

The Role of NGOs in the Reform on Natural Resources Management Policy in Burkina Faso

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This discussion paper is prepared by Center staff and collaborators. WRI takes responsibility for choosing the topic and guaranteeing authors and researchers freedom of inquiry. Unless otherwise stated, all the interpretations and findings are those of the authors.

FOREWORD

Over the last years, the WRI centre for international development and the environment took part in various activities related to the role of the community of NGOs and the private sector in formulating environmental policies in Africa.

Two of its most recent initiatives resulted in a report on the role of USAID in supporting African NGOs towards policy reform in the natural resource sector, and in an evaluation of the capacities of Cameroonian NGOs in participating in policy reforms.

The findings of both studies show that while NGOs have vast experience in terms of their work at the local level, most of them are not used to working with national decision-makers and decentralized authorities as regards policy formulation.

On the basis of the experience acquired by WRI in this field and in the light of the increasing interest shown by USAID in the role of NGOs and the private sector in the policy design, the Centre considers undertaking more in-depth work on the role of NGOs in policy reform and, particularly, on their increasing importance in environmental policy formulation.

The objective of this project is to improve the management of the environment and natural resources in Africa through greater popular participation in the dialogue on policies and reforms.

The objective of the project is threefold:

- 1) to understand better how NGOs and the private sector participated in and contributed to environmental policy reform;
- 2) to identify some of the most promising methods and tools used by successful NGOs;
- 3) to identify the avenues and constraints to greater participation in environmental policy reforms in sub-Saharan Africa.

This work by the Naturama Foundation, an environmental NGO in Burkina Faso, comes in the wake of a mission by WRI in Burkina Faso, which held discussions with NGO leaders and Government officials so as to:

- 1) assess their interest in participatory policy reforms and in the project as a whole;
- 2) consider the legal constraints which make the participation of NGOs difficult as well as the legitimacy of such participation;
- 3) make a preliminary evaluation of the experiences of NGOs in Burkina Faso and of the private sector in the field of policy reforms (encouraged by NGOs and the Government);
- 4) identify a local counterpart who is familiar with NGOs and policy design, so as to prepare a more detailed evaluation of possibilities for NGOs to participate in policy reform in Burkina Faso and, later on, to possibly hold a workshop around this issue.

The conclusions of this study are aimed at informing and setting a course for future actions related to the role of NGOs in the design of natural resource management policies in Burkina Faso.

Upon completion of this study, NATURAMA would like to thank most sincerely all NGO leaders and resource persons who contributed to the collection and processing of the data needed to write this report.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAEDC	Association Africaine pour l'Environnement et le Développement Communautaire
ABUSE	Association Burkinabè pour la Sauvegarde de l'Environnement
ACMVG	Association pour la Conservation et la Mise en Valeur de la forêt de Gabio
ADEFA	Association pour le Développement de l'Elevage de la Faune Africaine
ADP	Assemblée des Députés du Peuple
AFVP	Association Française des Volontaires du Progrès
AJPN	Association des Jeunes pour la Protection de la Nature
ANGDB	Agence Nationale de Gestion des Déchets du Burkina
APNE	Association pour la Préservation de la Nature et de l'Environnement
ATN	Aménagement des Terroirs du Nahouri
AVLP	Association Vive Le Paysan
BLONGA	Bureau de Liaison des ONG et Associations
BSONG	Bureau de Suivi des ONG
CES/AGF	Conservation des Eaux et des Sols / Agro-Foresterie
CGCONGA/ED	Cadre Global de concertation des ONG et associations sur l'environnement et le développement
CILSS	Comité Inter-états de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel
CIRAD	Centre International de Recherche en Agronomie pour le Développement
CNE	Comité National pour l'Environnement
CNSF	Centre National des Semences Forestières
CNUED	Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'Environnement et le Développement
CVGT	Commissions Villageoises de Gestion des Terroirs
DFVAF	Direction de la Foresterie Villageoise et de l'Aménagement Forestier
FAO	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture
FEM	Fonds pour l'Environnement Mondial
FFPS-UK	Flora and Fauna Preservation Society - United Kingdom
FMI	Fonds Monétaire International
FUGN	Fédération des Unions des Groupements Naam
GERES/VOLTA	Groupement Européen de Restauration des Eaux et des Sols
GRN	Gestion des Ressources Naturelles
IDR-ISN	Institut du Développement Rural-Institut des Sciences de la Nature
INERA	Institut National d'Etudes et de Recherches Agronomiques
INSAH	Institut du Sahel
IRBET	Institut de Recherche en Biologie et Ecologie Tropicale
IUCN	Union Mondiale pour la Nature
MET	Ministère de l'Environnement et du Tourisme
NAAM	En langue mooré, signifie: le pouvoir, la chefferie
NATURA	Bulletin d'éducation Environnementale de NATURAMA
NATURAMA	Fondation des Amis de la Nature
ONG	Organisation Non Gouvernementale
ONGE	Organisation non Gouvernementale Ecologiste
ORSTOM	Office de Recherche Scientifique des Territoires d'Outre Mer
PAED	Programme des Associations pour l'Environnement et le Développement
PATECORE	Projet d'Aménagement des Terroirs du Centre-Ouest et Région Est
PDI	Projet de Développement Intégré
PDRI/HKM	Projet de Développement Rural Intégré/Houet-Kossi-Mouhoun
PIB	Produit Intérieur Brut
PNFV	Programme National de la Foresterie Villageoise
PNGT	Programme National de Gestion des Terroirs
PNLCD	Programme National de Lutte Contre la Désertification
PNUD	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
PNUE	Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement
PPD	Programme Populaire de Développement
PSB	Programme Sahel Burkinabè
RAF	Réorganisation Agraire et Foncière
SANREM	Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Collaborative Research Support Program (projet USAID)
SCS	Solidarité Canada Sahel -
SIX "S"	Se Servir de la Saison Sèche en Savane et au Sahel
SPONG	Secrétariat Permanent des ONG
SP/PANE	Secrétariat Permanent / Plan d'Action National pour l'Environnement
UGEV	Union Générale des Etudiants Voltaïques
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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INTRODUCTION

As he studied the dynamics underlying the relationship between Governments, private companies and NGOs during the Conference on the Environment held in England (September 1993) on the topic "United for the Change", Lord TIMBERLAKE, an English writer well known for his sallies, exaggerated the shortcomings of Governments, private companies and NGOs under the following three lights:

"The first one is that Governments are in the wrong indeed. Narrow-minded people, working in Ministries with narrow views, with narrow schedules and a temporal horizon which only stretches up to the next morning paper, certainly cannot master the issue of sustainable development because future generations do not vote.

The second one is the business world. Firms are completely in the wrong. They pollute, they waste resources or overuse them and they are only interested in profits. They learn nothing because they read nothing, and when they read anything, it's just a text, one page long, and with good news only. Firms cannot master the issue of sustainable development because future generations are not today's consumers.

Finally, NGOs are completely in the wrong as regards sustainable development. They are vague and are too much concerned to make themselves understood instead of trying to understand others. They know that firms and Governments are to be blamed indeed, but they are too lazy and too mindful of their purity to make an effort so as to learn the language spoken by these other sectors, to become familiar with the way they do things and to co-operate with them".

These are three blatant exaggerations. But there is probably a good part of truth in each statement to convince us that we are in desperate need of co-operation to achieve something satisfactory. It is obvious that neither NGOs nor Governments alone can improve the situation.

Going back in history, it appears that any change for a better world -like the abolition of slavery or the right to vote for women- was achieved by small non-governmental groups while Governments strived to explain the political and economic reasons why such changes could not happen. And yet...

In Burkina Faso like everywhere else in the Sahel, the combination of economic stagnation and high population growth caused serious environmental problems. Aware of this, the authorities in Burkina Faso, for a decade now, have been putting the protection of the environment at the heart of major national concerns. However, it must be noted that after several years of management, the public sector failed to reach the expected outputs in terms of natural resource management.

It seems that these deficiencies mostly reside in the fact that natural resource management policies have not always been implemented in close association with the private sector, NGOs and the civil society in general (and they also have deficiencies

of their own but also some assets. Indeed, for a long time, a certain perception of the management of state affairs has raised the diagnosis of policy issues and strategy reform to the status of a private hunting ground for governments. NGOs have been considered (and they did consider themselves) as agencies only specialized in implementing field activities, on the cheap.

However, as long as such a perception lasted, the development process suffered considerably. Nowadays, the options for participatory development raise the issue around the participation of grassroot communities and NGOs in policy design. In our countries, several voices are even beginning to rise and assert that our major environmental problem is strategic and institutional before being technical.

"The Role of NGOs in Natural Resource Management Policy Reform": this is the topic covered by our study, the result of a desired partnership between WRI and environmental NGOs in Burkina Faso and that the Naturama Foundation kindly accepted to organize and implement, with the friendly collaboration of several Government bodies and of resource persons.

In fact, this study which is produced in a new context, characterized in Burkina Faso by structural adjustment and political pluralism intends to cast a light on three basic questions:

- what are the interests in NGOs participating in natural resource management policy reform?
- what is the current context in Burkina Faso? What are the facts and constraints that can be noted?
- which recommendations could be made with a view to establishing a type of co-operation which is satisfactory for both the Government and the concerned NGOs?

However, there is one prerequisite to answering these questions: this report duly respects the options of some NGOs which view themselves only as tools for implementing Government policies. Consequently, the report is not meant for this category of NGOs.

I. REPORT BACKGROUND

1.1 CURRENT SITUATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1.1.1 Economic Background

With a GDP around US \$ 280 per capita in 1989, Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world. The annual population growth rate is 3.3%, with 9 million inhabitants. Half of the population is concentrated on the central plateau where density is higher than 50 inhabitants per square kilometer.

In the North (Sahel), the population density is low because rainfall is inadequate for agriculture; the population is scattered and practises extensive animal husbandry. In southernmost areas where rainfall is abundant, up to recently, density was low because of onchocerciasis.

As from the 1980s, this disease has been eradicated thanks to concerted international intervention; thus, people very rapidly settled these oncho free areas. Although these new lands allowed the settlement of people from the densely populated North and Centre, population in the departure areas never stopped increasing in absolute terms; and so is the case as regards pressure on natural resources. On the newly settled southern lands, the degradation of natural resources equally poses a serious threat.

From 1982 to 1989, actual GDP increased by 4% per annum, mostly thanks to agriculture, mining and services. Measured in conventional terms, agricultural growth rated an average 4.7%

These rates are impressive but they are caused for a large part by more extensive utilization of lands. Fallow periods are shorter, which leads to increased disturbance in the natural processes that help maintain the productivity of soils and pasture lands.

Given the population dynamics, natural resources will be submitted to greater pressure over the next ten years: the prevention of natural resource degradation is therefore a national priority and the country's first priority in the environmental field.

1.1.2. Natural Resources

1.1.2.1. Situation in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Average annual rainfall ranges from under 500mm in the North to 1, 400mm in the far South, with however a 30% variation factor in the North and 20% in the South.

Agricultural exploitation and the management of pasture lands are rendered even more uncertain by high intra-season irregularity in rainfall. Risk management is a key factor in agriculture and animal husbandry and is characterized by extensive rather than intensive land use.

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Besides, over the last 30 years, average rainfall decreased continuously without it being possible to say whether this is a permanent trend or a cyclical process. A comparison of isohyets over the 1950-1967 and 1968-1987 periods shows that they moved some 200 km southwards.

This recent phenomenon cannot but increase the attachment of farmers and cattle-breeders to climatic risk management, i.e. their inclination towards more extensive utilization of lands.

Owing to a traditionally extensive system in husbandry and to animal wandering, overgrazing leads to progressive elimination of favourite species.

Overexploited soils undergo rapid degradation. In the Central region, reduction in the plant cover has bared the soils which erode at an increasing speed because of run-off which can be as high as 60 to 70% during the rainy season. The amounts of infiltrated water decrease noticeably, causing high mortality rates for perennial vegetations. Gradually, an exponential development of naked strips takes place and the course is set for a natural resource degradation spiral, the outcome of which is not perceptible in the short term.

On the newly developed southern lands, clearing methods by felling and burning used by the new settlers have increased soil sensitivity to erosion. The total area of arable lands is estimated at 90, 000 sq.km, that is one third of the total area of the country; this represents an average of one hectare per inhabitant. This ratio is very low as compared to the African average, with the exception of the fertile high lands in East Africa.

Indiscriminate clearing in the savannah woodlands and forests destroys more than 100, 000 ha every year. This phenomenon is aggravated by the increasing demographic pressure and by soil depletion (non-utilization of manure and fertilizers and disregard for fallows. In addition, land clearing for gold-washing constitutes a genuine scourge in some Provinces. Irrigated areas hardly represent 1% of the total area of the country while pasture lands are estimated as representing half of the total area.

Several remnant pesticides belonging to the group of 12 dangerous pesticides are still being used as phytosanitary products, with harmful effects on the population, the microflora, the fauna and cattle. However, the Government made an effort towards regulation, but deficiencies in terms of control favour non-implementation of legislation.

1.1.2.2 Water Resources

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Ground and surface water resources are abundant but exploitation is difficult. There is no place where surface water is easily available: the river systems can suddenly be in spate and dry up as rapidly. In many regions in the country, water tables are not

very deep (some 15 m). However, many studies show that the level of groundwater tables decreases by reason of the reduction in infiltration and increase in run-off.

Surface water resources represent some 10, 000 million m³, if the annual average run-off is taken into account. Dams alone store 2.7 thousand million m³ while only 1.6 thousand million m³ are used to supply drinking water. Difficulty in tapping surface water can be explained by the following factors:

- most rivers are not permanent;
- evaporation which is around 2, 000mm/year considerably reduces usable quantities, that is 3/4 of total reserves;
- the quality of water is always poor for human consumption and treatment is only profitable for important flows. Only big cities are provided with water from treatment plants.

As a result, women in rural areas walk over long distances to provide their families with water.

1.1.2.3 Forest Resources

National forests represent 8% of the total area of the country while 52% are seen as natural pasture lands. However, these forest areas are marked by a 250, 000 ha regression at the moment, mainly because of clearing for agriculture, indiscriminate felling for firewood, overgrazing and bush fires. The two major problems facing the vegetation are clearing (for agricultural land and wood) and bush fires. Protection of areas under preservation orders is not properly ensured and this facilitates destruction activities against the forest heritage.

Firewood is the main source of energy for rural and urban households. Some 96% of domestic energy and 86% of national primary energy are produced by wood derived from forests and fallows. The annual consumption of wood per capita (firewood and timber) varies from 0.33 to 0.74 m³ depending on regions, that is a total national consumption amounting to 2.9 to 6.6 million m³ per annum.

Such consumption is far beyond the productivity of the natural vegetation in most regions in the country. The deficit between demand and annual wood production could reach 2.2 million m³ in 1995. The situation is very serious on the Central Plateau where the annual consumption in 1984 was already 4.5 times higher than natural forest production, thus compelling the people to burn agricultural residue at the expense of the maintenance of agricultural land fertility.

Out of 30 Provinces in the country, only 8 have a positive balance between firewood availability and requirements.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF GOVERNMENT/NGO COLLABORATION

1.2.1. Possibilities offered to the Government owing to pluralism

For some years now, political and economic changes have been taking place in Burkina Faso in terms of democratization of public institutions and adjustment of the national economy. These changes provide the Government with an opportunity to bring NGOs to participate in natural resource management.

On the political plane, the on-going democratic systems impose on governments (even if this assertion still remains theoretical) formulae of territorial administration which take the local population into account.

The decentralization process initiated recently stands as an illustration. It gives an opportunity to private organizations and the civil society, at any given level, to participate in decision-making.

The greater scope of freedom of expression implied by such pluralism favours the participation of NGOs in policy formulation in the field of natural resource management. In this connection, their participation in the various consultations held around desertification is already appreciated indeed.

In the same vein, the impending establishment of the second House of Parliament will allow NGOs to express their views on the management of state affairs.

On the economic plane, financial and economic crises led to structural adjustment programmes, the mechanisms of which should bring about a contraction in the public sector to the benefit of the private sector and NGOs. In this sense, NGOs are bound to abandon their traditional role of service providers and significantly influence policy formulation and implementation.

Currently, in Burkina Faso, these two major directions are a strength which should lead the Government to review the role and potentialities of the private sector and NGOs.

1.2.2. Wishes expressed by the Government for Greater Participation from the Private Sector and the Civil Society

Participation of NGOs in the reform of natural resource management policies is a requirement felt at various levels. It provides the Government with opportunities to communicate with the people because, in Africa, NGOs are truly one possible mirror to reflect popular expression. Consequently, such participation contributes to greater transparency in decisions taken by the State.

For those NGOs which now share these tasks with the Government, such participation is advantageous in that it offers

possibilities to take initiatives of their own so as to stimulate economic growth.

For the civil society, the requirement expressed is that of dynamic and sustainable economic and social development.

All in all, the need for greater participation from NGOs is multi-faceted. However, some worries still persist as to the capacity of these organizations to fulfil the tasks of policy formulation.

1.2.3. The Capacities of NGOs

The first NGOs started working in Burkina faso in the 1960s. As regards environmental NGOs, the starting point was the major drought which devastated the Sahelian countries in the early 1970s. Their number steadily increased and their interventions very much varied in the field. From that moment, the Government undertook to promote and coordinate NGO activities.

Many NGO initiatives achieved remarkable results on the local scale. NGOs play an important role in rural areas as they work directly with the village people towards natural resource management: supply of drinking water, soil erosion control, reafforestation and agro-forestry projects as well as the exploitation of firewood.

Several NGOs are officially recognized as unavoidable stakeholders in the local or regional development process and they are increasingly associated to natural resource planning and utilization and the management of village lands: AFVP, "Six S", Solidarité Canada-Sahel, to mention but a few.

The major asset of NGOs in the field is a result of their flexibility in approach, their multidisciplinary and capacity to negotiate with villagers. Indeed, an NGO can meet all entreaties from the people in its area of intervention (agriculture, animal husbandry, water supply, forestry, education etc.) because it is less subject to the institutional constraints which confine public services to sectoral activities. Since the protection of the environment is a comprehensive approach, this aptitude of NGOs facilitates their efficiency.

On the other hand, the main deficiency in our environmental NGOs seems to opportunism and voluntarism resulting from the immediate funding capacity of donors. As a consequence, there is an absence of planning, which is incompatible with a sustainable development approach.

So as to back NGO initiatives at the grassroot level in favour of the environment and development, UNDP set up a programme known as "Network Africa 2000". A GEF/NGO programme managed by the same institution has just started and is funded under GEF. Similar programmes aimed at backing community initiatives in the environmental field have also been initiated by NGOs from the North, such as Solidarité Canada-Sahel.

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These initiatives helped increase the intervention capacity of NGOs as well as their development. In 1993, there were 164 NGOs in Burkina Faso, with 63 of them partially or totally involved in environmental activities. There are few NGOs working specifically on the environment and, in their majority, they are very young (less than 5 year-old) and they are faced with various difficulties such as the inadequate training of their leaders and lack of knowledge in administrative machinery. As a rule, these "environmental" NGOs are interested in questions which have not yet been answered satisfactorily or which are not matters for serious concern on the part of public authorities. So they have a tendency to table new solutions to problems which have been neglected so far.

Also, given their independence and small sizes, NGOs are in a position to undertake more rapid action. Their achievements in the field certainly stand out for reference. Thus, some NGOs worked with the Government to design the National Plan of Action for the Environment. Albeit inadequately, they also participated in the design of the Environment Code. In the field of agriculture, a number of technologies such as "Zaï", now famous in the west-African sub-region, are owed to NGOs.

1.2.4. The Objective behind the Political Measures which take Local Concerns into account

The Government has three main objectives in the environmental sector:

- to stop environmental degradation, improve natural resource management and ensure the sustainability of production systems;
- to improve food security and diversify food and income sources; and
- to entrust rural communities with total responsibility for the management of their own affairs, particularly as regards the management of the rural environment.

Aware of the gravity of the issues, the authorities in Burkina Faso have already taken important steps to improve natural resource management. The political leaders acknowledge the effects of population growth on resource degradation and, consequently, on economic development in the country. Burkina Faso stands as a pioneer among Sahelian countries, especially since the early 1980s, in the search of solutions to demographic, agricultural and environmental problems which are closely interrelated.

The various initiatives have produced quite positive results, but they present three major deficiencies:

- a) despite the underlying good intentions, programmes are generally implemented according to a vertical approach: although the people participated generally, they did not have the feeling of being the owners of results;
- b) programmes are generally designed according to multidisciplinary approaches but they are implemented by centralized sectoral departments. As a result, it is difficult to apply the multidisciplinary approach in practical terms;

c) ambiguities in the land tenure system, especially those related to the access of local communities to common resources, have slowed down the potential beneficiaries in their will to invest in the management of those natural resources.

In the light of these problems, the Government altered its strategy so as to give greater consideration to local concerns in natural resource management. Now, it recognizes the need to entrust the local communities with responsibility over the lands on which they live and produce and to give them control over common natural resources. This vision of the political authorities has been translated into a new approach to natural resource management, commonly known as the "village land approach".

The idea of promoting popular participation is based on the autonomy of local communities in relation to the Central Authority as well as on a calling into question of the role traditionally played by the State in the field of development. Such participation finally appears as a more effectual means for the management of available resources. It is increasingly admitted that development activities initiated at grassroot level have greater chances of success than those imposed from the top. Grassroot communities are in a better position to identify their actual needs and to apply the most appropriate measures.

So, in the light of these new avenues and of increasing NGO capacities, the monopoly-State wants to disappear in favour of the organizer-State which facilitates local development initiatives taken in all freedom by the grassroot communities. Such will be expressed by the Government materialized in 1988 with the adoption of a Structural Adjustment Programme.

However, despite the avowed political will, it can be noted that the approach is faced with some resistance to change. Thus, at the central as well as the provincial levels, many government authorities see decentralization only down to their own level, but not beyond.

1.3. INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

1.3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Burkina Faso, formerly Upper Volta, has always been included on the list of those west-African countries which went through a particularly tempestuous political life. In total, four constitutional Republics and five military régimes have presided over the political destiny of the country within 34 years of independence. Since 1960, three republican régimes have been toppled by military régimes which managed state affairs up to 1991, when the current Constitution was adopted.

15 Unlike the political régimes, development policies in general and natural resource management in particular have undergone a remarkable stability since the colonial days. Indeed, the natural resource management policy has been marked by State

preponderance, both as designer and implementing agency of programmes and projects. Up to recently, natural resource management has been characterized by:

- an emphasis laid on protection through the creation of preserved areas and the adoption of coercitive legislation;
- the concentration of resources and management power in the hands of forestry services at the expense of the rural people and other private stakeholders.

The beginnings of a change in the natural resource management policy appeared with the management of village lands and village forestry. Thus, as from the 1980s, the concept of village forestry was developed and a background document drafted: the National Programme on Village Forestry (PNFV).

This programme which was revised in 1991 is based on the principle of responsibility-building among the people in relation to the management of natural resources on their own village lands, using four strategic approaches (PNFV, 1991):

- the participatory approach which, from now on, involves the people in the design, planning and implementation of those natural resource management activities which meet their requirements;
- the management of village lands, seen as a local planning strategy which is based on the principle according to which overall natural resources on a given village land must be managed coherently. Thus, it is based on (i) spatial organization of the village lands according to potentialities and land use, (ii) dynamic management of resources according to the quality of ratios between requirements and potentialities and (iii) individual and collective responsibility-building among the people with an objective of self-promotion;
- taking duly into account socio-environmental realities on village lands when defining modes of intervention, with a view to identifying the most appropriate actions;
- a programme-approach which intends to take into account overall natural resources for management, as opposed to projects, the objectives of which are often sectoral and limited in time and space.

The participatory strategy was started following the failure of classical approaches in major reafforestation projects. It was largely inspired by the relative success recorded in NGO activities.

This form of intervention mostly developed as from 1973, when severe drought affected all the sub-region and raised awareness among Governments and the international community on the environmental fragility of the region. It mostly covered fields such as water supply, agriculture and rural forestry, namely through the development of lowlands, erosion control, village water supply and building of storage dams, village reafforestation etc.

1.3.2. Institutional, political and legal framework of natural resource management

The Constitution of Burkina Faso provides that all citizens have a right to a sound environment, but also have duties as to the management of environmental resources.

The management of natural and environmental resources in general is the province of legislation which states practical provisions in this field. The Constitution of the Fourth Republic actually endorsed a policy which intended to be a pioneer in the sub-region. With its adoption, Burkina Faso embarked on revising legislation in the field of natural resource management.

Chronologically, we shall highlight the following essential facts which marked this policy in its evolution:

1976, creation of a Ministry in charge of the Environment

This materializes the interest and importance of natural resource management and allows to float specific programmes for the protection, rehabilitation and preservation of biological resources.

Such creation led, inter alia, to the emergence of a national programme on village forestry in the 1980s (which will be revised in 1991) and the inception of a policy in fauna preservation.

1984, Adoption of the Reform of the Land Tenure System (RAF)

This piece of legislation has already been revised twice. However, the law which ambitioned to manage the national land patrimony as well as natural resources (renewable resources and mining) fails to make adequate provision for responsibility-building and transfer of decision-making power to grassroot communities. Hence, most of the local bodies planned under the law are only consultative in nature, the final decision being the province of the central authority.

1984, Creation of a Desk for NGO Monitoring (BSONG)

This body (a department of the Head Office in charge of Co-operation is the focal point between the State and NGOs. In addition to administrative issues related to Headquarter agreements, the Desk develops dialogue between NGOs and the State and endeavours to take stock of NGOs' contribution in the countries development. In 1992, a new law was adopted in replacement of the 1959 law and is now to govern the legal existence of associations and NGOs.

1984, Adoption of a popular development programme

This popular programme encouraged the people to use their own means to meet the degradation of resources. Eight million trees were planted, more than 2,000 wells dug and erosion control measures applied on 10, 000 ha between October 1984 and December 1985.

1985, Adoption of the three fights

The "three fights" are components of a political programme including three issues; it was launched on April 22nd, 1985 to combat unregulated bush fires, animal wandering and indiscriminate tree felling.

1985, Adoption of a National Family Planning Programme

This programme was launched in 1985, followed by an ambitious statement of population policy approved in April 1990.

1985, Creation of a National Forest Equipment Fund

This fund was to generate resources to be used towards funding the management of existing forests and community forestry projects.

1986, Adoption of the National Desertification Control Plan

This Plan advocates a comprehensive and concerted approach in desertification control which must remain an activity to be carried out by the people, with the support of the State, NGOs and donors. It falls in line with a regional strategy developed by the CILSS member countries, each of which drafted a national plan following the 1984 Summit of Heads of State.

1986- Inception of the National Village Land Management Programme (PNGT) as a tool for implementation of the law on land reform

A 5 year pilot phase (1986-1990) enabled the design and launching of a nationwide programme. The PNGT which is a participatory approach in the management of natural resources on village lands by the villagers has been expanded over the last years through various development projects: PDRI/HKM, PDRI/Tapoa, PATECORE, PDI/Zounwéogo, CES/AGF, PSB, ATN, SCS-ACCED/Gnagna etc.

Implementation of the PNGT is marked by greater NGO involvement, either through their own programmes or as implementing agencies for some Government programmes.

1991- Adoption of a National Plan of Action for the Environment (PANE)

Adopted in 1991, the PANE was revised in 1993 to include the orientations determined by the 1992 Rio Conference. Nowadays, the PANE is the official background document on natural resource management and the environment.

This plan of action calls for partnership between the Government, the people, NGOs and other private stakeholders. For its implementation proper, the frame programme on environmental capacity-building provides for support to NGOs and other associations.

1993- Adoption of 5 laws on decentralization; creation of a National Decentralization Committee

During the first years of independence, an interesting decentralization experience had already been undertaken for the rural world through what was known as "Collectivités Rurales" (rural local communities). A fundamental element in the transfer of power from the centre to the periphery consists in creating decentralized communities which are autonomous vis-a-vis the central authority and capable of taking into account the local people's requirements. This step has been made in Burkina Faso, although the five laws do not concern decentralization beyond urban municipalities (additional reflection is now going on around the rural world). As from 1997, Burkina Faso should be in a position to generalize decentralization in the whole country, including rural areas.

1993- Adoption of the Environment Code

This code more specifically addresses issues related to the quality of life and provides for waste production and treatment, pollution and nuisance of any type. It does not explicitly address the issue of resources such as forests, wildlife, fishing and other areas which will be the subject of a separate law (forest code under way).

1.3.3. Hierarchy of Institutions and Officers in charge of natural resource management

In Burkina Faso, the institutional landscape is characterized by a dispersion of decision-making bodies as regards natural resource management. A study has just been completed by FAO (1994) on the subject and it does reveal that:

a) the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism is the first institution concerned (organization chart appended). In principle, it stands as the institutional guarantor of environmental balance. To this end, the Environment Code, the PANE, the RAF (law on land reform) are some of its favourite tools. The forest code which is under its responsibility is being revised.

There used to be a Higher Council for the Protection of Nature (no longer operational) under the responsibility the Ministry.

b) The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock is the regular manager of soils and pasture lands. It is also responsible for the National Village Land Management Programme and of many integrated rural development projects with forestry components.

c) The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Mining plays a role in determining the price of some products such firewood and is the manager of the mining sector (another element in natural resources, the exploitation of which has direct consequences on other resources).

d) The Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Scientific Research manages all research issues related to natural resources. It is responsible for a Forestry Research Committee.

e) The Assembly of the People's Deputies is responsible for legislation, including laws on the environment. It comprises a second House known as the "House of Representatives", the members of which are from the civil society (customary and religious leaders, NGOs, Human Rights Organizations, environmental associations etc. On this account, the NATURAMA Foundation and the ANGDB were elected by the other national ecomovements to sit in this House as representatives of the environmental opinion.

f) The Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Planning is in charge of town and country planning as well as development planning. As such, it has considerable and even decisive influence on natural resource management.

The Law on land reform and the Environment Code provide for the creation of a National Committee for the Environment which is still to be set up. This body will share some fields of competence with similar existing bodies, especially with:

- the national, provincial and departmental committees in charge of town and country planning;
- the PANE permanent secretariat and its regional offices;
- the impact assessment office which is planned for in the Environment Code.

The mission assigned to all these bodies is to advise on issues related to natural resource management and to the environment in general. But as is underscored in the report, although there is no hierarchical relationship between all these bodies, it does not seem useful or logical to regroup them within a single entity. But, in our opinion, simplifications or even abolitions will be necessary while better consultation will remain a basic objective to achieve. Quite obviously, such an initiative should come from the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism.

1.3.4. Drafting of legislation and reform process in the field of natural resource management

In actual facts, Burkina has always expressed concern for the accelerated degradation of natural resources which are her main source of wealth. Undisputably, the country has so far made considerable efforts with the support of the international community. Since the adoption of the RAF and of the various plans and programmes (PNFV, PNLCD, PNGT and more recently PANE), Burkina is visibly in search of a better way. The decentralization process started with the adoption of the first five laws paves the way for natural resource management in the country.

All stakeholders in the civil society, including NGOs and development associations are involved in this process. In a country with limited resources, decentralization may be seen as an act of political and budgetary courage which should be supported by the international community. Success of the

decentralization process which should include legislation and power reform in the field of natural resource management will largely depend on the way lessons will be drawn from past experiences at both the national and international levels.

1.4. POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS

1.4.1. General points and background

Problems related to natural resource management are not identical all the world over despite the existence of a common basis and of natural interrelations, desired or not. Natural resources, be they renewable (flora, fauna and their products) or not (fossile minerals) are matters of interest or conflicts between the North and the South as regards their exploitation and management method.

Steps that affect natural resource management policies involve political, socioeconomic and cultural factors. Burkina Faso is a developing country which experienced colonial rule (from 1898 to 1960) and whose economy is mostly based on agro-pastoral resources despite the existence of an embryonic industrial sector and mining potentialities yet to be exploited on a large scale. For a country like this, is there really an "environmental policy"?

Before trying to answer such a question, one must bear in mind the dialectical relations in a Society-Nature system. According to I. LAPTEV (1979), "any modification in the Society-Nature system necessarily affects the foundations of the material as well as spiritual life of Humanity, its economy, its politics, its culture, its social relations". This Society-Nature system undergoes perpetual evolution. As regards Burkina Faso, it should be noted that during the colonial period, the exploitation and management of natural resources were basically undertaken to satisfy groups which had an economic interest in direct colonial domination. It is only but doubtful whether there was rational management of these resources or proper balance between the resources and the basic requirements of the colonized people.

It should be mentioned that the colonial policy in the field of natural resource management, in addition to the fact that it was not based on an appropriate appraisal of these resources and of the peculiarity of tropical semi-arid ecosystems, was characterized by:

- an absence of comprehensive and coherent vision in terms of natural resource management;
- a belated adoption of steps towards natural resource management;
- a piecemeal strategy which only took into account forest aspects; measures related to preserved areas (protected forests, game preserves, parks etc) rarely involved the riparian people and the latter's concerns and wishes recorded in the "palaver report" were generally not taken into account.

With the exception of the 1933 London Convention which was mindful of the protection of some animal and plant species for moral and scientific reasons, the first steps towards natural resource management were taken in 1936-1937. It took up to 1953 for the first political measures to be taken by the Assembly of the French Union. This Assembly decreed (see Gazette of the French Republic. Debates of the Assembly of the French Union. Year 1953, n° 28, Saturday, 11th July 1953) the principle governing the planning of tropical countries and called on the Government to take "all steps needed to protect the forests and spontaneous soil cover, and to embark on the agronomic planning of overseas territories".

The Assembly of the French Union underscored the need to define the long term policy which should enable steady planning of these areas so as to establish the balance indispensable both for maintaining conditions for life to be possible and for developing production steadily as prerequisites for the people's social progress.

In the same vein, the Assembly requested the Government to promote this policy and to draft legislative provisions conducive to such planning by creating a committee comprising scientists, technicians, the directors of the services concerned and members of the Assembly for the implementation of the following principles:

1. the various categories of lands will be differentiated according to whether they are to be protected or exploited;
2. three categories of domains are planned, viz. the forest domain, the protected domain and the agricultural domain.

When Burkina Faso became independent in 1960, the country inherited the old colonial legislation (Decree of July 4th, 1935 governing the forest tenure system) as the recommendations made the parliamentarians of the Assembly of the French Union virtually failed to be implemented during the transitional phase of the blueprint Law when the first government was appointed.

The natural resource management policy of the first Republic was basically pragmatic. It should be noted that remarkable efforts were made in the field of soil restoration, the substratum of agro-pastoral and forest products. The operation undertaken by the Groupement Européen de Restauration des Sols (GERES/VOLTA) allowed to restore some 30, 000 ha of lands, especially in the Yatenga Province for a total cost of 1, 500 million francs (about 10% of the national budget) between 1962 and 1965. However, because socio-cultural background was not duly taken into consideration and because the grassroot communities were not adequately involved, this huge investment supported by political will produced results which were far short of expectations.

After the semi-failure of the GERES operation, the political authorities were somewhat in lethargy, without any lesson drawn from this experience which was then exceptional in the sub-region in the framework of desertification control.

As signs of political commitment, the country's adhesion to most international or regional convention on Nature preservation and environmental protection should be underscored (ZEBA, 1990):

- convention on the preservation of migratory species belonging to wildlife, signed in Bonn on June 23rd, 1979;
- convention on the international trade of wild flora and fauna species threatened with extinction, signed in Washington on March 3rd, 1979.
- convention related to humid areas with an international importance, especially as habitats for water birds, signed in Ramsar on February 2nd, 1971. As such, the Hippopotamus Pond is enlisted among the sites protected under this convention;
- convention on the protection of the ozone layer;
- convention related to the preservation of wildlife and the natural environment, signed in Berne on September 19th, 1979;
- convention on the climate and convention on biological biodiversity, adopted by the Earth Summit of Rio in June 1992;
- Yamoussoukro Accord on hunting in countries members of the Conseil de l'Entente;
- memorandum of agreement between Benin, Burkina and Niger on the protection of the Environment and the preservation of protected areas shared by the three countries.

However, natural resource management remains a matter for concern which is expressed either during the design of development plans or under special circumstances, thus reflecting some degree of political will. In this connection, the following could be mentioned:

- the 1967-1970 frame plan which provided that "5, 000 ha will be planted by individuals or rural communities".
- the Political Orientation Speech of October 2nd, 1983 recommended a "bitter fight against the degradation of nature which, moreover, is not more stubborn in our country than it is for other people who marvellously subjugated its hostility through agricultural achievements";
- the environmental component in the Programme of the Popular Front.

The active participation of Burkina in various international or regional conferences on the environment should also be noted:

- * the UN conference on desertification held in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1977;
- * the SILVA conference held in Paris from 5th to 7th February, 1986.
- * the UN Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), BRAZIL 1992, held in Rio.

As another evidence of interest in environmental problems or issues related to natural resource management, it should be noted that Burkina Faso was represented at the highest level (by Heads of State) at the Paris SILVA and Rio Conferences.

Finally, a more recent and further commitment of political authorities has been an appeal, on June 2nd, 1994, by the President of Faso, for the development of production through six national commitments, two of which relate to natural resource management, namely:

1. The safeguard of the environment and desertification control through a project know as "8, 000 villages, 8, 000 forests and one school, one woodlot".

2. Steps to increase agro-pastoral production.

Something original in these recent political commitments is that they have been allocated financial resources in specific amounts and accompanied by proposals relating to organization (forest management committee involving grassroot communities.

1.4.2. Current Process governing the adoption of steps of a political nature

Usually, a number of orientations set the course for the "environmental policy" of a given country. According to I. LAPTEV, 1979, the following could be mentioned:

1. Steps to safeguard nature;
2. development of national programmes for environmental degradation control;
3. A new legislation aimed at improving the exploitation of Nature;
4. Establishment of special government bodies in charge of regulating the exploitation of Nature.

In addition to these four orientations, adhesion to and ratification of international or regional conventions related to the safeguard of the environment could be mentioned. But obviously, any political step falls in line with the logic behind a political programme which may vary according to ideological orientation and the nature of major political groups in the country. It is not easy to understand the current process governing the adoption of political measures. Procedures are varied according to whether initiatives are taken spontaneously by political decision-makers or the results of processes are adhered to by decision-makers, when such processes are started by technical bodies pertaining to the State, especially those working under the responsibility of Ministries involved in natural resource management (Ministry of the Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Scientific Research etc. As decision-making centres, the following could be mentioned:

- The President's Office with discretionary power;
- The Prime Minister's Office;
- The Assembly of the People's Deputies;
- The technical Ministries directly involved in natural resource management;
- The Advisory Interministerial bodies such as the former Higher Council in charge of Hunting and the Protection of Nature whose opinions used to guide the Council of Ministers as to decisions related to natural resource management.

The current decision-making process in the field of natural resource management, and even the previous one, have sometimes been eclectic. Therefore, it is very risky, even impossible to

understand all aspects because of difficulties in having access to appropriate sources of information. An analysis of those influences which bring decision-makers to address some issues may help understand the process.

1.4.3. Influences that bring decision-makers to address some issues

The Soudano-Sahelian zone to which Burkina belongs and where there seems to be a tragic interrelation between environmental degradation and poverty has been experiencing a serious environmental crisis since 1968-1973, against a background of recurrent drought.

Such environmental crisis occurs in a context of high population growth with some characteristics which deserve to be underscored (TOURE & CISSE, 1991). They are the following:

1. A generalized crisis in ecosystems, marked by a progression of desertification and sharp decrease in renewable resources (water, flora, fauna) and depletion of the soil which is the foundation of human production activities.
2. Accelerated population growth.
3. Emergence of the urbanization phenomenon, with a resulting exaggerated pressure on resources in peri-urban spaces.
4. Constant deterioration of general living conditions of the people, especially in rural areas with period of distress.

These few characteristics reveal high human and animal pressure on natural ecosystems, against a background of drought, and they result in profound disturbances.

Whatever the nature of the decision-making processes and how they are expressed, a number of factors have an influence on decision-makers:

- the socioeconomic consequences of the environmental crisis in the face of which political authorities cannot remain indifferent:

- * inadequate agro-pastoral production;
 - * energy crisis resulting from a depletion of forest resources.
- the various environmental consequences:
- * degradation of water resources;
 - * fall in water tables, the flows of which are increasingly hazardous;
 - * aggravation of erosion and loss in soil fertility in the framework of the traditional production system where the fallow system which is to restore the fertility potential is becoming increasingly problematic, resulting in internal migrations.

- the consequential effects of various international or regional conferences such as Rio 92;

- the weight of bodies belonging to the UN system (FAO, UNESCO, UNEP etc.), of international NGOs (IUCN, WWF, WRI etc.) and of obligations resulting from the ratification of various

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international conventions related to a better management of natural resources;

- the weight of financial institutions (World Bank, IMF etc.)
- decisions taken by regional bodies such as CILSS;
- the need to involve further the civil society and grassroot communities;
- the increasing role of international NGOs in field activities involving better management of natural resources;
- the emergence of economic interest groups and of associations with an interest in better natural resource management;
- * village groupings set up to manage forests of the Nazinon type;
- * hunters' associations;
- * hunting trailers/developers of hunting concessions;
- * Game ranches of the Nazinga type;
- * fishermen's groupings/fishing concessions;
- the emergence of NGOs, Human Rights movements, ecomovements (Mouvement Burkinabè des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples, Naturama, Ligue des Consommateurs du Burkina etc.);
- the formation of political parties which adpoted environmental issues as priorities in their programmes (Union des Verts du Burkina, Parti Ecologique pour le Progrès etc.);
- the affirmation and greater involvement of research bodies and institutions geared towards natural resource management (IRBET, INERA, CNSF, IDR-ISN, ORSTOM, CIRAD-Forêt etc.);
- the existence of projects undertaken in a bilateral or international framework with an environmental and natural resource management component.

Frenetic activities in the field of environmental protection, backed by increasing awareness among the people as well as exchange of ideas around environmental issues cannot leave the political authorities indifferent. Better still, they are being called upon.

1.4.4. How and why were policies designed, taking into account local concerns and natural resource management?

In Burkina Faso, the National Village Land Management Programme (PNGT) is currently Government policy, taking into account local concerns and natural resource management. Why and how was the PNGT developed?

a) Socio-political pressure exerted on the Government

As space is coveted by farmers and cattle-breeders (indigenous, migrant and transhumant people) leading to bloody conflicts and against a background of high population growth, it appeared necessary to develop a new policy in relation to national territory planning.

The need to control land issues where there is an obligation to reconcile traditional management methods and the option for modern management, with State intervention, underlie the August 4th, 1985 Decree on Land Reform (RAF).

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The launching of the PNGT in 1986 falls in line with the implementation of the said RAF. It should be noted that, currently, the PNGT is actually one of three frame programmes under the National Plan of Action for the Environment (PANE).

Nowadays, the management of village lands appears to be one of the alternatives for an increase in land productivity, for a better management of natural resources towards sustainable development.

Based on the organization of grassroot communities at the village level as the only space truly perceived and controlled by mostly rural people, the PNGT aims at a number of objectives (Ref. Report submitted by Burkina Faso at UNCED, Rio 92) which may be recalled:

- to reorganize the utilization of rural space towards better management of land and environmental resources;
- to ensure adequate land security needed by farmers and cattle-breeders to develop their production activities;
- to slow down the on-going environmental degradation process and to restore the production potential of renewable natural resources;
- to control and manage internal migrations towards optimum exploitation of the land capital and of environmental resources; to sedentarize, intensify and integrate cattle-breeding and agriculture.

The development of the PNGT was a particularly open and participatory process of political reforms which intended to actually entrust responsibility with the rural communities as to the management of their own affairs, especially the management of the environment.

At this juncture, the PNGT is being materialized into pilot operations under way (ref. Evaluation Report - Burkina Faso, National Village Land Management Project, World Bank, 1991. We shall simply note that 7 stages have been identified for implementation of the village land management programme. They are the following:

- awareness-building;
- diagnosis;
- social organization of the community;
- design of the management plan;
- agreement between community and State;
- implementation;
- monitoring and post-evaluation.

b) Pressure exerted on the Government by Donors

In developing countries like Burkina Faso where most funding is provided by external donors, the latter's reactions play a particular role in changes in development policies.

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For example, in many cases, donors imposed environmental impact assessment surveys before committing funds requested by the Government.

As regards the PNGT, it should be acknowledged that donors were dissatisfied with the fact that their funds failed to produce encouraging results in the field since the 1970s. Worse still, environmental and social conditions deteriorated further because of past incoherent policies.

Thus, strong influence from donors such as the World Bank, France, Germany, the Netherlands, USAID, Switzerland and Canada was observed in the development of the PNGT policy which was extended later on to other Sahelian countries.

1.5. INTEREST CURRENTLY SHOWN BY THE GOVERNMENT IN FAVOUR OF POLICY REFORMS

Over the last two decades, Burkina Faso has been making considerable efforts in the field of policy reforms.

1.5.1. Strategies and Policies

Several policy statements and new directions related to policy reforms in the field of natural resource management have been recorded in various documents and speeches: Five-year Plan, Economic Policy, Programme of Broad Rally for Democracy and Development, Prime Minister's Policy Statement, June 2nd Address, sectoral Plans and Programmes etc.

Since 1984, the political authorities seem to have made a resolute option for participatory development if one analyses documents on the Popular Development Programme, the Five-year Popular Development Plans (1986-1990 and 1991-1995). Actually, in Burkina Faso, attempts towards participatory development date a long time back. As evidence of this trend, one could mention the existence, as far back as 1963, of rural local communities which local development plans of their own.

Over the last years, the strategies and policies which show the Government's will to reform policies in the field of natural resource management are mainly the following:

- * development of a National Village Land Management Programme which is currently exploring several innovations: funding of local development, gender approach, school curriculum, village land management plan, joint management of protected forests/riparian village lands, national monitoring of the environment, monitoring of socioeconomic and environmental impact, new policy on bush fires (early fires) etc.

- * adoption of a structural adjustment programme;

- * adoption of a National Plan of Action for the Environment which calls for a number of institutional and legal reforms (reflection is on-going);

- * watchword known as "8, 000 villages, 8, 000 forest - one school, one woodlot) launched by the President of Faso on the

occasion of the June 2nd Rallye.

- * inception of a decentralization process with the creation of urban municipalities and on-going reflection on the creation of village land management committees;

- * adoption of new approaches by the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism: programme-approach, approach as per ecological zone, village land approach;

- * 1994-1996 Policy Framework Paper which shows that the Government holds environmental protection and sustainable management of natural resources in high priority. To this end, it emphasizes a reduction in population growth, price policies for domestic energy, participation of the people in management.

1.5.2. The Government's attitudes vis-à-vis NGOs, especially in relation to policy reforms

The Government positively appreciates the efforts made by NGOs to promote development. It also respects their autonomy, their independence and their identity, but does not want principles governing NGO be diverted to other ends.

The Government would like to design, guide and coordinate the national development policy. Although there is no clear government position as to the desirable role of NGOs in policy reform, there is a tendency to confine NGOs to implementation of development projects.

This tendency is reinforced by the non-political nature that most NGOs underscore in their statutes. There are even some NGO leaders who believe that NGOs should not interfere in the definition of strategies. For example, when the "Association Vive le Paysan ((AVLP)" tried to organize a workshop on the influence of democratization on NGOs, several NGOs felt that ALVP was involved in politics.

Fortunately, in Burkina Faso, the attitudes of the various Governments vis-à-vis NGOs remained positive for a long time. The following measures certify this reality:

- * signature of an agreement between the Government and the NGO Permanent Secretariat (SPONG) on April 10th, 1987 and amended on April 26th, 1991, an agreement through which the Government shows its will to associate NGOs in the construction of society in Burkina Faso. A number of steps have been taken in favour of NGOs so as to facilitate performance of their activities.

- * participation of NGOs in consultations around territorial planning, the definition of the PANE strategy as well as the roundtable of donors who contributed to PANE which includes a component on support to NGOs.

- * involvement of the civil society, including NGOs, in reflection around several policy reform and development strategies.

- * adoption of a legislative framework (Act n° 10/92/ADP of December 15th, 1992 on freedom of association which views NGOs as organizations with a public incidence.

Among the measures taken by the Government, there is an annual meeting held by the Minister in charge of Planning with NGOs so as to discuss issues of interest for NGOs and the State. In order to reach the development objectives stated in its plans and programmes, it is in the interest of the Government to initiate policy reforms with the participation of NGOs which are partners with good knowledge of the people's requirements and constraints.

In the framework of the 1991-1995 Five-year Plan, institutional measures have been taken so that NGOs may work in harmony with national strategies and policies. The participation of NGOs in the reform of natural resource management policies falls in line with an evolutionary dynamics. The basic principle is that NGOs should increasingly act in conformity with the national development policy.

However, it should be noted that Government/NGO relations have not always been good. Sometimes, there are frictions and misunderstandings: bad reactions to criticism voiced by NGOs, conflicts of competence in the field etc.

Thus, the Government has just decided unilaterally to suspend all duty exemption measures previously granted to NGOs for the procurement of project equipment.

1.5.3. The Action of Donors in favour of pluralism

Donors, especially bilateral ones, have exerted decisive influence in the opening of the political spectrum in Burkina Faso and in facilitating NGO participation in policy reforms.

a) Action at State level

The action of donors in favour of pluralism was either direct, through statements or attitudes (Denmark, USA...) or indirect, through fora (France, European Union, Canada. In concrete terms, Donors provided support for the establishment of democratic institutions (legislative elections, National Assembly), for training in the private sector, especially the press. They also extended support to the revision of some fundamental pieces of legislation, to the dissemination of legal documents, and they encouraged collaboration between NGOs and the State.

The adoption of internal economic reforms in the early 1990s with the support of the Bretton Woods Institutions and the Community of donors had an influence on the process of policy reforms.

Moreover, some donors condition their financial contribution to the adoption of political reforms, so much so that the Government's attitude vis-à-vis NGOs is partly a consequence of donors' action.

From now on, the Government intends to have the civil society participate in the dialogue on policies, under various forms and bodies, towards the formulation of strategies and policies.

b) Action at NGO Level

At the level of NGOs, the action of donors appears on two planes. First, on the plane of the country of origin, through support extended to NGOs: financial support and framework for dialogue established by the public authorities. Second, on the plane of the beneficiary countries, the action undertaken by donors to influence the adoption of policy reforms stands as an encouragement to NGOs to participate in the political debate. Donors encourage possibilities for co-operation between NGOs and public authorities.

However, it should be mentioned that some donors do not extend support to NGOs which are interested in policy reforms because they feel that this is the province of political parties. Most donors feel that their funds should not support lobbying and political ideas. Therefore, many NGOs are afraid of being viewed by donors as political parties, which would reduced their chances to raise funds.

II. METHODS AND TOOLS USED BY NGOs SO AS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REFORM OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

2.1. THE EXPERIENCE OF NGOs IN THE FIELD OF DECISION-MAKING OF A POLITICAL NATURE AT THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

2.1.1. Historic overview of NGO participation in decision-making

Since 1960, Cathwell, a private international organization, has been represented in Burkina Faso. This international organization mostly worked through limited actions to meet the immediate requirements of disadvantaged people. As is underscored by S. SOME of the NGO Monitoring Desk (BSONG), it was really after the drought in the 1970s that many emerged with the aim of disseminating new agricultural techniques, with a view to increasing farmers' production and incomes.

After some hesitations in terms of a development policy for the rural people, the participatory approach was developed, mostly on the Central Plateau and in the Sahel where the effects of drought were most visible. This approach enabled NGOs to design limited projects with the collaboration of beneficiaries. However, up to recently, as undisputable compliance with the political options of the Government was imposed on NGOs, natural resource management policies were drafted without NGOs being actually involved.

It was from the 1984 Popular Development Programme that the Government attempted to involve NGOs in the design of plans. However, the political context was not particularly favourable to real and effective NGO participation in decision-making. More recently, the development of the second 1991-1995 Popular Development Plan and of the National Plan of Action for the Environment was more openly debated, with NGO involvement.

A better understanding of the precious role that NGOs can play as intermediaries between the central bodies and the community groupings seems to come out. Such understanding, if carefully managed, could, according to the strategies for environmental protection stated by the World Bank, favour consensus around the measures to be taken and facilitate their implementation thanks to greater adhesion from the people.

But this objective can be reached only when the latent competition between activities undertaken by State services and non-governmental activities fades away, thus enabling NGOs to play their rightful role.

On the local plane, with the "village land management" approach, the external actors henceforth work with the local people. And it is the responsibility of villagers themselves to decide on programmes to be carried out. Then, they are granted support by their partners. This approach failed "to determine the local institutional framework properly" according to A. Faure (Club du Sahel, 1992. 32

2.2. EXAMPLES OF NGO PARTICIPATION IN LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL REFORMS

Save a few exceptions, most NGOs did not play a significant role in policy reforms. However, using three examples, we shall try and consider the tools and methods used by: the Association Vive le Paysan (AVLP), the Fondation NATURAMA and the Federation des Unions de Groupements Naam.

2.2.1. Case of the "Association Vive le Paysan (AVLP)"

a- Strategy and field of intervention

The Association Vive le Paysan is a typical peasant organization. Founded and managed by peasants, it undertakes its activities with the contribution of resource persons, external technical and/or financial support.

As for area, the AVLP covers the departments (administrative districts) of Saponé, Komsilga and Kayao in the Bazèga Province.

Its fields of intervention bear on the following five major sectors:

- Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Environment;
- Formal and non-formal education (schooling of children and adult literacy;
- Human and animal health;
- Training of members and guidance;
- Improvement of the status of women in development.

Established in Burkina Faso in 1979, the AVLP's current objective is to help the peasant be capable and aware of being the main actor of his own well-being. Its programme-motto summarizes all its efforts: "Millet and water for All".

b- Technique and methodology used to participate in reforms

Through colloquies on various topics and also concrete actions in the field, the Association can influence decision-making at the provincial and government levels. This indirect influence may be explained by the fact the AVLP's approach demands that it is part and parcel of the village community so as to maintain the confidence and complicity necessary for activities undertaken to be successful.

c- The real reasons behind this successful venture

Generally, AVLP chooses to work on rural development activities which are collective in nature, involving a deep sense of village unity, with mobilization and active participation of the beneficiaries. This allows, from the identification stage of projects with the concerned villagers, to reach clear agreement on the desired objective and the participation of each and everyone.

In addition to this, some factors played an important role in the NGO's success. They are the following:

- conviction at work;
- effort to understand the rural world so as to build confidence between the local people and the AVLPL team. In order to reach this objective, the permanent presence of the team in the field has been an asset (its headquarters are established in its area of intervention.
- the establishment of a light body in the shape of a reverse pyramid;
- the period of creation (very few NGOs existed in 1979.

2.2.2. Case of the Fondation des Amis de la Nature (NATURAMA)

a- Strategy and fields of intervention

NATURAMA works towards the dissemination and materialization of the ideal of Nature preservation and of its resources for sustainable development.

To this end, it:

- gives priority to support to local initiatives, especially those taken by already organized communities which are aware of the fact that rational management of natural resources towards sustainable development is achieved by the rural communities and for them.
- endeavours so that its interventions in the field become models which, on a demonstration scale, are likely to convince the public and development stakeholders that the advocated approaches and techniques are well grounded.
- looks for ways and means to grant women and children their rightful place in the design and implementation of programmes related to the protection of the environment and to tap indigenous knowledge in this field.
- endeavours to foster sound but critical co-operation relations with public and private partners, aimed ultimately at creating or strengthening genuine environmental awareness in the identification and implementation of research and development programmes.

The existence and action of NATURAMA are based on a programme and a strategy which meet fundamental concerns in the field and which have been fed by experiences acquired by several institutions in the field of natural resource management and of continuous surveillance of the environment.

The Foundation has established a Scientific Council and operational working groups whose members competence allows to address specific topics in-depth.

The current programme of NATURAMA aims at environmental communication for development, through the following four major objectives:

- to develop environmental education, especially among the youth (school children, students, youth movements, etc. Information activities are backed by a quarterly newsletter named "NATURA".
- to develop demonstration projects in the field, especially in relation to the preservation of bio-diversity. This was started in 1992 with a joint NATURAM/WWF-USA/FFPS-UK, aimed at sustainable management of the Pô National Park.

- to conduct studies on specific topics related to the environment and development. Several studies have already been completed on: poverty and environment, the "3 fights" watchword, operation "8, 000 villages, 8, 000 forests", operation "one school, one woodlot".
- to promote communication between environmental NGOs and the training of trainers.

Established in 1990, the Foundation also comprises NATURAMA clubs, mainly composed of school children, students, teachers, civil servants, soldiers and stakeholders in the field.

b- Technique and methodology used to participate in reforms

The main techniques used are:

- * working group reflection on given topics;
- * contacts with the concerned bodies;
- * search of partnership with other NGOs around a given issue;
- * utilization of the press to inform and gather support from the public.

In this connection, NATURAMA successfully organized in 1991 a campaign against the occupation, by administrative buildings, of the protected forest in the vicinity of the Ouagadougou dam. This testifies that the highest political authorities attaches importance to environmental views expressed by NGOs.

In the same vein, it organized a protest against the indiscriminate felling of trees lining up major roads. There again, the Ministry of Public Works paid attention to NATURAMA's arguments.

c- The reasons behind the Foundation's success

They boil down to:

- the existence of a scientific and technical basis which enables the Foundation to take a stand in critical situations. Diversity in the backgrounds of its membership appears to be an asset in the knowledge of policies and a relevant analysis thereof.
- rapidity in reaction through critical analysis of actions that are harmful for the environment.
- the development of partnership with national and international NGOs addressing environmental issues.

2.2.3. Case of the Federation des Unions de Groupements Naam

a- Strategy and field of intervention

Strategies must be based on the physical and cultural characteristics of regions. Therefore, according to L.B. OUEDRAOGO (1990), Chairman of the "Six Ss" association, "what is essential is to be capable of making people feel responsible of their own problems and help them manage the said problems in their totality".

So, the method of the "three As" (Author, Actor, Arm) used by the Naam Groupings enable them to avoid the obstacles related to customs and prohibitions without destroying them.

According to L.B. OUEDRAOGO (1994), it consists in "bringing ingeniously the peasant to design his project by himself (Author), to discuss it with the outreach worker/technician who helps him build it. Implementation of the project by its designer (Actor) is done under the critical watchful eye of the technician for possible useful advice. During the operation, efforts resort to sustained will, love for work done properly, determination and motivation. Such commitment and concentration of mind captivate the person. Which annihilates the soul and allow to pay less attention to customs and prohibitions". The efficiency of the instrument allows to convince even more.

As regards the field of intervention of the Naam Groupings, it is built around limited urgencies (hunger control, water supply...) or around long term objectives (community activities for the protection and restoration of the environment.

In order to back all these fields, training is a priority activity. According to the Federation of the Unions of Naam Groupings (FUGN), "the training strategy is based on responsibility-building, decentralization and steady capitalization of the peasants' knowledge and know-how" (FUGN, 1994.

FUGN was created in 1967 in the Yatenga Province. Then a proliferation of groupings occurred in neighbouring provinces and regions further afield. Nowadays, the Federation of the Unions of Naam Groupings consists of 4, 700 groupings in 18 Provinces (out of a total of 30 in the country.

The experience of the Naam groupings in Burkina Faso spread to other Sahelian countries¹ and led to the creation of the international NGO "Six Ss"², based in Burkina.

1. The Sahelian countries members of "Six Ss" are: Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo and soon, Chad.

2. "Six Ss" means: Se Servir de la Saison Sèche en Savane et au Sahel: To profitably use the dry season in the savannah and the Sahel

b- Technique and methodology used by the Federation to participate in policy reforms

The influence of the FUGN on the local people is so strong that archaic policies can no longer mobilize them. Government services are obliged to take this into account when designing their new policies.

Despite its long experience and its fame, this NGO was only called upon by Government bodies to contribute to the design of five-year plans. It has not been associated to the design of other policies such as those related to land reform.

The fact that smaller NGOs based in Ouagadougou have been invited to fora where "Six Ss" has more expertise perhaps shows voluntarism and the non-systematization of NGO consultation in the definition natural resource management policies.

c- The reasons behind the Federation's success

The federation's achievements are mostly a result of its method of intervention. The Federation:

- works with existing bodies and uses the local methods. Which excludes domination and creates harmony between the groupings through the peasants' culture, language and aspirations. This builds confidence and facilitates the spontaneous creation of groupings by imitation.
- proposes collective activities which takes into account the peasants' requirements and know-how.
- organizes solidarity networks to support local initiatives while favouring the most disadvantaged. According to OUEDRAOGO (1990, 95, 96) "it accompanies new associations when they start and infant activities by developing training and outreach activities. In co-operation with other partners, it has established an efficient support system which allows to amplify the peasants' efforts, while respecting their autonomy.

2.3. BEST PRACTICES, TOOLS AND PERIODS USED TO INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKERS

Among the consultation mechanisms existing between NGOs on the one hand, and between NGOs and the State on the other hand, the following may be mentioned:

a) Traditional mechanisms

- The meeting organized to present New Year wishes to the President of Faso which has always been an occasion for mentioning the problems and wishes of NGOs,
- the annual meeting of NGOs with the Minister in charge of Planning,
- the NGO Monitoring Desk (BSONG),
- the NGO Permanent Secretariat (SPONG)

b) The new mechanisms

- The Programme of Associations working for the Environment and Development (PAED)
- The General Consultation Framework of NGOs and associations on the Environment and Development (CGCONGA/ED)
- The second House of the Assembly of the People's Deputies

Communication deficits may lead to contestations from the local people when measures taken are against their interests. An NGO leader in the Yatenga Province told us the story of this politician whose compound was turned into a venue for a sit-in organized by peasants, following a decision to put an end to the exploitation of an area which had been occupied for a long time by a village community.

It should be noted that there is great interest among NGO to express their opinions and share their experiences for the development of reforms.

III. IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT POSSIBILITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

3.1. CURRENT INTEREST AND CAPACITY OF NGOs TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICY REFORMS

The current interest and capacity of NGOs to participate in policy reforms in the environmental field vary very much. In the field, it can be noted that NGOs mostly play a role of implementing agencies. However, their special relations with the people at grassroots level and field difficulties related to deficiencies in the policies in force raise their interest in sharing their opinions during the design of policy reforms.

3.1.1. NGOs with policy reforms in their mandate

In Burkina, NGOs with policy reforms in their mandate are very rare. Even the environmental NGOs highlight in their statutes objectives related to the implementation of concrete activities in the field: reforestation, soil defense and restoration, education of the public, training of the people etc.

Most NGOs systematically underscore their non-political nature in their statutes, as if this was imposed by the national legislation. The few NGOs with policy reforms in their mandate are but exceptions which confirm the rule.

This is the case for NATURAMA whose statutes provide that:

"NATURAMA intends:

- to design or contribute to designing programmes related to sustainable management of natural resources;
- to organize consultations under the form of conferences, workshops, seminars, colloquies and symposia on particularly sensitive topics in relation to higher consideration for natural resources in development activities".

3.1.2. NGO networks and alliances

In order to ensure minimum coordination in their activities, the Government established the NGO Monitoring Desk (BSONG) in 1984 with an objective of standardization of working relations between NGOs and State bodies. NGOs themselves saw the need to coordinate their activities and created groupings: SPONG, BLONGA.

- The NGO Permanent Secretariat (SPONG) is the largest consortium, gathering both national and international NGOs.
- The NGO and Associations Liaison Office (BLONGA) which is a specific grouping of national NGOs.

So as to improve their performance and impact, several NGOs and associations operating in Burkina came to understand the need to nurture partnership among themselves and, in July 1993, they established a "Programme of Associations on the Environment and Development (PAED)".

In October 1993, other NGOs established a consortium called "General Consultation Framework of NGOs and Associations on the Environment and Development (CGCONGA/ED).

The network of NGOs ("Six Ss/Naam/SOS international can also be mentioned).

3.1.3. NGOs' Major concerns

Most national NGOs came to life by the will of people originating from a department, a province or region, willing to contribute to development in their region (PNGT, 1990).

All foreign NGOs signed a frame settlement convention with the Government of Burkina Faso, whereby they are authorized to work in those sectors which are determined in their objectives.

Generally, NGOs are humanitarian organizations: health, village water supply, agriculture, small credits, job creation etc.

3.1.4. NGOs' attitude vis-à-vis the Government

In Burkina Faso, the Government tries to better coordinate NGO activity. The NGO Monitoring Desk has been created to this end. However, despite the existence of networks such as the SPONG, NGOs face difficulties in consulting, formulating positions and put them successfully to the Government. Therefore, most of the time, their attitudes remain conformist.

Despite such a situation, NGOs are generally mindful to preserve their independence vis-à-vis government bodies. As a result, they show some reservation or distance vis-à-vis measures taken by the State.

It should also be noted that there exists a communication deficit between NGOs and the Government, owed to the many internal NGO contradictions.

3.1.5. The influence of environmental NGOs (ONGE) in Burkina

a) in relation to the profit-making private sector

Environmental NGOs rarely have an influence on the profit-making private sector. They failed to develop critical attitudes vis-à-vis the harmful activities of this sector on the environment: companies causing pollution and nuisance, enterprises exploiting firewood and timber, hunting societies etc. Besides, the profit-making private sector rarely funds environmental NGOs.

However, some twenty companies participate in funding NATURAMA's programmes. These companies and firms work in various fields of activity such as the building and public works industry, the audio-visual industry, tourism and hotel industry, hunting for sports, services etc. Their common denominator is that they are sensitive or have been sensitized by NATURAMA to environmental issues in their fields of activity.

b) in relation to the non environmental NGOs

These NGOs have a rather passive attitude in this field. Instead of co-operation and complementarity among themselves, it can be noted in the field that some non environmental NGOs are interested in everything, each trying to embark on any activity depending on possibilities that come their way and, consequently, they cannot deepen any field of competence or critical approach in a specific development area.

c) in relation to the media

Generally speaking, environmental NGOs have a pedagogical vision of development. The outcomes of their activities attract the media which echo them. The press is extremely important in disseminating the ideas of environmental NGOs in Burkina. Through the press, NGOs can reach all opinion or pressure groups, be it in the general framework of policies governing the exploitation of natural resources or the implementation of the said policies or quite simply through technical and practical activities.

Such an influence could be reinforced if NGOs had a group approach in their activities, if they made better use of means of communication and if they took advantage of possibilities offered to them in this field at the national level.

d) in relation to individuals and other groups interested in environmental issues

NGOs undertake concrete and practical activities, in consultation with the people. The outcomes of these activities modify the conscience and behaviour of the people. Such influence can be verified at the level of both the local community as a whole and the individual.

For example, the Association for the Development of African Fauna Breeding (ADEFA) successfully demonstrated, through the creation of the Nazinga game ranch, possibilities for regeneration and rational and sustained exploitation of fauna resources. In the same vein, through media campaigns in favour of the protected forest in the vicinity of the Ouagadougou dam (Bois de Boulogne), NATURAMA contributed to creating psychological conditions to salvage this forest.

3.2. POSSIBILITIES FOR NGOs AND OTHERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICY REFORMS IN THE FIELD OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

NGOs highly contribute to the training of the people so that they progressively cater for themselves. That is why they are considered as close partners and are involved in major debates on the search of solutions to national problems.

41 They are the first ones to initiate peasant self-promotion. Indeed, NGOs go to the people with the intention of contributing to the success of local actions: therefore, they negotiate their

participation in local development. Conversely, many government services have so far considered that the people are the ones who must participate rather.

3.2.1. NGOs' capacity to influence policy reforms at the local as compared to the national level

Through their sustained interventions in villages, many NGOs have great local influence. This is understandable, for their approach ended up creating privileged relations.

This status of privileged relations between NGOs and the people is a possibility for NGOs to influence policy reforms at the local level. In this sense, NGOs appear as guides for the people, their intermediaries when raising some issues with the local administrative authorities.

On the contrary, at the national level, this influence is lesser, although one could note that NGO actions reduce the omnipresence of the State in all development fields.

For NGOs to have an influence at the national level, they need to stand as valuable partners for the Government. For this to happen, they have to fill their own deficiencies in terms of organization, finance and human resources.

Indeed, NGOs generally have limited human and financial resources. This does not prevent them from being efficient at the local level. However, in order to be in a position to negotiate as Government partners, they need capacities to understand national policies and their interdependence. This presupposes the recruitment of management staff with a good level of information and political culture.

In the current state of affairs, NGOs are not government partners, but rather implementing agencies at the disposal of the Government.

3.2.2 Possibilities offered to NGOs to stimulate policy reforms

NGOs are an interface between decision-makers and the local people. This position gives them some sort of legitimacy vis-à-vis government bodies and recognition from the beneficiary communities.

In Burkina Faso, several factors stand as possibilities for NGOs to stimulate policy reforms:

- the democratization process started in 1990-1992 calls for a reform of development policies at all levels. Since all these policies have an impact on the environment, reforms related to natural resource management will be iterative and will be continued over a long period of time;
- the structural adjustment programme adopted by the Government and which advocates a new vision of national labour division, through better involvement of the private sector and NGOs;

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- the implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Environment. This process calls for an updating of institutional mechanisms and imposes NGO participation in the management of the environment;
- the inception of the decentralization process. This supposes reform in the management of the urban environment (entrusting responsibility with the municipalities) and as regards the ownership of some natural resources (municipal forests, provincial forests, departmental forests etc.;
- the coming development of a National Plan of Action for Desertification Control, in implementation of the provisions of the International Convention on Desertification which was adopted in October 1994;
- the implementation and monitoring of the provisions adopted by the Rio summit (June 1992): convention on bio-diversity, Agenda 21 etc.

3.2.3. Means that allow better NGO information as to the opportuneness of policy reforms

The involvement of NGOs in policy reforms requires their being regularly informed on the new orientations envisaged by the State. But to achieve this, it is necessary to have a consultation framework between NGOs and between NGOs and the State.

In this connection, the following recent steps could be mentioned:

- appointment of members to sit on the Economic and Social Council;
- appointment of NGO representatives to the second House of Parliament;
- representation of SPONG in the PANE Coordination Committee;
- creation of the BSONG within the Co-operation Head Office;
- NGO representation during the sessions of the PNGT Management Committee.

The annual meeting between the Government (Ministry in charge of Planning) and NGOs would benefit if it were reinforced by initiatives to hold meetings with other Ministries (for example, Ministry of the Environment/Environmental NGOs. This would be then an opportunity to systematize NGO information and their participation in the considered reform projects.

Also, with the on-going decentralization, it would be advisable to set up, in each Province, a consultation framework between the various development partners (including NGOs) who work in the region and the local political authorities.

3.2.4. Major constraints to popular participation

No development objective in Burkina Faso can be achieved in an environment under perpetual degradation. And such degradation cannot be controlled in the absence of an appropriate natural resource management policy. The importance granted by the political authorities to this issue is easily understandable.

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However, there are many new departures and dissatisfactions. Nowadays, it is agreed that the non participation of the people in the development of those natural resource management policies is the major cause of repeated disappointments.

Indeed, could the people be expected to participate frankly in implementing a policy which is not their own? But what are the constraints to popular participation in the definition of natural resource management policies?

a) non-systematization of popular participation

The persistence of the colonial natural resource management policy materializes through authoritarian legislation and institutional framework where participation in decision-making and implementation is private ground for the administrative elite.

Generally, the Administration's line of argument is that it lacks the necessary resources to inform and involve the people in the definition of legislation governing natural resource management. This line of argument is strengthened by the fact that no legislation systematically compels administrations to consult the people when defining development strategies. So everything depends on the good will of administrations.

b) centralization of decision-making systems

This is another weakness inherited from colonisation. Indeed, pending the entry into force of decentralization, the law does not provide for provincial or regional policies. All policies are national, detailed and binding all over the territory without any consideration for diversity in ecosystems and socio-cultural and economic realities.

Under such circumstances, it is considered that the State is to design policies and instruments for implementation (laws, institutions etc.), as the representative of national interests and of citizens. Hence political decisions taken at the top of state institutions and implemented at the bottom line. However, it is accepted that the outcomes of this approach are not encouraging.

c) illiteracy and dismissal of peasant knowledge

Illiteracy (which affects some 80% of the people) and inadequate information are major constraints to popular participation in the reform of natural resource management policies in Burkina Faso. Such illiteracy has often been used as a pretense to marginalize the people in decision-making related to natural resource management.

However, the actual reason behind this marginalization seems to be the dismissal of peasants' knowledge and rationality in the definition of natural resource management policies.

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d) legal constraints

Drafting legislation is generally technocratic. For a long time legislation on natural resources in Burkina Faso has been based on the preservation-exclusion logic. This means that, in the legislator's eye, there was a need to protect an environment perceived as fragile and vulnerable by substracting it from the action of hostile local people. The latter were seen as a major source of environmental degradation.

Throughout all instruments designed by the State, there is a permanent concern to constantly assert state ownership on natural resources, so as to ensure total control and organization of exploitation.

As a consequence, the people lost their sense of responsibility and feel nowadays that natural resource management should be the responsibility of government administrative and technical institutions.

Nowadays, new conceptual and policy considerations are perceptible; which is a sign of hope for the creation of conditions conducive to popular participation in the definition of development strategies.

3.2.5. Items in the policy reform process where NGO contribution could have the greatest impact

Eight particular items drew our attention:

a) Decentralization

The Government just embarked on a decentralization policy by establishing a national committee. For the time being, this process aims at establishing 33 municipalities in 1995. It is planned that proposals should be made for continuation of decentralization at village level.

This issue is very important for an improvement in Burkina's current natural resource management systems for two reasons:
- At the level of urban centres, there is a need for policy reforms towards responsibility-building among municipalities, especially for the management of some municipal forests and generally for the management of urban and peri-urban natural resources.

This will require reflection where NGOs could play a major role in the design and implementation trials of the new policies.

Indeed, their experience and, most of all, their non governmental status ensure indispensable neutrality.

45 - At the rural level, NGOs are also in a good position to contribute to reflection, based on their experience and sound knowledge of the field at grassroot level.

b) Operation "8, 000 villages, 8, 000 forests - one school, one woodlot

This commitment of the President of Faso offers a favourable framework to Environmental NGOs to highlight their achievements in the field in the areas of village forests and environmental education in schools.

NGOs should take initiatives to support this major political project with their advice. They could well play an efficient role in terms of communication between villagers and public authorities.

c) Poverty control

It is well known that poverty is often the major cause of natural resource degradation. In our Sahelian countries, the relationship between poverty and environment is obvious.

Nowadays, NGOs, Governments and donors are mindful to alleviate poverty and improve natural resource management. This supposes political, institutional and legislative reforms so as to take local realities into account, to ensure that the new mechanisms will lead to greater mobilization of village communities and have an impact on natural resource management.

To this end, NGOs are the most appropriate bodies to advise the Government and ensure monitoring of the progress made on this issue.

d) Upgrading of peasant knowledge

NGOs could express the consistency of peasant knowledge and prepare grassroot viewpoints during discussion on policy reforms. This would enable the Government to receive sincere reactions from villagers on preliminary draft policies. Indeed, NGOs are in a good position to understand peasants and discuss with government services.

e) Legislative reforms

The Government is about to design a new forest code and implementation legislation on the Code of the Environment. The contribution of NGOs could have an impact in such processes for they reflect better the viewpoints of communities on topics such as hunting, indiscriminate tree felling, bush fires etc. Indeed, they present the advantage of being neither judges nor parties.

f) Environmental impact assessment

The new Environment Code has just imposed an obligation to carry out environmental impact assessment for all activities likely to have repercussions on the environment.

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It is possible that environment impact assessment will be carried out by private individuals (consulting firms, consultants) and submitted to the administration for final decision. It would be advisable to provide counter-expertise which will be carried out by third parties before appraisal of the conclusions by the Administration.

This could be done by a consortium of Environmental NGOs whose field of competence and environmental ethics will help avoid environmental impact assessments which are poor or unsatisfactory.

g) Prior dissemination of research outcome

Many scientific research outcomes need trials on a few sites before dissemination.

In the same vein, new political concepts need trial on a few stations before final adoption. NGOs could play a role in prior dissemination in their workplaces before such outcomes are validated.

h) The village land management approach

This is the main sustainable development policy in rural areas and which is on-going in Burkina and some neighbouring countries.

As such, many sub-policies are currently under discussion: funding of local development, village land management plans, gender approach (women and village land management), environmental and socioeconomic monitoring of village lands etc. The contribution of NGOs would be highly desirable in all this reflection work.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the current climate of political opening and in the light of ideas that were developed in the previous section, the following recommendations seem to be the most relevant ones:

1- to raise awareness among competent NGOs as to their possible roles in strategy reforms, for they not aware enough that their contribution could be decisive the formulation of natural resource management policies;

2- to work towards unity in action through networks and alliances so as to improve internal partnership which is timid yet and be more credible in the eye of the Government.

3- to build among competent NGOs a proposal force likely to stand as a valid government partner in the field of natural resource management policy reform. In this sense, NGOs should be involved in the legislative reforms on the new forest code which is under way and on the implementation legislation of the Environment Code.

4- to work towards actual decentralization of natural resource management in the framework of the national decentralization process started by the Government.

5- to take advantage of NGO experience and sound knowledge of the field in order to experiment large scale programmes such as "8, 000 villages, 8, 000 forest - one school, one woodlot". To this end, NGOs could, for example:

- * clarify the management of village forests;
- * help guide environmental education in schools;
- * stand as intermediaries in the field of communication between villagers and authorities.

6- to ensure monitoring of initiatives for poverty control, so as to slow down the resulting degradation of natural resources;

7- to help upgrade peasant knowledge, especially when designing preliminary draft policies;

8- to propose a Government-NGO forum which would meet periodically to exchange information and share experience in terms of the relevance of natural resource management policies. This would solve the absence of framework for NGO expression.

9- to convince donors that the funding of NGO initiatives in the field of natural resource management policy reform is well-grounded. Indeed, most donors still feel that NGOs should not be involved in policy reforms, an attitude which does not allow to upgrade the valuable lessons acquired by NGOs with the people, albeit often with donor's financial support. It would be advisable that donors back the initiatives which could be developed by NGOs in this field.

Besides, donors should demonstrate their will to work with NGOs by allocating more funds towards capacity-building.

10- to build a competent counter-expertise force, capable of collaborating with the Government to consider the conclusion of environmental impact assessments.

11- to co-operate with research institutions in order to contribute to prior dissemination of scientific research outcomes by field trial. The same holds true for some new political concepts.

12- to work towards the imposition of a legal obligation to consult the people as regards policy reforms.

13- to attach great import to the training of their leaders with a view to increasing their competence in the field of national strategies, which will enable them to better apply sound policies and to contribute to improving those which are less so.

14- to promote the dissemination of NGO experience in the field of natural resource management. This could be started by broad dissemination of this report among interested NGOs and concerned government bodies and by a feedback seminar to validate the proposals tabled herein.

15- to extend financial support towards a framework for capacity-building for those NGOs interested in natural resource management policy reform.

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ANNEX 1 : STRUCTURES OF THE MINISTRY
OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

ANNEX 2 : STRUCTURES OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ENVIRONMENT (PANE)

ANNEX 3 : LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL NGO'S and ASSOCIATIONS**a) List of associations**

SIGLES	NOMS	ADRESSES BF	Tél (226)	Ville BF
AAEDC	Association Africaine pour l'Environnement et le Développement Communautaire	BP 1051	30 03 90 30 77 69	Ouaga
ABJ ABUSE	Association Belle du Jour Association Burkinabè pour la Sauvegarde de l'Environnement	- BP 7135	30 10 45 -	Ouaga Ouaga
ADEEPS	Association pour le Développement et l'Exploitation des Essences Protégées du Sahel	BP 4608	-	
ADESSI	Association pour le Développement Economique et Social de la province de la Sissili	-	31 16 45	Ouaga
AMIS DE LA TERRE ANAR	Amis de la Terre Association Nationale d'Action Rurale	- -	31 24 30 30 85 09	Ouaga Ouaga
ANDAB	Association Nationale pour le développement de l'Agro-écologie au Burkina Faso	BP 524	30 61 12	Ouaga
ANGDB	Agence Nationale de Gestion des Déchets du Burkina	11 BP 202	26 97 78 /04	Abidjan
APENRTA	Association pour la Promotion des Energies Nouvelles et Renouvelables et des Technologies Appropriées	01 BP 1969	-	Ouaga
A.P.S.T	Association des Professionnels des Sciences de la Terre du Burkina	01 BP 1639	30 86 39	Ouaga
A.R.A.E	Agence de Récyclage pour l'Environnement en Afrique	04 BP 1827	45 55 11	Abidjan
A.S.A.A.E.A	Association Secours à l'Artisanat d'Art et à l'Ecologie en Afrique	01 BP 4266	-	Ouaga
A.S.A.R	Association pour le Soutien aux Actions Rurales	-	30 30 35	Ouaga
ASS.KOLOG-TAABA B.L.O.N.G.A	Bureau de Liaison des ONG du Burkina	-	30 86 16	Ouaga
F.B.A.C.U	Federation Burkinabè des Associations et Clubs Unesco	-	30 68 05 /06	Ouaga
I.CO.MOS	Conseil International des Monuments et Sites.	75 Rue du temple, 72003	-	Paris
O.O.S	Opération Oasis Sahel	-		Ouaga

SA.J.AC	Sahel-Jeunesse-Action	BP 7021	-	Ouaga
MO.JE.D	Mouvement de la Jeunesse pour le Développement	-	-	Ouaga
PRO.S.A.P.A.D	Programme de Solidarité et d'Assistance des Partenaires d'Appui au Développement	BP 3160	-	Ouaga
A.P.E.A.P	Association pour la Protection de l'Environnement et l'Auto-Promotion Paysanne	06 BP 9804	-	Ouaga

b) LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL NGO's IN BURKINA FASO

ABAC	Association Burkinabè d'Action Communautaire.	01 BP 4071	36 26	Ouaga
ABBD	Association Belgo-Buriné pour le développement	BP 9800	30 08 29	Ouaga
ABPAM	Association pour la promotion des Aveugles et Malvoyants.	BP 5588	30 33 54	Ouaga
ADEEPS	Association pour le développement et l'exploitation des Essences Protégées du Sahel.	01 BP 4608	-	Ouaga
ADESSI	Association pour le développement Economique de la Province de la Sissili.	04 BP 8271	31 16 45	Ouaga
ADRA	Adventist Development and relief Agency (Agence Adventiste d'Aide et de développement.	BP 4273	30 09 38	Ouaga
ADRK	Association pour le Développement de la Région de KAYA	BP 54	45 35 29	Kaya
ADRTOM	Association pour le Développement de la Région de Toma	BP 164	53 60 41	Toma
ADRY	Associatin pour le Développement Rural du Yaanga.	-	6	Ouargaye
AEC/BF	Aide à l'Enfance-Canada (Save the Children Canada).	01 BP 1076	30 63 23	Ouaga
APP	Association Pour la Productivité	BP 72	77 00 81	Fada N'gourma
ASERB	Association des Eglises Evangéliques Réformées du Burkina	BP 269	44	Kongoussi
NATURAMA	Fondation des Amis de la Nature.	BP 6133	36 28 42	Ouaga
AFB	Amicale des Femmes Burkinabè.	BP 3228	30 20 12	Ouaga
AFRICARE	Africare	01 BP 608	30 21 01	Ouaga
AFVP	Association Française des Volontaires du Progrès.	01 BP 947	30 70 43	Ouaga
AICDS	Association Internationale pour la Coopération et le Développement au Sahel.	BP 7129	30 62 51	Ouaga
AMI	Alliance Missionnaire Internationale.	BP 640	33 34 20	Ouaga
AMURT	Amanda Marga Universal Relief Team.	BP 3665	34 01 28	Ouaga
ANAR	Association Nationale d'Action Rurale.	BP 2314	30 32 53	Ouaga
APSS	Association pour la Promotion de l'Elevage au Sahel et en Savane.	BP 2694	33 43 02	Ouaga

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Annex 4 : LIST OF PERSONS MET DURING THIS SURVEY.

N°	NOMS ET PRENOMS	ADRESSES
1	ZEBA Souleymane	Président de la Fondation NATURAMA
2	BOGNOUNOU Ouétian	Chercheur à l'Institut de Recherche en Biologie et Ecologie Tropicale IRBET/CNRST.
3	OUEDRAOGO Bernard Lédéa	Président, fondateur de la Fédération des Unions des Groupements Naam.
4	DAH HIEN Daniel	Ligue des Consommateurs du Burkina
5	Mme OUEDRAOGO Haoua	Centre National des Semences Forestières
6	LOMPO Jamano	Secrétariat Permanent du Plan d'Action National pour l'Environnement
7	HIEN Justin	Direction Générale de la Coopération
8	BAMBA Bogna Yahaya	Journaliste au Quotidien national SIDWAYA
9	COMPAORE Albert	Inspection Contrôle Interne du Ministère de l'Environnement et du Tourisme
10	PARE Isaïe	Responsable sectoriel de la Région Ouest de l'AFVP (région de la Bougouriba, Sissili, Houet, Mouhoun, Ganzourgou, Sourou)
11	SOME Serge	Responsable du suivi Administratif de la Documentation au Bureau du Suivi des Organisations non Gouvernementales (BSONG)
12	NIKIEMA G. Edouard	Office National d'Aménagement des Terroirs.
13	ZONGO Jean-Didier	MBDHP 01 BP 1895 Ouagadougou 01 Tél.: 38 11 14
14	ZEBA Idrissa	NATURAMA, 01 BP 6133 Ouagadougou 01 Tél.: 36 28 42
15	KAWANE A Jean-Baptiste	SPONG, 01 BP 131 Ouagadougou 01 Tél.: 30 62 63
16	Tiga B. ZABRE	AVLP, 05 BP 6274 Ougadougou 05 Tél.: 31 16 36
17	André Eugène ILBOUDO	AVLP, 05 BP 6274 Ougadougou 05 Tél.: 31 16 36
18	Hamado SAWADOGO	VOISINS MONDIAUX, 01 BP 9248 Ouagadougou 01 Tél.: 34 83 30
19	Issaka KABORE	AFVP, 01 BP 947 Ouagadougou 01. Tél.: 30 70 43
20	SOME L. Magloire	NATURAMA, 06 BP 6133 Ouagadougou 06. Tél.: 36 28 42
21	MILLOGO S. Laurent	SANREM-CRPS/USAID, Tél.: 30 68 08/ 30 18 06
22	KAMBOU M. Clarisse	UICN, 01 BP 3133 Ouagadougou 01. Tél.: 36 21 19
23	ZERBO D. Pierre	SECOS, 03 BP 7126 Ouagadougou 03. Tél.: 31 63 98

ASIDIS	Association de Solidarité Internationale pour le Développement Ingré au Sahel.	01 BP 262	31 28 88	Ouaga
AVD	Association des Volontaires pour le Développement Autopromotion et Solidarité.	01 BP 4623	30 16 09 30 86 16	Ouaga
AVLP	Association Vive Le Paysan.	05 BP 6274	31 16 36	Ouaga
BEL	Bureau d'Etude et de Liaison.	BP 1195	30 60 25	Ouaga
CARITAS	Caritas Burkinabè.	01 BP 1083	30 64 73	Ouaga
CDMRN	Comité de Développement du Monde Rural "NOOG-TAABA".	BP 336	30 97 45	Ziniaré
CDRY	Comité de Développement de la Région de Yako.	BP 29	30 90 56	Yako
CEAS	Centre Ecologique Albert	BP 3306	30 26 35	Ouaga
CECI	Schweizer.		30 23 93	
CFCF	Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération Internationale.	01 BP 3440	30 63 22	Ouaga
	Comité Française Contre la Faim.	-	-	-
CLUSA	Cooperative League of USA (Ligue des Coopératives de Etats Unis).	06 BP 9277	33 57 95	Ouaga
CMA	Christian and Missionary Alliance.	BP 128	98 02 89	Bobo Dsso
CRB	Croix Rouge Burkinabè.	BP 1200	30 08 77	Ouaga
CRS-BF(CATHWELL)	Catholic Relief Services-USCC.	01 BP 469	30 23 53	Ouaga
CVCS	Centro Volontari Cooprazione allo Sviluppo.	BP 312	97 08 17	Bobo Dsso
DED	Service de Volontaires Allemands pour le Développement.	BP 351	30 20 88	Ouaga
DELWENDE	Association pour le Développement "DELWENDE"	02 BP 5178	30 29 24	Ouaga
DIAKONIA	Diakonia	01 BP 3191	34 04 01	Ouaga
EAU VIVE	Association EAU VIVE	01 BP 2512	30 75 52	Ouaga
EFB	Entraide Féminine Burkinabè.	01 BP 339	30 81 39	Ouaga
FCD	Fonds pour la Coopération au Développement (Solidarité S).	BP 464	33 55 24	Ouaga
FDC/SCF	Fondation de Développement Communautaire (Save the Children Federation.)	01 BP 642	30 64 38	Ouaga
FONADES	Fondation National pour le Développement de la Solidarité.	BP 523	30 01 46 31 01 61	Ouaga
FUGN	Fédération des Unions des Groupements Naam.	BP 100	55 04 11	Ouahigouya
GRADE-FRB	Groupe de Recherche et d'Action pour le Développement Endogène de la Femme Rurale du Burkina.	01 BP 3656	30 32 92	Ouaga
ILES DE PAIX	Iles de Paix Yalogo	BP 5379	31 01 72	Ouaga
INADES FORMATION	Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et Social.	01 BP 1022	30 20 70	Ouaga
LVIA	Association Internationale des Volontaires Laics.	01 BP 783	30 97 27	Ziniaré
MANI TESE '76	Mani Tese '76.	01 BP 5365	31 06 00	Ouaga
NOVIB	Organisation Neerlandaise pour la Coopération Internationale au Développement.	BP 9037	36 30 32	Ouaga