

briefing note



Ethiopian policy and community dialogues to build resilience to climate change

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) are collaborating to produce a tool aimed at facilitating community dialogues to build climate resilience. It works by improving watershed management with explicit consideration of ecosystem services.



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Agriculture in Ethiopia

Agriculture remains the backbone of the Ethiopian economy, generating almost 42% of gross domestic product in 2014 and providing employment for 73% of the population in recent years.

World Bank. 2016a. Agriculture, value added (% of GDP). Data downloaded on September 14, 2016. Online: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS> (accessed on September 14, 2016).

Background

Ethiopia has been experiencing the impacts of climate change for decades, with devastating effects on the food security and livelihoods of millions of people. Heavy dependence on rain-fed agriculture makes the country particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate extremes.

The Ethiopian government has enacted a number of policies, strategies and laws over the last 10 years, designed to promote sustainable development and economic growth (see Box 1), leading eventually to a climate-resilient green economy. Integrated participatory landscape management is an integral part of these policies.

Community dialogues for climate resilience

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) are collaborating to produce a tool aimed at facilitating community dialogues to build climate resilience. It works by improving watershed management with explicit consideration of ecosystem services. The method supports Ethiopia's climate-resilient policies and strategies that are grounded in participatory approaches. It specifically complements and extends the government's Community-based Participatory Watershed Development Guidelines. The approach also contributes to the government objective of developing "effective methods of popular participation in the planning and implementation of environmental and resource use and management projects and programmes".*

*Abyssinia Law. 2011. Environment Policy of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Abyssinia Law. Online: www.abysinnialaw.com (accessed on September 11, 2016).



Photo: Liza Debevec, IWMI

A road map to resilience

Participatory approaches are used to develop data and information to recognize the essential role played by ecosystem services in transforming vulnerable livelihoods while strengthening climate resilience in local landscapes. This interaction allows the communities to develop a watershed action plan that the local government can use as a 'road map' to build climate resilience through sustaining ecosystem services. The plan typically details practical approaches that communities and local officials can follow to strengthen the climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes, by identifying where, when and how improved water and land management strategies can be enhanced.

Future action

During the next phase of this project, we propose to collaboratively work with national partners on strategic refinement of the protocol, and in identifying appropriate mechanisms for implementation within Ethiopia and other sub-Saharan African countries.

A timeline of strategies and policies that support a climate-resilient green economy

1994 Environmental Policy (1994 under revision 2016)

????short commentary????

2005 Community-based Participatory Watershed Development Guidelines (2005)

enhances resilience to climate shocks by enabling local management of the natural resource base to safeguard pathways to well-being/prosperity

2006 Revised Food Security Strategy and Productive Safety Net Program (2006)

????short commentary????

2007 National Adaptation Programme of Action of Ethiopia (2007)

Updated by the National Adaptation Program of Action – see below

2010 Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management (2010)

????short commentary????

2010 The Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management (2010)

sustains biodiversity and ecosystem services to enhance productivity and alleviate rural poverty

2014 Program of Adaptation to Climate Change (2014)

entrusts communities with the responsibility for developing their own work programs and bylaws to enhance climate resilience

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Further resources

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