local Government and Lands	NCS Advisory Board and Coordinating Agency	Approved but search in progress for new ministerial home for coordinating Agency
Ethiopia	Ministry of Natural Resource Development and Environment Protection Conservation Strategy Secretariat (1990)	National Environmental Protection Authority	Established in office of Prime Minister
The Gambia	Environment Unit/ Ministry of Natural Resources	National Environment Agency	Recommended by NEAP established in office of President
Ghana	Environmental Protection Council (1974)	Environmental Protection Agency (1994) Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MEST - 1993)	Recommended by MEST and approved
Guinea	Department of Natural Resources and Environment (1986) National Environmental Council (1987)		Institutional Arrangements not yet designed

Box 3. (continued)

Country	Pre-NEAP/NCS Institution(s)	Recommended Institution By NEAP/NCS	Remarks
Kenya	National Environment Secretariat (1974) Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Kenya Environment Agency (1994)	Recommended by NEAP Launch Workshop Dec. 1994
Mali	Ministère du Développement Rural et de l'Environnement, 1994 (Ministry of Rural Development and Environment, 1994)	Cellule de Suivi, d'Évaluation/ PNLCD	Responsible for Desertification Control Plan; likely to coordinate NEAP
Nigeria	Federal Environmental Protection Agency (1988)	—	No new institution created
Sénégal	Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature	Conseil Supérieur des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement (CONSERE), 1993	Inter-Ministerial Council for Environmental Policy Coordination Responsible for NEAP
Tanzania	National Environment Management Council (1983) Ministry of Tourism, Natural Resources and Environment (1990) / Department of Environment (1992)	—	No decision on institutional arrangements yet
Uganda	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (1994) Environment Directorate/ Department of Environment Protection (1994)	National Environment Management Authority	Approved
Zambia	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (1991) National Environment Council (1990)	—	No new institution created

semi-autonomous agencies already existed. In countries where agencies have been recommended, the favored locations are the office of the president or prime minister, or a non-sectoral location, such as the Ministry of Finance and Planning. Such positioning reflects the conviction that environmental matters are cross-sectoral in nature and can best be handled or managed by a powerful and influential agency in a prominent position. The high-visibility and authority of this arrangement can be especially valuable in the performance of the agency's coordination, enforcement, monitoring, and advisory functions.

However, these locations also entail some problems. Being in the office of the head of state or government, for example, does not automatically confer the power and visibility of that office. In fact, the office of the president or prime minister can sometimes be likened to an orphanage for agencies left to fend for themselves without the benefit of an authoritative advocate, such as a cabinet minister. Moreover, mere placement in these high offices means little without the accompanying political and legislative support, resources, and trained manpower crucial to ensuring efficient performance.

The increasing tendency of governments to create separate ministries for the environment further confuses the process of environmental management, especially if these ministries themselves are not assigned clearly defined functions. Apart from being used to create patronage positions, the formation of new ministries often duplicates roles and responsibilities and invariably disrupts the strategic planning process. Moreover, this is a favorite ploy used by new "democratic" governments looking for international recognition and donor support instead of working on national concerns. The result, unfortunately, is usually a proliferation of institutions and overlapping jurisdictions.

3.1.3 Inter-institutional Conflicts

Conflicts among institutions involved in environmental management stem partly from the lack of balance between resources and agenda.

Ideally, such a balance would clearly define the operation of the institutional policy reform mechanism, preventing distortions within the inter-organizational power network. Legal reforms undertaken as part of the institutional review process under both NEAPs and NCSs are directed at reversing jurisdictional overlaps for just this reason. (See Section 3.6.)

In most of the countries studied, earlier attempts to avoid such conflicts are reflected in the linkage of environmental ministries to other key sectors of the economy, e.g., natural resources and tourism (see 3.1.1 above). But entrenched ministerial jealousies make success elusive. In Mali, significant opposition to the establishment of a high-level inter-ministerial Conseil de Suivi du Plan National de Lutte Contre la Desertification (PNLCD) was intense because the host ministry believed that the council would intrude upon the ministry's legitimate mandate.

One way to forestall such conflicts is to define institutional mandates and linkages from the outset by ensuring that resources are sufficient to implement recommended actions. Another approach is to make sure that national environmental policies are coordinated at a level above the line ministries. Inter-ministerial bodies have been established in some countries for such purposes. The failure of the Office National de l'Environnement (ONE) to take this step created operational problems for the institution in Madagascar (Talbot, 1993).

As Honadle points out, budgetary allocations also reflect the inter-organizational balance of power (Honadle, 1994)—some departments under the same ministry are favored over others. Generally speaking, the favorite departments are those that could or do make direct visible contributions to the economy. In Uganda, where the Environment Directorate includes the Departments of Forestry, Meteorology, and Environment Protection, budgetary allocation within the parent Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources clearly favors the more "productive" departments of forestry and meteorology. A similar situation was observed in Tanzania's Ministry of

Natural Resources, Tourism and Environment. In Ghana's new Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, the science and technology departments have more established organizational and funding bases than their late-arriving sister department which is controlled by a board that now operates under the ministry.

In each of the countries studied, the strategic planning process attempts to resolve these institutional shortcomings. Task forces or working groups composed of a large number of local experts from government, non-governmental, and private sectors, as well as the academic and research community, are formed to identify diverging and converging objectives and policies across the broad spectrum of the national economy in an interactive and participatory manner. The "coalition building" that results as the issue and topic papers that form the basis of the planning document are prepared has been identified as one of the major benefits of the NEAP process.

Not surprisingly, this coalition-building process does not always work, however. In Guinea, for example, a local NGO—Guinée Ecologie—had to be called in to prepare the NEAP after the government institutions proved unable to do so during the two years that they had been allotted.

3.1.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- Both the NEAP and NCS process have provided African countries with much-needed opportunities to identify and analyze legislative and institutional shortcomings and to formulate and implement policies and action plans to rectify them.
- The choice of institutional arrangement is the most crucial decision that African countries have to make in terms of minimizing institutional conflicts and ensuring the effective implementation of policies and programs. No "ideal" institutional arrangement exists, so

national issues, needs, functions, and circumstances must form the basis of this critical decision.

Recommendations

- Since environmental management is cross-sectoral, factors that inhibit effective coordination deserve priority attention. To eliminate the inter-agency conflicts that arise when mandates are unclear, governments should ensure that the strategic planning process incorporates a comprehensive review of the country's legal system, removes conflicts and overlaps, defines mandates, and designs legal codes to implement new laws.
- Decisions about the nature and location of a national institution for the environment should be guided by the principle that national policies for the environment should be coordinated at a level higher than that of line ministries. Whatever the choice of institutional option, efforts should be made to ensure an adequate flow of resources to all agencies involved in the process. Responsibility for implementing environmental projects should be vested in line ministries and local institutions, including NGOs.
- The type of institutional set-up that has had the most success in moving the planning process into the implementation phase is one with a semi-autonomous status and with an inter-ministerial advisory/policy board. Although the establishment of such an institution is highlighted as a non-prescriptive recommendation, whatever institution is devised must have a clear mandate and authority, as well as broad-based political support.
- Countries should be encouraged to frequently assess the institutional situation and make changes where appropriate. Environmental institutions should be "small," performing mainly coordination, policy formulation, monitoring, and assessment functions.

3.2 Issue Two: Coordination

The structure of the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) has been cited as a good example of what Hjern and Porter (1981) termed an "inter-organizational implementation network." In their report on the implementation of the GEAP, Gustafson and Clifford (1994) indicate that the "purpose of these networks is not merely to distribute tasks among collaborating units, but to link the programs of several organizations so that larger policy objectives are met that are beyond the reach of any individual organization." The primary goal is to develop strategies and mechanisms that link individual agency commitments to the overall policy objective.

No matter which environmental strategy is utilized, the complex and interrelated nature of environmental issues provides opportunities to achieve a balance between permitting individual implementing agencies to operate independently, using their respective comparative advantages, and restricting that independence with supervision and control mechanisms that will help ensure that their output fits into the larger framework of the plan. The key to achieving the desired balance is "coordination." This has been given special consideration in all the strategy plans, but especially the NEAPs (see Box 4).

Although the strategic planning process is viewed as facilitating functional linkages among

Box 4. Coordination Provisions in Environmental Legislation in Selected African Countries

1. THE GAMBIA: National Environment Management Act, 1994.

Part III Section 7: The Council (National Environmental Management Council) shall:

- (a) be the policy making organ of the Agency (National Environment Agency);
- (b) coordinate all policies, whether by government or the private sector, that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment;
- (c) promote the integration of environmental consideration in all aspects of social and economic planning;
- (d) harmonize the plans and policies of the various sectors dealing with the environment and approve all environmental plans and policies.

Section 10: The Agency shall perform the following functions:

- (b) liaise with the various ministries, departments and agencies of government on all issues relating to the environment, and ensure that environmental concerns are integrated into all spheres of national planning and project implementation;
- (c) liaise with the private sector, inter-governmental organizations, governmental agencies of other states on all issues relating to the environment.

2. TANZANIA: National Environment Management Act (No 19), 1983

Part II, Section 4: The National Environment Management Council shall:

- (a) formulate policy on environmental management and recommend its implementation to government;
- (b) coordinate the activities of all bodies concerned with environmental matters and serve as a channel of communication between those bodies and the government;
- (c) foster cooperation between the government, local authorities and other bodies engaged in environmental programs;
- (d) stimulate public and private participation in programs and activities for the national beneficial use of natural resources.

diverse agencies, it has actually created wedges between and among agencies in many countries as a result of differing interpretations of "coordination." Individuals and agencies tend to interpret coordination in terms of *interference* in their "legitimate business." Agencies—especially newly created ones—charged with coordination functions are thus suspect from the very beginning. This suspicion can block cooperation and, in extreme cases, lead to sabotage.

According to the experiences of several case-study countries, coordination is crucial to ensuring effective participation in planning at two different levels: (1) locally, where NGOs and indigenous institutions are involved, and (2)

nationally, where sectoral ministries and agencies are the key players. It is difficult to pass judgment on which of the two levels presents a more difficult challenge. With respect to NGOs and other local institutions, coordination problems trace back partly to a lack of capacity to perform effectively and to comprehend the issues, as well as to the unmet need to develop and strengthen linkages between the two levels or among all stakeholders. These shortcomings underscore the necessity of involving all stakeholders in the process from its inception.

A recent World Bank draft report on NEAPs (1994) presents examples of various approaches to improving institutional coordination within

3. UGANDA: The Environment Management Bill, 1994

Part III, Section 6:

- (1) The National Environment Management Authority shall, in the exercise of its powers under subsection (2) of section 6, coordinate and supervise the activities of all government organs and agencies in the field of the environment.
- (2) The exercise by the Authority of its coordinating and supervisory function...shall not release any lead agency from performing its duties as prescribed by law.
- (3) The Authority may...delegate...any of those functions to a lead agency, a technical committee...or any other public officer.

4. GHANA: Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994

Part 1, Section 2: The functions of the Agency are:

- (b) to coordinate the activities of bodies concerned with the technical or practical aspects of the environment and serve as a channel of communication between such bodies and the Ministry (for the Environment);
- (c) to coordinate the activities of such bodies as it considers appropriate for the purposes of controlling the generation, treatment, storage, transportation and disposal of industrial waste;
- (d) to secure in collaboration with such persons as it may determine the control and prevention of discharge of waste into the environment...;
- (j) to act in liaison and cooperation with government agencies, District Assemblies and other bodies and institutions to control pollution and generally protect the environment.
- (r) to coordinate with such international agencies as the Agency considers necessary for the purposes of (the) Act.

the context of NEAPs in Central and Eastern Europe, The Gambia, and Bulgaria. (See Box 5.) According to the report, the NEAPs for these countries contain several recommendations on inter-ministerial coordination designed to improve environmental management at the national level. Honadle and Cooper (1989) have also indicated that from their experience, an effective way to consider coordination is in terms of three types of activities: (1) sharing information, (2) sharing resources, and (3) joint action. Ideally, these activities should constitute the core functions of the coordinating agencies.

3.2.1 Sharing Information

Information sharing encompasses everything from the simple interchange of information among

participants in planning to the creation of complex environmental information systems. In any case, the accuracy of available information should be verified and synthesized to an appropriate level of analysis before it is disseminated to users. The effective use of available information by those actively involved in planning is a valuable test of the national institutions' ability to function collectively. Lessons learned here can be extremely valuable during the coordination phase when that ability will be even more crucial. The National Environmental Information Center (NEIC) of Uganda—a well-established authority on environmental management strategies, implementing agencies, and NGOs—is mandated to prepare a state-of-the-environment report every two years for planners and decision-makers in the country. The first report was released in November 1994.

Box 5. Improving Institutional Coordination

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: To increase inter-ministerial coordination, the NEAP for CEE recommends: (i) creating a First Deputy Minister or equivalent senior position for environmental policy and regulations to focus on economic policy issues, strategy development, and policy implementation; (ii) designing task-oriented teams to connect existing departments and provide links between ministries; (iii) setting up cabinet-level committees, bringing together the ministries of environment with economic and sectoral ministries; (iv) establishing temporary task forces of high-level officials to prepare the work for these cabinet-level committees and provide career and other professional incentives to encourage participation; (v) designating staff from the ministry of environment to participate in strategy development in sectoral ministries and invite staff from those ministries to Working Groups in the Ministry of Environment on relevant issues; and (vi) within the Ministry of Environment, creating capacity for evaluating policies and setting long-term targets for key environmental indicators.

THE GAMBIA: The Gambia NEAP recommends upgrading the environmental unit of the Ministry of Natural Resources into a semi-autonomous unit in the office of the President to give the unit greater latitude and responsibility for environmental policy formulation, coordination, monitoring, and regulation. The recommendation also specified that the new unit will support the ministries through technical working groups and a technical advisory committee, but will not be responsible for project implementation.

BULGARIA: To ensure inter-ministerial coordination in addressing pollution control the Bulgaria NEAP recommends establishing a Supreme Ecological Council of Experts consisting of 21 individuals. Serving in an advisory capacity to the Ministry of Environment, the council's main function would be to review applications for support of projects and research and development activities in the area of pollution abatement.

Source: World Bank, October 1994

3.2.2 Sharing Resources

Resource sharing activities are perhaps a more obvious and even more readily accepted part of planning coordination. In general, the coordinating agency assumes responsibility for pooling resources for implementing programs and projects. Usually too, donor funds are committed to projects with clearly defined outputs and reporting schedules that can be used to assess the level of resource sharing.

The coordinating role of Ghana's former Environmental Protection Council (now EPA), for example, has been greatly enhanced because it shares the funds and resources for the implementation of the Ghana Environmental Resource Management Project (GERMP) with line ministries and with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Survey Department, the Department of Game and Wildlife, and the University of Ghana (EPC, 1992). Since the launching of the GERMP, the EPA has enjoyed an increased level of goodwill and cooperation from these and other agencies primarily because the former Council was able to negotiate a US\$36 million facility (on behalf of the government) for the benefit of the implementing agencies. The real test of the success of these inter-organizational activities will come when the donor funds are exhausted three years from now. Will government see fit to disburse funds through the EPA or any coordinating agency?

3.2.3 Joint Actions

The third type of coordination activity involves joint actions. The need for joint action in environmental management is obvious, but has proved very difficult to attain in many countries unless it is linked to resource sharing. For example, national parks services and forestry departments have had trouble working together in many countries. In the same way, Crops Services and Livestock Services, both departments of the Ministry of Agriculture in Mali have not been able to work well together. To lay foundations for successful joint actions, the working groups should think through joint implementation strategies early in the planning process, when policies

and programs are still being formulated. Once a culture of togetherness has been developed, it can then be applied during the plan implementation.

Difficulties are also encountered in the implementation of joint actions between government ministries and departments/agencies on the one hand, and NGOs and private organizations on the other. Such collaborations can be marred by a lack of trust and threats to autonomy (especially on the part of private organizations). Only a few of the strategic plans are currently being implemented, and it is too early to draw any meaningful conclusions from these. Still, it's obvious that general program monitoring mechanisms must be instituted early in the implementation process to gauge progress in coordination activities.

3.2.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- Coordination is a crucial factor in ensuring that all concerned agencies and individuals participate actively in planning, particularly during the implementation phase.
- The apex coordination institution must have a clear mandate and political support if it is to perform well at both the national and local levels.

Recommendations

- To ensure effective coordination, create a high-level, inter-ministerial body responsible for national environmental policy formulation. Ministers and the political leadership will all feel committed to implementing policies and actions that they helped draw up.
- Maintain the multi-disciplinary task forces/working groups established during the preparatory phase to provide technical services during implementation.
- Institutional arrangements should assign implementation responsibilities and functions to the line ministries, agencies, and NGOs that

have the necessary capacity. The coordination agency should then devote its energies to policy development and implementation, legislation, public education and awareness, and assessment. The experiences of Ghana and The Gambia support this strategy.

- Establish consultative forum for all concerned agencies and ensure regular consultations to discuss and review institutional arrangements and implementation strategies.

3.3 Issue Three: Political Support

Section 1 of this report discussed the role of African governments in national development planning activities since independence. The success of each of these plans has depended largely on the ability of the current government to raise the resources necessary to implement the plans. However, the over-dependence of many governments on foreign donors also means that inconsistencies in donor policies and lack of donor coordination in the respective countries can be destabilizing.

The political and economic history of African countries is well known; it has been characterized by a wide range of negative attributes, among them instability (frequent military coups), dictatorships, corruption, one-party rule, and great inconsistencies in policies. Such qualities have not nurtured the efficiency, clarity, and consistency of national purpose required to design and implement long-term strategic plans. Although the present proliferation of strategic planning activities is closely linked with general macro-economic reform policies and the emergence of more representative government across Africa, it is too early to pass judgment on the ultimate efficacy of these democratic processes. Recent events in Nigeria and The Gambia have proven how fragile and vulnerable elected governments and the overall democratic process in Africa can be.

Political support for strategic planning, especially institutional arrangements, can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. With respect to the NEAP process in particular, it has been estab-

lished that the national government's understanding and commitment to the process is crucial to the decisions taken on resource allocation and institutional arrangements.

3.3.1. Government Commitment to Process

The decision to undertake a NEAP, NCS, or any other strategic plan is essentially political. In Ghana, for example, the decision to undertake the NEAP was taken by the then military government—the country's top political authority—and communicated by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning to the coordination agency, the Environmental Protection Council.

Although all such strategies address the larger issues of poverty and environmental degradation, the key issues considered tend to be the country's priority political issues—whether overgrazing and land degradation in Botswana, coastal erosion in The Gambia, or land tenure and land use practices in Ghana. By design in NEAP and NCS processes, these issues are usually brought up for general, open scrutiny by technical experts. Sufficient political commitment to tackle these issues in open forums is therefore a prerequisite for the process.

Unfortunately, the political commitment to strategic planning processes in many countries has been either short-term or only in the form of lip service. In some instances, planning activities launched with fanfare by high-ranking government functionaries were denied political support later—for example, at sub-national workshops. Radical changes in the national political agenda, may be to blame or a subsequent realization that the major issues are too sensitive to debate publicly. In Botswana, for instance, the key environmental problem identified in the NCS process is overgrazing and land degradation. But overgrazing is a delicate political issue because the small group of owners of large ranches is highly placed. Attempts by the NCS Coordinating Agency to implement the recommendations of the action plan with respect to overgrazing have yielded little success because the political leadership has been unwilling to challenge the powerful owners.

The emerging wave of democratic systems in Africa has had no discernible influence on the political commitment to strategic planning. In those few instances where the planning process was in progress before the introduction of multi-party, democratic systems, party manifestoes allocate space to "environmental and natural resource management" or "sustainable development planning." But these often turn out to be mere window-dressing paragraphs in the documents and do not represent any genuine commitment to environmental management. For example, on the eve of the launch of the implementation of the Kenya NEAP (November 28, 1994) a group of NGOs threatened to withdraw from the NEAP process,

accusing the government of violating its commitment—expressed in the NEAP—by allocating over 7,000 acres of forest land to individuals for development.⁴ This dissent against a shift in stated government policy illustrates how active this group of stakeholders was in the process. (See Box 6.)

3.3.2 Understanding the Issues at Stake

Although the political power of vested interests is also a factor, government commitment to NEAPs, NCSs, and other planning processes wavers largely because understanding of the issues at stake is incomplete. This understanding can be interpreted at two levels:

Box 6. Kenya NGOs Give Ultimatum

ELEVEN Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) yesterday threatened to withdraw from the National Environmental Action Plan, accusing the Government of allocating to individuals 7,212.87 acres of forest land.

Representatives of the NGOs said the Government had irregularly allocated the land in South Western Mau, Karura, Kitalale, Loitokitok, Kaptagat, Bahati, Ngong Bojoge, Eldoret and Kapchemutwa forests.

The NGOs included the Kenya Energy and Environment Organization (KENGO), the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, East African Wildlife Society Environmental Liaison Center, Freedom from Hunger Council, Kituo cha Sheria, Maendeleo ya Wanawake, Society for the Protection of the Environment, Kenya Pastoralists Forum, the African Wildlife Society and the International Commission of Jurists.

Representatives of the organizations hold a Press Conference at the KENGO offices in Nairobi about allocations made within the last four months.

They appealed to President Moi to nullify the allocations since they posed a threat to the environment and the country's ecosystems.

The NGOs also demanded a halt to further allocation of forest land and regazettement of forest land already allocated to individuals. They urged the Government to form an independent commission to monitor, arbitrate and control the use of public property.

"If this appeal is disregarded, then we will have no option but to immediately withdraw from the implementation process of the government's National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP)", they said.

Addressing the conference, the KENGO Executive Director, Mr. Awori Achoka, said that the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources was systematically decimating the country's natural forest without explanation.

Source: THE KENYA STANDARD, Tuesday, November 29, 1994 - p.3

1. An understanding by individual members of government and other political leaders of the meaning and implications of the issues and themes involved. Ecological principles and other technical topics discussed in environmental planning documents are not easily grasped by the average bureaucrat without some basic background in environmental matters. In some instances, for example, high-level government personnel have openly confused Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) with Environmental Information Systems (EIS), especially when only the acronyms were used. Even when a basic knowledge of the conceptual issues exists, the potentially important operational implications are rarely comprehended readily.

It also bears mentioning that the planning process often occurs in a highly politicized bureaucratic setting where agencies and individual stakeholders are pursuing departmental or personal agendas. What ends up determining the outcome of policy debate in such cases, is the extent to which these groups see themselves as winning or losing from environmental policies—not the technical validity of their arguments. For this reason, the strategic planning process must provide ample opportunity for raising decision-makers' appreciation of environmental management principles, especially the awareness that activities in one sector invariably have repercussions on many other sectors and the overall welfare of the country.

2. An understanding on the part of government and political leadership of the linkages between the various issues and their implications in terms of both immediate and long-term national political, social, economic, and ecological policies. While a few ministers may have a fair understanding of the often-complex relationships involved, the same seldom holds true for the entire government bureaucracy. In most of the countries studied, the decision to embark upon the planning process is usually based on short-term economic factors. The World Bank's decision to make preparation of a NEAP a precondition for obtaining all-important IDA credits is a case in point. Collective responsibility for decisions to undertake a com-

prehensive strategic planning process becomes highly suspect under these circumstances. Decisions are not based on a uniform comprehension of the issues at stake, so creating an institutional framework for coordinating the implementation of the adopted plan is difficult at best.

3.3.3 Resource Allocation for Institutional Development

In all the countries studied, those who design management structures and service schemes usually propose conditions of service for the environmental institutions over and above what obtains for the civil service. The rationale for such extra requirements is generally the need to promote efficiency by attracting and retaining qualified and experienced staff during the planning and implementation phases, but it is also to ensure resource flows to the institution. Environmental agencies in The Gambia, Ghana, and Botswana, for example, have been granted higher salaries and greater allowances than their civil service counterparts.

The allocation of resources by government traditionally takes place through annual (and supplementary) budget appropriations. Budgetary allocations provide for salaries and allowances, as well as development and operational expenditures. Resource allocation usually favors the traditionally "productive" sectors—agriculture, mining, and forestry—and such politically important social sectors as education and health. A relatively new and supposedly "unproductive" sector, such as environment, rarely receives the consideration that it deserves, and some countries place such institutions outside the normal government administrative sector. Where that institution is a unit or department of a broad-based ministry (e.g., Guinea, Uganda, and Tanzania), it often becomes the victim of budgetary strangulation as a disproportionate part of the ministry's financial and other resources flow to departments held in higher regard.

An analysis of the financial allocations made to environmental agencies in the countries studied indicates that a large percentage is spent on staff salaries. For example, of the total budgetary allo-

cation of the equivalent of US\$54,000 for the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) in Tanzania in FY 1993, fully 98 percent was used to pay staff salaries and allowances, leaving only 2 percent for "projects."

In many countries, the government's allocation of resources to sustain new environmental institutions that are in no position to generate their own funds is now in question. Apart from inadequate financial resources, these institutions often have difficulty recruiting a full staff because structural adjustment requirements call for government personnel retrenchment. Institutional development and performance have thus suffered in Ghana, Botswana, and Tanzania, where national agencies are not allowed to recruit the additional staff needed to perform mandated functions.

Given the inadequacies in the allocation of domestic resources for the development of environmental institutions, governments have resorted to foreign donor support. Of the US\$14.5 million spent on environmental protection in Uganda in FY 1992/93, for example, as much as 95 percent was provided by donors.

Unfortunately, this kind of support materializes mainly as technical assistance—consultants, experts and advisors—and equipment, with vehicles, computers, and other office equipment heading the list. Although all major donor agencies recognize and express their commitment to helping recipient countries develop institutional capacities, these assistance packages are frequently handed down without much consultation with these countries about their needs and priorities. This is particularly common in instances where recipient governments prepare "shopping lists" in the form of investment projects as part of their NEAP or NCS. In only a few cases (e.g., Benin and The Gambia), did the NEAP process afford an opportunity for government and donor agencies (through roundtable discussions) to negotiate on the basis of the perceived priority needs of the respective countries. For these reasons, donor contributions to the resource needs of environmental institutions in African countries has re-

cently been under scrutiny by both the donor governments and the recipient countries.

3.3.4 Involvement of Political Leadership

Perhaps the most encouraging manifestation of political support for environmental management in some African countries comes from the personal interest and involvement of the head of state or other senior members of government. In Uganda, Ghana, and The Gambia (before the military take-over), for example, each head of state personally identified himself with the NEAP process by attending launching ceremonies, making public speeches and pronouncements on environmental matters, and, in the case of the former President of The Gambia, assuming the chairmanship of the National Environment Agency. Such high-level involvement not only provides the clout and visibility that the institution requires, it also helps ensure resource flow and, to some extent, compliance with environmental regulations since ministers and ministries are forced to participate in environmental programs if the head of state intervenes.

3.3.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- NEAPs, NCSs, and other strategic planning initiatives are national activities that require the efforts and resources of all parts of the economy. Government policies have a profound and direct influence on the process. Political commitment to the process is therefore crucial. Indeed, the success of the planning process requires efficiency, clarity, and consistency of national purpose—all of which can be best achieved when government and political authorities fully comprehend and embrace the strategies.
- The personal interest and involvement of the head of state or other senior members of government is useful and should be encouraged. However, in view of the unstable political history of most African countries, over-relying on such support can be a mistake.

African leaders are frequently removed from office along with the structures they built during their tenure. In any event, reliance on the image and power to ensure action in environmental management is not necessarily the best approach. Heads of state and ministers can catalyze environmental management, particularly through their support for private and voluntary organizations. But they should not be expected, or called upon, to play the role of a godfather.

- Donor contributions to planning and institutional development will probably remain the main source of resources in many countries. However, for reasons of national pride—which has been hurt in many cases when donors unilaterally suspended aid—and institutional sustainability, reliance on donor funds must be reduced to a reasonable level.

Recommendations

- The strategic planning process must be launched together with a well-designed environmental sensitization and educational program for decision-makers and political leaders. These programs should be short and should allow decision-makers the opportunity to adequately comprehend and appreciate those issues involved in the planning process.
- The national environmental management process must derive its political support and legitimacy from due process of law. The institution(s) established to be responsible for environmental management should derive their authority from parliamentary enactments.
- African governments should make more determined and sustained efforts to rely on domestic sources of funding for national agencies. Options include the creation of a national environmental fund, with contributions coming from government, local industry, individuals, and donors. (See Box 7.) Governments should re-allocate non-development funds (such as military spending) to

the national environment fund. At the same time, local and sub-national institutions (e.g., regional and district governments) assisted by international and local NGOs should be encouraged to take responsibility for funding environmental activities in areas under their jurisdiction through revenue-sharing arrangements.

- African governments should review and rationalize the contribution of international development assistance to their strategic planning processes. Donor agencies and recipient governments must institute regular review meetings—apart from annual negotiation conferences—to discuss the problems related to donor intervention.
- Donors should review their policies, especially with respect to technical assistance, and commit their resources to longer term programs in support of planning activities.

3.4 Issue Four: Local and Sub-national Level Participation

Local participation in strategic planning involves the national activities of NGOs, indigenous institutions, concerned individuals, and others. To date, the preparation of the strategic framework has been the exclusive responsibility of task forces or working groups composed of technical experts. In most of the countries studied, institutions at the region/province, prefecture, commune, district, and community level played a minimal role (if any) in the preparatory process. The exceptions were Lesotho, Malawi, Guinea, and Ethiopia, where the NEAP and NCS processes involved regional and district institutions.

Local participation in environmental management in general has been widely debated in development planning circles and constitutes a major topic of current research (Brinkerhoff and Kulibaba, 1994; Rugumamu, 1994; and Veit, 1994). Many African planners and politicians believe that the term “local participation” has become an empty catchword, one used to create a

Box 7. Financial Provisions for Environmental Management

1. GHANA: Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994

Part III: National Environment Fund

Section 16.(1) There shall be established by this Act a fund to be known as the National Environment Fund.

(2) The sources of money for the Fund shall be:

- (a) grants from government for the protection or improvement of the environment;
- (b) levies collected by the Agency in the performance of its functions;
- (c) donations from the general public, institutions and organizations;
- (d) gifts.

Section 17. Monies from Fund shall be applied for:

- (a) environmental education of the general public;
- (b) research, studies and investigations relating to the functions of the Agency;
- (c) human resource development.

2. UGANDA: Environment Management Bill, 1994

Part XII (1) There is hereby established the National Environment Fund

(2) The sources of Fund shall consist of:

- (a) disbursement from Government;
- (b) all fees charged under this statute;
- (c) any fees prescribed for any service offered by the Authority;
- (d) any fines collected as a result of the breach of the provision of this statute...;
- (e) gifts, donations and other voluntary contributions to the Fund made from any sources.

3. TANZANIA: National Environment Management Act, 1983

Part III: Financial Provisions

Section 13-(1) The funds and resources of the Council shall consist of:

- (a) such sums as may be provided for that purpose to the council by parliament, either by way of grant or loan;
- (b) such donations, grants, bequests and loans as the council may, from time to time receive from any person or organization;
- (c) any sums or property which may vest in the Council under this Act or any other written law or which may vest in the Council in any other manner in the performance of its functions;

(2) The funds and resources of the Council shall be applied for the purposes for which the Council is established under this Act.

laudatory but false impression that local stakeholders have been consulted extensively in decisions affecting the management of the natural resources upon which they depend.

The true involvement of representatives of resource users in the planning process would contribute to equitable and sustainable development by:

- capturing indigenous knowledge, skills, and experience in relation to resource management;
- relating general environmental concerns to specific local contexts;
- developing local institutional capacity to identify needs and implement programs;
- informing local leaders about the planning process and its policy implications; and
- challenging and revising the inaccurate assumptions of policy-makers.

3.4.1 Decentralization Policy and the NEAP Process

Detailed studies of the decentralization policy in the context of the NEAP process in Ghana and Uganda have been conducted (Veit, 1994; 1993). In these and other countries, the devolution of overall management responsibilities to sub-national institutions was part of the national macro-economic policy. Decentralization is viewed as an effective means of investing overall planning and management authority and responsibility with the people who own and utilize resources as well as local institutions. However, this commendable idea—which has been elaborately planned and executed in some countries—has failed to produce the expected results.⁵

In most African countries, the machinery of district and local government administration has been designed to facilitate peoples' participation in development, but most local government administration continues to be controlled by the

central government, which distributes the vital resources. To make amends, the new decentralization policies being adopted in Ghana and Uganda, for example, are therefore geared toward investing local institutions with broader power, including revenue generation, planning and implementation of development activities, and environmental management.

Decentralization policies have had a minimal impact on the environmental strategy process in most countries. At fault are three major constraints: (1) differences in economic policies and resource endowments; (2) lack of access to technical support for development planning and implementation; and (3) differences in socio-cultural needs and ecological realities (Veit, 1994). However, through concerted efforts among the NEAP Secretariat in Uganda and both foreign donors and government ministries and departments, the decentralization of environmental planning and management has become a cornerstone of the NEAP. By building on the government's overall decentralization program, the NEAP Secretariat provides specific guidelines and options for taking environmental management to local governments including planning, by-laws, financial resources, and information. In addition, the NEAP Secretariat is providing project assistance for local implementation. Veit (1994) concludes that not only has the Ugandan NEAP addressed issues of decentralization for environmental management in more detail than its counterparts in other Sub-Saharan African countries have, but the NEAP Secretariat has also taken the lead among government agencies in strengthening government below the district level.

In contrast, the Ghanaian government has embarked upon a decentralization program—devolving 22 central government functions to newly created District Assemblies—described by the World Bank as perhaps Africa's most ambitious (World Bank, 1993). Enthusiasm for the exercise paled, however, when the reassigned responsibilities to local agencies exceeded their financial and institutional capacity. Although the NEAP process was initiated in the same year as the decentralization program, no conscious attempt was

made to devolve NEAP activities to the districts even though some activities were to be implemented there. The EPA did prepare district-level guidelines for environmental management, however, and this document was subsequently used as a training manual for District Assembly personnel throughout the country. Also, EPA's regional offices are structured to provide access to the districts.

Apart from these two countries, all the other national environmental plans refer only generally to local participation and make few specific links to decentralizing planning and implementation. In Botswana, for example, although the district councils have appointed Environmental Liaison Officers (ELOs), the Coordinating Agency has not been able to establish any direct and effective working relationships with the ELOs.

3.4.2 National Ownership of the Planning Process

Strategic planning processes, particularly NEAPs, have become requirements or conditionalities for development assistance credits and grants. To satisfy these requirements, some countries have emphasized the investment programs at the expense of the planning process. Others have rushed to produce their plans to meet external deadlines. For example, Kenya's NEAP was produced in less than a year to meet a hard and fast deadline imposed by donors. Whenever the environmental planning process has been modified or abridged in response to such outside pressures, the degree of national "ownership" of the process, and especially the end product, is compromised commensurately.

If natural resource management strategies are to contribute to national development, the country must feel that it "owns" the planning process. Accordingly, the environmental planning process should be made part and parcel of the overall development planning process, be well entrenched in the country's political and administrative system, and encourage the active participation of grassroots stakeholders. If NEAPs, NCSs, or other strategic plans are to have any lasting influence

and be sustainable, they must be based on in-country initiatives (including local-level participation) and not be imposed from outside.

Although most African NEAPs have been described as "demand-driven" and have been prepared with considerable help from in-country nationals (Falloux and Talbot, 1993), all the case-study countries covered here consider their NEAP as primarily a World Bank/IDA conditionality. In this regard, World Bank Operational Directive 4.02 has created much controversy—and considerable animosity—throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

Since 1987, the World Bank has encouraged borrowing governments to prepare and implement NEAPs and offered support for the exercise. Bank procedures stipulate that the Bank's role in preparing and implementing a NEAP is primarily supportive. In principle, "the government is responsible for Environmental Action Plan (EAP) preparation and implementation; the Bank's role is primarily to provide advice and help arrange technical assistance for the government" (Section 2(b) of the Bank's Operational Directive). In practice, the degree of Bank involvement generally depends on the government's capacity to design and manage the planning process. Normally, it is dominated by experts hired to produce reports, which effectively eliminates input from indigenous groups and individuals. In a few countries, the Bank's participation in planning is seen to have advanced well beyond the provision of advice and technical assistance to include overt pressure and explicit directives on how and when to prepare the plan. As an example, the Bank compelled IDA governments to complete their NEAPs by June 1993. Further difficulties stem from implementation schedules that are contingent upon the availability of funds, a condition also controlled by the Bank and other donors. For these and other reasons, the World Bank has been accused in many NEAP countries of imposing conditions that preclude recipient countries from assuming ownership of the strategic planning process.

Two practical ways of enhancing national ownership of the planning process are: (1) using

multi-disciplinary teams of experts from appropriate agencies within and outside government in the preparatory process; and (2) taking into account the views and experiences of interested parties, including NGOs, obtained through broad public participation. In Ethiopia and Guinea, multi-disciplinary teams of local experts succeeded in internalizing the planning process. The use of external consultants in planning was limited to such esoteric areas as environmental law and economics or environmental information systems. The NEAP process has also encouraged the emergence and growth of indigenous consultancy groups and networks of experts, such as NESDA, which provide specialized services in pollution control, environmental education, institutional development, EIA, etc.

Local participation in planning has been minimal—except in Ethiopia and Lesotho, where plans originated in the districts. In most countries, local groups and individuals did not take part in the working group or task force activities, which include problem identification, synthesis, and draft plan preparation. However, a considerable amount of consultation with local-level groups and individuals took place during the series of country-wide workshops that formed the strategic planning process in most case-study countries. The missing link is therefore local participation in the preparatory process—the entry point at which vital indigenous knowledge and experiences could be useful in identifying and prioritizing problems and issues.

With respect to both local participation and the planning process, it must be pointed out that first-generation NEAPs and NCSs—in Madagascar, Ghana, Mauritius, Lesotho, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—revealed lessons of use in later exercises. For example, convening district workshops helped these countries to avoid conflict by integrating local perspectives into the planning process early on, so Uganda and Tanzania followed suit. And experts from Ghana and Lesotho applied the lessons learned in their countries about institutional arrangements to help their counterparts in The Gambia, Uganda, and Kenya.

3.4.3 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Participation

NGOs are the fastest growing category of private organization in Africa. Each of the countries studied has dozens of active local NGOs that are typically affiliated under the umbrella of a single national-level organization. A few international NGOs also have branches in some African countries. While NGOs in Latin America have been the driving force of a vibrant environmental agenda for over a decade, African NGOs are just beginning to consolidate their ranks. NGOs have tremendous potential for participating in the strategic planning process, especially now that donor agencies are turning to them as agents of local development. An estimated 10 percent of development aid worldwide—US\$8 billion—is now channeled through NGOs. According to a report published in *Newsweek* (August 1, 1994), the United States disburses nearly a quarter of its foreign aid through NGOs because, according to Carol Lancaster, Deputy Administrator of USAID, “not only do they help us implement our programs, they strengthen civil society by working with indigenous groups.” Although Lancaster’s statement refers primarily to U.S. NGOs, it typifies the expanding view that donors, including USAID, now have of NGOs as vehicles of popular participation. As a result, northern NGOs are increasingly collaborating with their developing-country counterparts to improve participation in local activities.

In three countries—The Gambia, Guinea, and Kenya—NGOs actually helped the NEAP. Their comparative advantage is reflected in the plan documents, particularly those sections dealing with decentralization and grassroots participation. In those countries where NGOs were consulted during the process, they were very vocal at the country-wide workshops at which draft plans were discussed, and their views and suggestions were useful in redrafting the final documents. In Tanzania, a separate workshop was organized to air local NGO views of the draft plan.

Most indigenous NGOs have focussed on such community activities as health and education,

small-scale agriculture, food processing, and tree planting. With the support of more established international NGOs, several indigenous groups are now getting into natural resource management (NRM) projects, especially the development of community-based resources management plans to support increased food production, afforestation, and soil-erosion prevention.

Some strategic plans have specific provisions for NGO participation in the implementation process. Kenya, Tanzania, and The Gambia, for example, have allocated funds for community-level activities that are to be channeled through NGOs. While these developments are encouraging and should be promoted, a few issues need to be resolved to enhance the participation of NGOs in strategic planning.

The first relates to the capacity of NGOs vis-a-vis their expected role in the planning process. While there is no argument that indigenous NGOs have valuable perspectives that enable them to play critical roles in this process by criticizing and lobbying governments (*see Box 6*), providing institutional support to the grassroots, and catalyzing local resource management activities, most lack the management skills and technical expertise needed to do this effectively. Most NGOs are simply too small or too new to play more than a minor role in planning and should not be favored at the expense of experienced public institutions.

Second, the traditional image of NGOs as lobby and advocacy groups doing battle with inappropriate or inequitable government policy and action is no longer valid. NGOs are now partners in development that emerge (particularly in rural areas) when government withdraws or fails to meet local needs. Strategic planning processes should therefore provide ample opportunities to define and improve government-NGO coordination, vis-a-vis local participation.

3.4.4 Planning and Implementation Instruments

Local participation in planning presupposes that the necessary policy instruments (e.g., by-

laws and fiscal policies) are or soon will be developed to support it. In most African countries, the legal systems are only now beginning to be overhauled. Legal authority continues to be vested in central government, and local authorities derive their powers through local laws on sanitation, revenue collection, land tenure, etc.

Generally speaking, these legal provisions are inadequate, uncoordinated, and inconsistent with modern planning practices. In all the countries studied, therefore, a major objective of strategic planning is the creation of a framework of national laws and regulations, policy guidelines, and relevant institutional frameworks to support the process. In Kenya, for example, 77 statutes have been identified as relating to environmental management and conservation. These are being harmonized and consolidated under the NEAP.

Decentralization in most countries has also afforded an opportunity to redefine the instruments that the sub-national institutions will use to perform their new roles. In Ghana, for example, the District Assemblies are now empowered to enact by-laws covering all the activities within their jurisdiction. Government fiscal policy-makers have also worked out revenue-sharing mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of funds from the central government to the districts and, hence, to promote self-sufficiency. In general, the empowerment of local institutions has been recognized as critical to their effective participation in the strategic planning process, though it is too early to expect dramatic improvements.

3.4.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- In many African countries, central government's pervasive influence makes it difficult to ensure the compatibility of strategic planning and decentralization. Decentralization as a policy involves several organizational arrangements within government. Where devolution is the adopted approach, responsibility for a range of multi-sectoral operations is generally assigned to decentralized

government agencies. This move makes strategic planning easier in principle, but NEAPs and NCSs have yet to fully utilize the potential of decentralization policies to involve local institutions adequately in the planning process.

- Involving multi-disciplinary expert task forces or working groups in the preparatory process is a good way to ensure their continued participation in implementation later—important since their acumen and expertise can help the strategic planning process adjust to changing local conditions. In many countries, however, these task forces and working groups have been disbanded.
- Current legal structures don't accommodate stakeholders' rights or facilitate the resolution of conflicts between stakeholders and state institutions.

Recommendations

- Decentralization in Africa should be progressive, flexible, and responsive to local circumstances. It should also be accompanied by capacity building, especially in management and accounting skills, policy analysis, and increased general knowledge about government structures and procedures.
- Governments should create opportunities for stakeholder participation and make sure they are used. Practical action should be pursued at different levels to (i) involve all affected groups and stakeholder representatives in designing the process, (ii) incorporate local knowledge and practices into the design and implementation of policies and projects, and (iii) utilize new capacities and coordination mechanisms to monitor plan and program performance at all levels.
- Governments should involve the private sector, (e.g., industry, and commerce,) in all stages of the planning process. Along with grassroots organizations and NGOs, private

sector groups and individuals should be invited to help formulate, implement, and review all phases of strategic planning.

- Local networks and linkages should be strengthened to make them more accountable to those they serve. This will make it easier for local institutions to participate in planning.

3.5 Issue Five: Donor Support

The contribution of donors and lending agencies to development in Africa has been on the increase since the 1960s. Now it is a permanent feature of the operating budgets of many African countries. Grants and loans continue to sustain many Sub-Saharan African economies, and bilateral and multilateral donors provide the bulk of the funding for preparing and implementing strategic planning. Most strategic plans have been introduced by international organizations as conditions of continued funding and so some countries merely translate donor prescriptions into development plans.

In any event, many countries show no signs of being capable of extricating themselves from this dilemma, which they usually blame on the global economic situation, but which also traces back to poor economic management by African governments, especially to expenditures on non-development activities. (Some more appropriate methods of donor support for strategic planning are discussed below.)

3.5.1 Technical Assistance

Ideally, national strategies should be developed and directed with local needs and perceptions in mind, be under local control, and be readily adjustable to changing circumstances. These conditions are most likely to be realized if the process is internalized and most of the experts involved are in-country nationals. In many of the countries, especially Guinea, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Zimbabwe, strong local direction and participation has meant minimum reliance on outside experts.

Traditional technical assistance—whereby donor agencies provide experts to participate in, or in extreme cases, undertake project preparation and implementation—has generated palpable dissatisfaction in many African countries. This is completely understandable. Of the \$12 billion a year that donors spend on “technical assistance,” an estimated 90 percent goes to foreign experts (*Newsweek*, August 1, 1994). This approach does not nurture national talent and can even discourage it.

Donor conceptions of technical assistance are gradually changing, however, partially in recognition of recipient country sentiments. Only a few specialists (usually called “technical experts”) were used in each of the case-study countries, and they functioned primarily as catalysts and facilitators. In their place, nationals were hired to work on the environmental strategy using donor funds.

The German technical aid agency, GTZ, has encouraged German consultancy firms seeking Africa-based contracts with the agency to recruit Africans with the assistance of NESDA. Such initiatives promote capacity development, reduce the use and influence of foreign experts, and help the country internalize the process.

3.5.2 Coordination and Continuity

The priorities of each donor agency are determined by the government of the donor country. These priorities are rarely the same from country to country, various donors commonly operate at cross purposes in a particular country. Indeed, a major weakness in the programs of the donor agencies is a lack of coordination. Coordination is essential to ensure that whatever assistance is available is channeled into areas where it will have the greatest positive impact.

In addition, most donor assistance is time-specific, but is not necessarily synchronous to the strategy’s time frame. When local resources cannot be mobilized to bridge any gaps, lack of continuity can distort or derail planning. Similarly, a donor often decides to fund projects in many sec-

tors without attempting cross-sectoral coordination. Where pick-and-choose funding is the norm, NEAPs and NCSs can disintegrate as essential component projects go unfunded.

Lack of coordination generally results from competition among donor agencies. Coordination can be initiated by one of the agencies; within the UN family, this role was the exclusive responsibility of the UNDP, which has the advantage of being represented in almost every country in Africa. But in recent years, the World Bank (though strictly speaking not a donor agency), has increasingly assumed the role of a coordinator, at least in NEAP countries where it has “harmonized” donor resources with priority projects identified in the investment plans. This approach worked especially well in Ghana and The Gambia, where donors helped each other identify the projects each wanted to support.

At the national level, donor coordination can be organized by either a local government or a non-governmental agency—if it gains the community’s confidence. In Guinea, for example, the local NGO, Guinée Ecologie, successfully coordinated donor contributions in the preparation of the NEAP document. An even more illustrative case is Ethiopia, where government has forced donors to accept the coordinating role of the NCS Secretariat. As a result, donor support for environmental activities in Ethiopia is provided within the framework of the NCS.

In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, there was total lack of donor coordination. The UNDP sponsored an implementation planning framework study, which was later reviewed by UNEP. The IUCN then sponsored an NCS implementation study while the World Bank encouraged the government to pursue a NEAP. Lack of coordination also results in duplication of efforts: as a result, governments spend scarce resources preparing successive planning documents. For example, NEAPs frequently cover the same ground as NCSs or Tropical Forestry Action Plans in part because they have all been prepared in response to different donors’ requirements and priorities.

Lapses in continuity often reflect a lack of donor coordination. Commonly, donor support is "lined up" at the beginning of the planning process. Problems ensue when the process outlasts donor funds. Unless extensions are negotiated, projects and project personnel are abandoned in midstream since few national governments can provide the appropriations needed to continue. In Uganda, the donor funds for the NEAP Secretariat were exhausted in April 1994, a few months before the planning phase of the NEAP process was completed. Fortunately, fresh grants were negotiated, but meanwhile the fate of the staff was left hanging. Continuity lapses in donor support can also result from changes in political circumstances. For example, USAID support for an Agriculture and Natural Resources project in The Gambia was suspended following the military coup in July 1994.

3.5.3 Donor Conditionalities

Most donor and lending agencies impose conditionalities, whether explicit or implicit, in grant and loan agreements. Recently, donors have tended to link grants and credits to economic liberalization, political pluralism, and sustainable development. Most protectionist and state-led economic systems have not promoted development on a sustained basis, and these conditionalities have contributed to a move in many African countries away from planned socialist economies with large subsidies and protectionist policies and toward open-market systems.

Although conditionalities come under attack, they have brought about much-needed policy changes in many African countries. On the one hand, they help promote rational political, economic, and ecological policies. (The World Bank's intention in introducing environmental planning as a prerequisite for IDA and IBRD loans is expressed in its Operational Directive 4.02.) On the other hand, overly rigid deadlines, specifications of project outputs, and reporting schedules are not always in the interest of the recipient countries.

Although the World Bank and IMF conditionalities pushed many African governments to

change, local citizens' groups have also recognized the failure of state-led development strategies and advocated reforms on their own. As a result, in many African countries, there are now effective internal constituencies for reform.

3.5.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- Donor grants and credit facilities have become a major factor in promoting and supporting national strategic planning processes. Donor funds and credits have been used in all the case-study countries in formulating and implementing these plans. This trend is likely to continue in spite of the shortcomings identified with this kind of funding.
- Donor support in particular, and international cooperation in general, is essential in developing the capacity for environmental management. But mutual understanding and agreement between donors and recipient countries with respect to priorities and policies is critical.
- A shift is needed in donor policy to accommodate changing circumstances and requirements in recipient countries. In particular, donors must appreciate African norms and values, culture, and heritage as major influences on definition and management of the environment.
- Lack of continuity and uncertainty associated with external funding can be an overwhelming constraint in relying on such funds for national programs. Grants and loans tied to project outputs, for example, do not respect the planning process.

Recommendations

- Donor intervention in strategic planning should not be considered permanent, but should instead be geared toward supporting priority development activities. Donor support should create an environment that

will discourage a “brain drain” from recipient countries.

- The principles of collaboration and coordination between and among donors must be re-evaluated with the need for flexibility in relations with African countries in mind.
- The arrangement between the donors and the recipient central governments should make more explicit provisions for true stakeholder participation in all stages of the project cycle through local consultations and information dissemination. More openness in funding is needed, among both donors and recipient governments.
- Donors must be prepared to support long-term projects that may not produce immediate results while recipient countries should not consider such investments a permanent source of budgetary support. African governments should pursue economic reform to improve national economic performance and reduce their dependence on donor funds.

3.6 Issue Six: Capacity Development

A shortage or lack of trained manpower and requisite material and financial resources persistently constrain efficient environmental management in African countries. As a result, the institutional development components of strategic plans are often designed to build working capacity within the institutions and their staffs.

In the context of environmental management, capacity development answers a society’s need to identify and solve its environmental problems. It includes training and educating, as well as organizational and institutional development. It is aimed at abilities in different areas and at different levels and is highly dependent on prevailing political, social, and economic conditions. Capacity needs to be built in the corporate sector, as well as among NGOs and communities.

Wide-ranging activities can be used to strengthen environmental institutions. These include the following (OECD, 1994):

- **Training and human resources development**—The most common manifestation of capacity development in Africa, this includes academic programs in higher institutions, short-term (refresher) courses, and on-the-job training.
- **Definition of institutional mandates**—If the roles and responsibilities of central governmental ministries, central and local government administrative bodies, and government and NGOs and the private sector are clarified, all stakeholders can better understand and fulfill their respective environmental and social responsibilities.
- **Improvement in internal management systems**—This includes making institutional organizational structure, budgeting and auditing systems, and internal communications systems more accountable and “transparent.”
- **Definition of organizational objectives**—Linkages between strategic goals and activities, as well as institutional goals, must be clearly defined, along with methods for integrating the various environmental, social, and economic perspectives and objectives.
- **Allocation of resources**—Resource allocation on the basis of roles and priorities is crucial to ensure institutional efficiency.

Given the limited resources available in most African countries, the effectiveness of these activities can be best ensured by a judicious combination of measures designed to achieve cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and progress. The overriding concern, however, should be good performance—the ultimate goal of capacity building.

In many countries, capacity development has been viewed narrowly as formal education. Under the traditional narrow approach, many

other elements that are vital to a wide-ranging, multi-sectoral activity, such as environmental management, are neglected. Even within the international community, only recently—through the CAPACITY 21 program—has it been given serious attention outside the formal educational system. From now on, capacity development should be viewed as an ongoing dynamic process that gradually increases an agency's or organization's ability to play an influential role in a changing institutional environment.

During the design stage of the strategic planning process, the technical experts in each of the case-study countries became aware of the lack of expertise in such key areas as management, leadership skills, resource mobilization, negotiation skills, advocacy, financial accounting, and evaluation and monitoring. While some of these skills can be easily acquired through short-term formal training, others require much more extensive training and hands-on experience, and it is generally counterproductive to separate formal from informal learning.

Capacity-building activities figure prominently in the action plans of most of the case-study countries. Part of institutional development programs, these activities are biased toward providing technical expertise. In Ghana and The Gambia, where NEAP implementation is under way, however, considerable attention has been given to leadership and management training in the lead agencies and the other implementing institutions. Private sector institutions in Ghana provide regular courses in management and conflict resolution. The GERMP has also provided leadership and management training for personnel in the apex institution and its collaborating agencies.

One way of ensuring that critical skills that cannot be found in-country (e.g., negotiation and conflict resolution skills) are easily and cheaply acquired is to enter into "twinning arrangements" with outside institutions capable of providing the necessary training. Instead of the conventional practice of sending personnel from African countries for academic training in foreign

institutions, operational arrangements between African institutions and relevant foreign counterparts ensure prolonged contact between trainers and trainees and between the institutions as well. In one successful twinning arrangement between Ghanaian and United Kingdom institutions, for instance, leadership and management skills and expertise in Environmental Impact Assessment techniques and procedures were shared.

3.6.1 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- A major weakness of institutional arrangements for environmental management in Africa is that of capacity. Neither the institutions responsible for managing the planning process nor the members of government, political leaders, and civil society firmly grasp (and thus effectively support and participate in) the planning process.
- Capacity development activities in most African countries are presently designed with a narrow focus on sectoral needs, which helps entrench sectoral thinking, even among the staff of coordinating institutions. Capacity-development programs should therefore provide opportunities to reduce or eliminate sectoral thinking and action.
- Capacity development programs should not be limited to the privileged elites in national institutions. Indeed, arrangements for bringing the facilities to the attention and benefit of the broad masses of stakeholders whose personal perceptions, experiences, attitudes, and choices constitute the decisive factors in national level efforts to manage the environment are vital to success.

Recommendations

- Government should build national capacity by establishing a functional institutional network of all agencies involved in planning. Support should be provided to the task forces and working groups to establish

functional relationships among the multi-sectoral programs they represent.

- Capacity-development training should be extended to embrace those critical skills that will facilitate integrated management and should involve decision-makers through seminars and shorter courses.

- Pilot projects should be designed and implemented to demonstrate sound environmental management and help build local capacity. The pilot projects should be designed in consultation with local communities so as to reflect their priorities and experiences, strengthen indigenous environmental expertise, and raise public awareness.

Box 8. Key Constraints in Designing Institutional Mechanisms for Environmental Management in Africa

Although their manifestations often assume different forms, the six key issues of institutional arrangements identified in the case studies (and discussed above) present six common and prevalent constraints found in institutional structures throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

1. The institutional capacities of national governments for environmental policy formulation and management are inadequate.
2. To date, legal regulations have been used as the main tools of environmental management, and these are usually limited to single sectors, such as agriculture, industry, water resources, urban sanitation. Since they are applied primarily to generate revenue, they often encourage corruption. Cross-sectoral environmental policy formulation and implementation is generally restricted to central government institutions, which typically lack implementation and control capacities.
3. Central government institutions are generally insensitive to the perspectives and potential of sub-national and local-level institutions and communities, including non-governmental organizations and informal groups.
4. Environmental problems have traditionally been handled on a piecemeal, reactive, or curative basis, using sectoral approaches.
5. Environmental awareness in general and an understanding of national policies of environmental management in particular are inordinately low due to lack of information and the low level of education of the general public.
6. The inadequacies of institutional arrangements are exacerbated by serious shortages of skilled manpower and experienced staff, an absence of adequate training facilities, insufficient staff incentives and low pay, and counterproductive government policies and legislation. As the country studies indicate, government policies often hamper institutional development by undermining morale and management capacities.
7. The policies of donor agencies inadvertently hinder or discourage local institutional development. Donor funds are provided to support specific sectoral projects over a limited time. Given this restriction, cross-fertilization among institutions working in other sectors is limited.
8. The role of technical assistance in bilateral and multilateral funding has also had adverse effects on institutional development. Expatriate "technical experts" around only for the duration of the project, cannot make any significant capacity-building contributions.

- To help ensure the success of local capacity development, adequate and relevant training should be provided for extension agents who work with local communities.
- Resources for program implementation should be allocated for strengthening the delivery capacities of formal and informal training institutions. Cost-effective links, such as twinning arrangements, should be established between national and foreign institutions.
- Policy analysis and research skills training needs to be provided in the appropriate institutions.

Given these widespread and debilitating constraints facing environmental management (*see Box 8*), new initiatives for comprehensive approaches are clearly required. This need is being addressed in strategic planning processes currently under way in many African countries. Establishing and strengthening national institutional capabilities for environmental management, however, is a lengthy, complex, and expensive process of experimentation and adaptation.

In each of the strategic planning processes covered in this report, attempts were made early in the process to address institutional arrangements and capacity building. Some proved successful in helping to overcome historical constraints while others failed. But both successes and failures point the way toward more effective solutions and initiatives, as the next section shows.

Notes

1. Principle Seven of the Stockholm Declaration encouraged governments to assign appropri-

ate national-level institutions with the task of planning, managing, and controlling the environmental resources of their states so as to enhance environmental quality.

2. In Ghana, for example, the government approved the NEAP and the recommended institutional arrangements in 1992. However, in 1993, just as implementation of the NEAP took off, a new government created a Ministry of Environment. The ensuing confusion over mandates and responsibilities delayed implementation for about one year.

3. The EPC of Ghana is structured into major operational areas called *networks*. These *networks* deal respectively with technical services, monitoring and assessment, inter-sectoral issues and administration, and human resource development. The Tanzania NEMC is divided into Directorates as follows: natural resources, pollution prevention and control, environmental education, research and documentation, and administration and finance.

4. The land allocation issue subsequently became a major national debate as other concerned groups joined the protest. The Minister of National Resources and Environment was eventually forced to make a public statement on the issue denying the accusations.

5. The best example is found in Ghana where in 1988 the government embarked upon an extensive program of decentralization whereby 22 central government ministerial or departmental functions were devolved to district assemblies. Implementation of the policy, however, has not matched the enthusiasm and expectations mainly because the reassignment of responsibilities has exceeded the financial and institutional capacity of the district assemblies.

4. Implementing Environmental Management Strategy Plans in Africa—An Agenda

The preceding discussion of institutional mechanisms for environmental management in Sub-Saharan Africa mainly reflects the experiences of the first (or formulation) phase of strategic planning. Although NEAPs were introduced in the late 1980s, only five African nations have begun implementing the related investment programs: Madagascar, Ghana, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, and Mauritius. (A few countries have ended planning with the completion of a written document, emphasizing the investment plan at the expense of the planning process.)

Several caveats and imperatives emerge from “first generation” environmental strategies in Africa, as well as from implementation strategies designed for “green plans” elsewhere. First, it bears repeating that the success of an environmental management strategy ought to be judged by the improvements it makes in environmental quality and other targeted outputs. Far too many excellent development plans gather dust on office shelves because they could not attract the required funding. With the support of donor and lending agencies, governments should therefore commit to implementing highly promising environmental management strategies and to addressing key implementation issues explicitly during strategy formulation.

Second, overly ambitious targets may not be achieved. Finding funds to cover a long shopping list of projects may prove impossible.

Third, much can be achieved without foreign funds, especially through realistic internal policies, resource allocation, and priority setting.

Fourth, successful implementation depends on the cooperation of other organizations (e.g., government ministries and departments, private sector groups, NGOs, and local institutions). If the lead agency doesn’t mobilize the cooperation of these partners, no action is likely.

Fifth, current political support for the planning process has resulted primarily from international pressure, especially from UNCED and the World Bank conditionalities. This support may wane with the emergence of other more pressing national and international issues. In two pioneering NEAP countries—Madagascar and Ghana—political and economic changes have hindered implementation of the NEAPs.

An Implementation Agenda based on clearly defined priorities should be designed during the planning process. It should focus on providing support programs that enhance the environmental management program’s prospects of success through capacity building and institutional development. Support programs should address cross-sectoral issues and highlight programs and projects that demand immediate action to ensure success early in the planning process. These include institutional and legal framework, capacity development, standard setting, and monitoring mechanisms. Six specific goals deserve emphasis:

1. *Ensure that a credible central coordinating institution is in place.* This institution should have a clearly enumerated legal basis, well-defined functions and responsibilities, conspicuous and broad-based political backing, and adequate human and financial resources.
2. *Build bridges with other organizations.* Key here are creating political support for the planning process, the decentralization of authority, NGO participation, and donor coordination in funding. Further, all stakeholders must be involved in the preparatory phase of the planning process.
3. *Meet the training needs required for implementation.* A training needs assessment for the lead agency as well as the collaborating institutions should be carried out as one of the first implementation activities. Certain key skills such as management, leadership, negotiation, and conflict resolution must be provided from the very start, and training programs—including short-term (one-day) briefing sessions for decision-makers, government ministers, and elected representatives—in local and foreign institutions should be organized to show sectoral agencies how to incorporate environmental concerns into their planning and implementation processes. In general, human resources development should be linked to employee retention mechanisms within the public sector, perhaps through the civil service reform programs currently under way in most African countries.
4. *Adopt innovative approaches in the use of policy instruments* with which the NEAP process has been identified. The structural adjustment programs in most African countries have created suitable policy frameworks for implementing environmental management programs and projects, but generating financial support for these programs on a long-term basis remains a concern. Most African countries are signatories to international conventions on biodiversity, climate change, drought, and desertification which provide their own mechanisms for funding. In Ghana, Madagascar, and The Gambia, these instruments have been used effectively to obtain access to funds from the Global Environment Facility. Other countries have utilized the “debt-for-nature-swap” mechanism. In theory, tax policies and other economic instruments are additional revenue generators in African countries, though they are difficult to apply effectively to environmental management. Finally, besides international conventions, governments can use NEAPs to benefit from IDA credits.
5. *Monitoring the performance of the planning and implementation process, including policies, programs and individual project monitoring.* An effective information management system—one that is comprehensive but not excessively complex and is lodged at the appropriate institutional and national levels—is vital, as is determining acceptable indicators against which data emerging from the implementation process can be compared. The general state of the environment should be assessed regularly and State of the Environment Reports should be produced. The results of monitoring should be fed back into the planning process to improve implementation and ensure the quality of the project outputs.
6. *Promote public awareness and education.* Since the successful implementation of strategic plans will depend largely upon the understanding and cooperation of the general public, several steps should be taken to ensure that the public understands the implications of all policies and programs contained in the plan. Awareness programs (such as local-level workshops and seminars) for grassroots populations should be organized as part of the preparatory activities. Special briefing sessions must be organized for political leaders and other government decision-makers. Environmental sciences should be incorporated into school curricula and teachers trained to teach them. Finally, the

non-formal education sector should be strengthened to expose largely illiterate populations to the principles of environmental management. Such programs and activities should be built upon existing traditional knowledge, beliefs, and practices.

These activities should guide plan implementation, though priorities will vary by country. Environmental planning processes and their associated institutional frameworks provide

unique opportunities for coordinating national policies and actions with donor contributions. As more countries begin implementing their environmental plans or strategies, coordination will be increasingly key to environmental management. The success of the planning process will largely determine the success of the implementation. In other words, in this process the health, welfare, and well-being of millions of local-level resource users throughout Sub-Saharan Africa are at stake.

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Annex I: Summary of the Country Study Reports

Annex I A

BOTSWANA NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY (BNCS)

1. **The BNCS process** was commissioned in 1985 by the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (MLGL) to provide an overall framework for coordinating and administering programs, projects, and policy instruments for improving the sustainable use of the country's national resources. Unlike the national development plans, the BNCS was primarily designed to achieve specific economic, social, and ecological objectives within the context of the overall national development strategy.

The framework proposed by the BNCS involves the adoption of a combination of approaches supported by the continued intervention of the central government in the use and management of natural resources. These include:

- continuation of the interventionist approach under which a combination of laws, price incentives, and fiscal reliefs determine land use;
 - resource allocation based on "reasonable rationing" and zonation; and
 - integrated use and management of resources.
2. **Institutional Arrangements:** Responsibility for the administration of environmental matters

was shared by several line ministries and departments, statutory boards, regional, district, and village-level organizations, and local people. The traditional political institutional arrangement revolved around the king whose power was exercised through a hierarchy of lower chiefs. This system of decentralized power invariably had a positive impact on the use of natural resources.

In addition to—and in spite of—the existing structure cited above, the BNCS recommended the establishment of new institutions to coordinate the implementation of the NCS Action Program. The government expressed its intention to: (1) strengthen existing organizations, and (2) create new administrative structures.

The NCS Advisory Board was established in 1992. Chaired by the Minister of Local Government and Lands, the Board reports to Cabinet through the Minister. Board members include permanent secretaries, senior representatives of all relevant sectoral and other ministries, local authorities, NGOs, and representatives from the academic and private sectors. The Board has statutory advisory powers with each ministry exercising its own executive powers. The main responsibility of the Board is to coordinate the implementation of the NCS.

A parallel measure was the establishment of the NCS *Coordinating Agency*, the secretariat and implementing organ of the Board. The agency is to coordinate, initiate, and implement policies, projects, and programs with inputs from the line ministries and other organizations such as NGOs. Like the Board it supports, the Agency was temporarily located in the MLGL; a permanent institutional home is being sought.

The government has also designated Environmental Liaison Officers (ELO) within each central and local-level ministry or department. ELOs are expected to ensure that their respective organizations comply with the policies and programs designed by the NCS. ELOs have also been appointed at the District Council level where they are to provide the necessary linkages between implementing agencies.

Botswana's NCS Process: Key Issues

- Conflict between National Development Plan (NDP) and NCS goals. The NDP is a

national plan, not simply a blueprint for government actions or a financial budget. As such, it highlights the roles of people, the private sector, and NGOs. Meanwhile, the NCS deals with specific problem areas. Its solution packages are in the form of projects.

- NCS Coordinating Agency, victim of circumstances? The Board and its Agency have paid inordinate attention to the most intractable national problem (overstocking/overgrazing), which receives only lukewarm government commitment. As a result of this preoccupation, both the Agency and the Board have shortchanged other problem areas where they could have made an impact.
- Location and clout of the NCS Coordinating Agency—the search is still in progress for a “suitable” location, one which will improve its image and enhance its performance.

Annex I B

THE ETHIOPIA NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY (NCS)

1. **The NCS Process:** The initial planning phase of the NCS was completed in May 1989. The second phase, the policy-making phase, was launched in May 1990 at a national conference. The NCS takes a “holistic view of the natural, human-made and cultural resources and their use and abuse. It seeks to integrate existing and future central and regional government planning in all sectors that impinge on the natural and human-made environments”. The NCS formulation process was to have been undertaken in three stages:

- formulation of regional strategies, action plans, and investment programs;
- formulation of national, sectoral policy strategies, action plans, and investment programs; and;
- formulation of cross-sectoral policies, strategies, and institutional/legal frameworks.

This schedule, however, could not be adhered to due to adverse political and economic circumstances. The final NCS was therefore based on existing sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies.

2. **Institutional Framework for the NCS Process:** The NCS process was initiated by the NCS Secretariat under the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. The Secretariat was later assigned to the newly-created Ministry of Natural Resource Development and Environmental Protection (1993). The NCS Secretariat established inter-sectoral Regional Conservation Strategy Steering Committees and Zonal Task Forces at the regional and zonal levels whenever possible. It was decided that those bodies charged with coordination at the various levels (national, regional, and local) should be representative of the concerned line ministries and bureaus. A national conference was held in May

1994 to discuss the final draft of the NCS documents. It proposed the following: (1) devolution of responsibility to the regions and lower levels of administration, (2) institutional development at national and regional levels, (3) harmonization of existing legislation and development of an information system, and (4) harmonization of the NCS and Ethiopia Forestry Action Plans documents. A National Environmental Protection Authority (NEPA) was subsequently established in the office of the Prime Minister to move the process forward.

3. Major Issues Associated with the Ethiopian NCS Process

- The institutional and cultural context is especially inimical to a participatory, bottom-up approach. The NCS was prepared under difficult circumstances including a draining civil war, the formation of a new national government, the redrawing of regional boundaries along ethnic lines, the decentralization of authority to new regions, the dislocation and movement of government personnel, and the limited technical capacity available outside Addis Ababa.
- The NCS Process: despite the delays in carrying out the work at the regional and zonal levels, the secretariat was pressured into completing the NCS before any of the regions were able to complete their strategies.
- A biased view of peasant agriculture: The negative views of peasant agriculture held by task force members prevented them from obtaining much information about the strengths of indigenous resource management practices.
- Political commitment: the present government demonstrates clear commitment to addressing agricultural and environmental

issues and peasant welfare. After extensive discussion and debate at the community level, new programs have been initiated. It remains to be seen, however, how long these will last.

- Institutional Arrangements: placing the NEPA in the Prime Minister's office presents both assets and liabilities.

- Donor Commitment and Coordination: donor support for NCS implementation appears to be available for both central and regional activities, but does not ensure cross-sectoral coordination and the balancing of objectives.

Annex I C

THE GAMBIA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN (GEAP)

1. **The GEAP Formulation Process** was initiated in February 1991 with a Consultative Technical Workshop convened in Banjul to identify and recommend broad national as well as specific sectoral environmental policies. Representation at the workshop included government institutions, NGOs, the private sector, and donor representatives. Follow-up activities resulted in the formulation of the first GEAP draft. It was reviewed in a second workshop in February 1992. The final draft of the GEAP was published in May 1992 and approved by Cabinet two months later.

2. **Issues addressed by GEAP:** Three major programs were developed in the GEAP:

- (i) The NRM Program—to assist in the development and implementation of improved land and NRM practices, manage coastal and fresh water resources, develop government/NGO partnership for NRM, manage NRM data collection and use, and develop local integrated management plans.
- (ii) The Environmental Health Program—centers around waste management, industrial and chemical pollution, and community health programs.
- (iii) The Energy Program—to introduce new and renewable sources of energy to replace fuelwood, and to further the development of community forestry programs.

The GEAP also identified four implementation strategies:

- institutional framework development: dealing with inter-sectoral coordination, NGO coordination, institutional structures for environmental planning legislation, and the enforcement of regulations;

- fiscal measures to improve environmental protection;
- public awareness activities including extension and education, media campaigns, and programs for women; and
- environmental information management.

3. **Institutional Framework under the GEAP:**

The coordination role was initially assigned to the Environment Unit (EU) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), but the need to invest coordinating functions in an institution which is independent of any single ministry was recognized. A new institution, the National Environment Agency (NEA) was subsequently created in August 1993, and attached to the Office of the President. A new National Environment Management Act (1994), has been published to replace the 1987 Act. The new Act provides for a reconstituted National Environment Management Council (NEMC) to be chaired by the President and composed of representatives of the Ministries of Natural Resources, Agriculture, Local Government and Lands, and Health and Social Welfare. The NEA is responsible for planning, coordinating, monitoring, setting standards, and preparing guidelines for managing the environment.

The NEA is headed by an Executive Director who is assisted by a Director and three departmental coordinators responsible for Technical Services Network, Inter-Sectoral Network, and Administration and Finance. The network coordinators manage the activities of those experts in charge of specialized areas such as policy, planning and legislation, EIA, education, and environmental quality.

4. **Issues associated with the GEAP Institutional Framework include:**

- **Coordination:** a major problem facing the NEA is the difficulty of ensuring that all the concerned parties appreciate their respective roles and are capable and willing to perform their roles.
- **Capacity development:** NEA responsibility outweighs its present capacity to meet its goals, especially in terms of human and financial resources.
- **Local-level action and decentralization:** involves participation in the GEAP at the local and community levels, including participation by NGOs, whose roles are reflected in the plan. The government's present decentralization policy, which is rather vague, is nevertheless designed to empower local-

level institutions to operate as agents of change.

5. **Lessons Learned from GEAP Process:**

- Participation, consensus building, and ownership are important for the process;
- Institutional responsibilities and relationships need to be clearly defined for efficient performance;
- The sustained political support of stakeholders at the ministerial and departmental levels is very desirable;
- Donor participation is valuable, but overly prescriptive.

Annex I D

GHANA NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

1. The NEAP Process

Ghana's NEAP process was inaugurated in 1988 in response to several years of economic recovery and structural adjustment programs. NEAP preparation was influenced first and foremost by the need to respond to a World Bank request which called for identifying the environmental impacts of the various resource management processes and defining a set of policy actions, related investments, and legal and institutional strengthening activities which would make the national development strategy more sustainable environmentally.

NEAP coordination was undertaken by the Environmental Protection Council (EPC) (now the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)), following a formal request by the government. Seven working groups whose membership was drawn from ministries and departments, university and research institutions, NGOs, and the private sector were established. Each group identified and defined a specific issue of national concern and recommended policy and legislative actions, strategies, and activities required to address that issue. Financial and material assistance for the preparatory activities was provided by the World Bank, USAID, and ODA.

The working groups' reports, dealing with agriculture and forestry, water, manufacturing, hazardous chemicals and mining, human settlements, education and awareness, and policy, legislation and institutional framework were collated to produce a draft plan which was then discussed at a national conference. The final NEAP document, embracing the national policy, legislation, institutional framework, and investment program was adopted by the government on June 13, 1991. To implement the investment program, the Ghana Environmental Resource Management Project (GERMP) was designed and negotiated with donors in 1992.

2. Institutional Arrangements

The institutional capacity of the EPC and its location in the administrative hierarchy of government was of concern during the NEAP process. There was a consensus that the Council (as constituted at the time), needed to be strengthened, equipped, and elevated above its existing location if it were to effectively perform its new coordination role. It was therefore proposed to make the governing body of the EPC directly responsible to the office of the Head of Government, and to streamline its membership. The formation of a Technical Secretariat within the Council was also recommended. The government subsequently created a line Ministry for the Environment to supervise the Council which had been redesignated *the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*. The Environmental Protection Agency, 1994 (Act 490) has recently been passed to further some of the main recommendations of the NEAP.

3. Issues Arising out of the Ghana NEAP

- Need for policy dialogue concerning the environment and natural resources management. This was reinforced by the deliberations of the various working groups.
- Political support for the process: environmental management involves policy formulation, planning, implementation, and monitoring, and the development of actions and programs. At each stage, the process involves decisions made at the highest level of government.
- Widespread environmental awareness and public participation are pre-requisites for a successful NEAP process.
- The NEAP process is an effective diagnostic tool.

- International cooperation is required in addressing environmental and natural resource management problems.

Annex I E

MALI - THE NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (PNLCD)

1. **The PNLCD Process** was commissioned in 1985 by the Ministry of Livestock and Natural Resources (MRNE) and was finalized in May 1987. The initial phase of the preparation of the PNLCD consisted of a diagnosis of Mali's natural resources problems as they affect production and the ecology in each of the country's seven agro-ecological zones. The broad strategy of the PNLCD called for a "global approach to the rational utilization of natural resources, permitting a more productive exploitation of the country's natural resources and at the same time protecting the environment within a national plan, with the active participation of the population." The PNLCD elaborated eight priority sub-programs including:

- execution of a national master plan for land management;
- establishment of a "green belt" as a protection against desertification;
- development and implementation of a program for sensitizing, educating, and training the population;
- re-orientation of ongoing development programs;
- promotion of more efficient use of fuel-wood; and
- provision of support measures, including a review of the legal framework, a delineation of the institutional framework, and the enumeration of national and local financial measures and reforms necessary for the decentralization of NRM.

2. **Institutional Framework:** Donors insisted on the creation of a special unit to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the execution of the PNLCD. Until then, the government had given

only cursory consideration to an institutional framework for the PNLCD. In response to the donors, the MRNE was to be reorganized and a high-level *Conseil du PNLCD* (PNLCD Supervisory Council) composed of senior staff of key ministries was to be created in the Prime Minister's office. But the Conseil never became operational in part because of significant opposition to the concept of a high-level "Council", particularly from the MRNE. Thus, Mali's first attempt at inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial collaboration and coordination in the natural resource sector was aborted.

As an alternative, the MRNE proposal to establish a *Cellule Provisoire de Suivi, d'Evaluation et de Planification des Action du Programme National de Lutte Contre la Désertification (CSEP/PNLCD)* was accepted in 1989. The CSEP was attached to the office of the Minister for MRNE and was responsible for the implementation of the entire PNLCD program. The CSEP was reorganized in 1993 as a permanent unit—the Cellule Suivi Evaluation—and located in a new Ministry of Rural Development and Environment.

3. Institutional Issues Related to the PNLCD:

- Lack of an early blueprint of an institutional framework for planning purposes: the PNLCD focussed on purely technical issues and there was no clear idea how the sub-programs would be implemented. The 1989 decree creating the CSEP/PNLCD did not detail the unit's mandate, task description, or working relationships.
- Lack of broad national consensus on the need for a PNLCD: The PNLCD's objectives were important, ambitious, national in scope, and strongly promoted by the MRNE. But its commitment to the concept was not shared by all interested agencies.

In addition, many issues were not publicly discussed.

- Deficiency in collaborative analysis and planning: the determination of PNLCD objectives and the means to attain them was undertaken by a relatively small number of technicians from MRNE.
- Lack of credibility: the credibility of the CSEP

was compromised from the very beginning because of its “provisional” character.

- Absence of legal basis for the CSEP: the government did not accord the CSEP legal status because of its provisional character.
- Confusion over inter-organizational roles and relationships, especially among ministries.

Annex I F

TANZANIA NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. **Strategy Planning Process:** The government of Tanzania began to formulate a National Conservation Strategy (NCS) in 1988. In the aftermath of UNCED (1992), the NCS process was renamed the NCS for Sustainable Development (NCSSD).

The National Environment Management Council (NEMC) was established by an Act of Parliament (No. 19 of 1983) and made responsible for coordinating the NCS process. Two NCS preparatory workshops were held in November 1990 and April 1992. The first identified the country's major environmental problems and the second prescribed solutions. The NCS Secretariat of the NEMC synthesized the workshop documents and recommendations into an NCSSD document. An Environmental Action Plan (EAP) was later formulated and added on to the NCSSD as "a priority listing of problems in a number of program areas." The whole process occurred in a national environmental policy vacuum. A comprehensive national environmental policy was only drafted in 1994 by the newly created Division of Environment of the Ministry of Tourism, Natural Resources and Environment (MTNRE). The revised NCSSD document was approved by the ministerial steering committee in February 1994.

2. **Institutional Framework:** About 100 government ministries and departments, research institutions, NGOs, communities organizations, and a host of individuals are involved in the management of Tanzania's natural resources. At the time that the NEMC was established, there was no line ministry with direct responsibility for the environment. The MTNRE was created in 1990 and the Division of Environment in 1992. Other relevant institutions include the National Land Use Planning Commission (1984) and the Planning Commission

(1989). There have been increasing concerns about the respective roles of these institutions due to their overlapping roles and mandates.

3. **Issues Concerning the NCSSD Process:**

- **Awareness and political support:** there is a modest, yet significant and growing awareness of environmental issues among the literate public. This is reflected in, among other things, press reports on the environment, the growth of NGOs, and parliamentary debates on environmental issues.
- **Institutional capacity and viability:** the NEMC is well structured and has trained a number of experts. Although it receives a good deal of technical and financial support from bilateral donors, there is concern about its ability to coordinate decision-making and policy development among other concerned ministries. The Division of Environment has no governing statute but its Director has become the dominant figure in policy and planning matters. As a result, the NEMC and the DE have been able to develop and set in motion most of the essential elements of a functional administrative machinery for environmental management.
- **Unintended impacts of international initiatives:** International initiatives such as the NCS, NEAP, and UNCED/Agenda 21 have contributed to the advancement of environmental policy-making, planning, and decision-making in Tanzania. Donors have been forthcoming with both technical assistance and financial support. However, the multiplicity of donor agendas and the inadequate coordination of these initiatives have unwittingly created some new environmental management problems.

Annex I G

UGANDA NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

1. **Uganda's NEAP Process** was initiated in 1990, following a number of environmental assessment studies, discussions, and negotiations with bilateral donors and the World Bank. The scope of work was elaborated in 1991 and a NEAP Secretariat was established within the Department of Environment Protection (DEP) of the Ministry of Water, Energy, Minerals and Environment Protection (MWEMEP). Nine task forces, each comprised of professionals from government, university and research institutions, NGOs, and the private sector were launched in November 1991. Issue and topic papers were prepared on land and resource tenure, land use policy, land use planning, environmental management and information systems, environmental assessment, education, human resources development, biodiversity, and human settlements, then discussed in regional and district workshops. All told, the preparatory process took about two years.

2. **Institutional Framework:** The Ministry of Environment Protection was created in 1986 and given a broad mandate for environmental management. But poor performance resulted in its being absorbed into an expanded MWE-MEP in 1989, where it became the DEP. In 1993, the MWEMEP was reconstituted into the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the DEP became the Directorate of Environment.

A new Environment Management Bill (1994) seeks to give legal backing to NEAP institutional arrangements by creating a National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to serve as the "principal agency in Uganda for the management of the environment and shall coordinate the activities of the Government in the field of the environment." The NEAP Secretariat also recommended that NEMA be established under the MNR. This confusing state of affairs was probably influenced by prevailing political conditions.

It has been proposed that NEMA have a governing body—to be known as the Policy Committee on the Environment (PCE)—comprised of 17 government ministers and chaired by the Prime Minister and charged with approving and communicating all NEMA proposals and reports to Cabinet. If so constituted, the PCE will provide high-level political support, visibility, and policy guidance. It is doubtful, however, if this unwieldy "committee of ministers" will be able to effectively perform its expected oversight functions. In order to develop and foster effective operational links with ministries and other relevant lower-level implementing agencies, the establishment of a small Environmental Liaison Unit (ELU) within each line ministry has been proposed. The decentralization of environmental planning and management is also an important component of the Uganda NEAP.

3. Issues Relating to the Uganda NEAP

- **Perceptions of institutional arrangements:** Strategies for environment and natural resource management are generally perceived as being mere "add-on" considerations in overall development planning. This disparaging view has influenced the placement of environmental institutions in sectoral ministries.
- **Coordination role of NEMA:** The key role of NEMA is the coordination of all government activities in the environmental field. Such cross-sectoral roles have always been misinterpreted by implementing agencies.
- **Financial sustainability of NEMA:** Funding for NEMA activities is expected to come from government contributions, self-generated revenue, and donor support. These sources, however, are not generally reliable. A proposed National Environment Fund has no brighter prospects.

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