

Ecosystem Accounting and Forests: Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward for Uganda

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Introduction: ENR Valuation studies

- First attempts were in 1992 covered forests, and urban wetland in Kampala City (Nakivubo channel)
 - Not comprehensive
 - Limited to valuation of provisioning services of Forest Ecosystems in the country
 - Did not penetrate the System of National Accounting
 - Were however widely used by ENR sector to demonstrate the contribution of the sector to the GDP

ENR Valuation Studies

- The ENR Sector Working Group (ENR SWG) realized that valuation of ENR is a management tool
 - Make a case for more budget resource allocation
 - Demonstrating the contribution of ENR to development objectives
 - Commissioned various resource valuation studies during the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP-Uganda's PRSP during 2002-2008)

ENR Valuation Studies

- The studies demonstrated the total economic contribution of ENR (Forestry, Fisheries, Wetlands, Biodiversity to GDP, employment (direct and indirect)
 - The ENR sector at least had numbers to show its contribution
 - The figures were widely used in the PEAP and in many other important policy documents
 - However, they were not captured in compiling the National Accounts
 - UBOS used lower estimates (mainly provisioning services) on contribution of ENR

Creating Partnership

- The ENR SWG with support from DFID commissioned a study on the **feasibility assessment of integrating sustainability concerns into the Ugandan National Accounting system.**
 - The study recommended immediate, medium and long term actions.
 - The immediate actions were those that could be undertaken basing on the existing data with minor adjustments
 - The medium and long term actions required more extensive revision, research and collection of additional data

Creating Partnerships

- Environmental cooperation (Environmental Accounting); South-South Cooperation;
 - Created partnership with the Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy (CEEPA) at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.
 - Financial and technical support obtained from CEEPA to develop Forest and Fisheries Accounts
 - Only produced Fisheries accounts (though not used), forest accounts not produced
 - Lesson: Institutional Commitment critical for SEEA

Major Issues of concern

- Capacity gaps in: Environmental economics in general and ecosystem assessments and accounting in particular
- Limited appreciation of economic sustainability issues by key decision makers(Political and Technical)
- Limited collaboration between the ENR sector and UBOS
 - Low prioritization and appreciation of ENR data
 - Capacity issues in ENR data collection
 - Credibility and integrity issues of ENR data and collection methods

Prospects

- UBOS has created a section/dept on agriculture and environmental statistics
- Collaboration between ENR sector and UBOS in data collection and standardization
- Capacity building
 - Environmental economics
 - ENR data collection and standardization
- A comprehensive study on the TEV of Forest sector contribution capturing stocks and flows has been done and published
 - Used in the NBSAP revision process and the preparation of the country Biodiversity Report
- Profile of the Forestry sector has been raised in the NDP
 - **A primary growth sector for wealth creation**

Way Forward

- Institutional commitment, collaboration and partnerships for SEEA
 - The ENR sector
 - The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS)
 - The National Planning Authority (NPA)
 - Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC)
 - The Private Sector (Local Consultants)
 - Ministry of Finance
- Capacity building and awareness raising on SEEA
 - Educational materials
- Resource mobilization
 - National budget
 - Development partners

Way Forward

- Identify and exploit the linkages and synergies between SEEA and on-going policy and planning initiatives
 - NDP1 mid-term review process
 - NDP2 production process
 - National Statistical Strategy
 - Post 2015 development agenda
- SEEA driven research studies (selection based on availability of data, policy relevance and on-going institutional collaborations)
 - Water accounts
 - Fisheries accounts
 - Land accounts