



STRATEGIC POWER AND POWER STRUGGLES IN THE NATIONAL REDD+ GOVERNANCE PROCESS IN TANZANIA: ANY EFFECT ON ITS LEGITIMACY?

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ABSTRACT

Tanzania is currently undertaking a number of initiatives related to the development of national REDD+ governance structures. These initiatives, among others, include process to establish a national REDD+ Trust Fund (NRTF) and the National Carbon Monitoring Centre (NCCM). In this paper, the on-going national REDD+ governance structure establishment processes at both local and national levels are analysed. The study focused on REDD+ governance process, the participating actors, power and power struggle and its effects on the political legitimacy underlying the REDD+ governance process. The study was undertaken through intensive review of literature and relevant reports and documents, and dialogue with actors involved in the process. It was found that while REDD+ governance continues to evolve, some non-economic actors are transforming themselves into economic actors and 'Power brokers' in order to enhance their position in protecting their interests during the process. It was noted as well that strategic power and power struggles are emerging as part of the evolving processes at both local and national levels. The study concludes that strategic intervention/decision was required to facilitate smooth process and avoid the stalemate that can be caused by emerging power struggles in the national

REDD+ governance structure development process.

Key words: Tanzania, REDD+; governance structures; institutions; actors; power struggles; and legitimacy

INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that about 17- 20% of the global annual Carbon emissions is from loss of tropical forests in the form of deforestation and forest degradation (IPCC 2007; UNFCCC 2007, Phelps *et al.* 2010). Stern (2007) suggests that curbing deforestation and forest degradation is potentially a highly cost-effective way of reducing greenhouse gases. It is in this context that reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation plus conservation of forests, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of carbon stocks (REDD+) are advocated as potential strategies to address deforestation and degradation in the post Kyoto climate change regime (Angelsen *et al.* 2009). REDD+ started as a global initiative at the 11th Conference of the Parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and was approved for engagement of various actors through demonstration of REDD+ activities at the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP-13) in Bali Indonesia in 2007 (UNFCCC 2007). It has been agreed that implementation of



REDD+ initiatives will be undertaken in three phases: namely the readiness phase (focusing on capacity building activities such as monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV); Second phase (focusing on policy and measures to reduce emissions) and the third phase (i.e. full implementation of REDD+ activities based on compensation for reduced emissions and enhanced stocks) (Wertz-Kanounikoff and Angelsen 2009). Currently, most REDD+ activities in most countries focus on capacity building (i.e. MRV systems and relevant policy and measures, including governance structures) (Sills *et al.* 2009). Literature on REDD+ governance emphasizes that being a new concept, REDD+ needs establishment of appropriate governance structures before its full operationalization (Angelsen *et al.* 2009, Vatn *et al.* 2009, Pacheco *et al.* 2010, Bushley and Khatri 2011) or else the existing structures should be aligned to accommodate it (Karsenty 2008).

Currently, some REDD+ governance structures are emerging at global, national and local levels and initiatives to institute these structures are evolving rapidly and simultaneously at both national and international levels (Bushley and Khatri 2011). Already, some REDD+ governance structures setting up processes have been initiated in different countries with various approaches being proposed (Vatn *et al.* 2009, Wertz-Kanounnikoff and Angelsen 2009).

In Tanzania, both national and local level REDD+ governance processes are emerging concurrently (Manyika *et al.* 2012, URT 2012) and a significant number of actors are taking the stage. However, little is known about the effect of power and power struggles of the participating actors as the process evolves. There are also concerns that balancing of different interests in the national REDD+ process is likely to face significant hurdles (Rantala 2012). This may result into problems

during the process as well as in the ineffective implementation of REDD+ initiative given the fact that distribution of power and funds are among central issues that underpin debates over institutional arrangement and policies (Petkova *et al.* 2010). Therefore, this study aimed at highlighting the national REDD+ governance process and examining the effect of various power bases and power struggle of actors participating in the process. The study contributes to the clear understanding of participating actors, their interests, power and power struggles which are of imperative importance in the national REDD+ governance process. Such understanding may help to redress the political legitimacy concerns which are likely to emanate from un-informed governance structures setting up process. In a nutshell, this study was designed to respond to the following key questions: what are the proposed REDD+ governance structures and how are they evolving?; Who are the key actors involved in formulating of the governance structures in Tanzania?; How are the power and power struggles in the national REDD+ governance process? and What is their effect on the political legitimacy of the proposed governance structures?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Institutions

The perspective of institutions has been described differently by anthropologists, economists and sociologists (Vatn 2005, North 1990). In this study, institutions are the “conventions, formal rules and norms that form the actors and regulate the interaction between actors” (Scott 1995, Vatn 2005). In addition, institutions are seen as sites of power and reflect and entrench power hierarchies and the interest of powerful actors. The interaction between institutions and actors form the core aspect of governance (Vatn 2011).



Power

Power is defined differently (Jones and Sergot 1996, Reed 1997, Lukes 2007, Biermann *et al.* 2010). In this study, power is perceived as the capacity to influence outcomes, with or without the legitimacy to do so (Biermann *et al.* 2010). Power works through two main dimensions: (i) interaction of specific actors and (ii) social relations of constitution (Barnett and Duval 2005). Both sources of power and power relations are deemed important (Gaski 1984) in the process.

Governance structures

While REDD+ governance structures encompass interaction between different actors and institutions (Vatn and Angelsen 2009, Vatn and Vedeld 2011, Vatn *et al.* 2011), governance is about rules, structures, and institutions that guide, regulate and control social life, features that are fundamental elements of power (Barnett and Duvall 2005). REDD+ architecture is seen as a system of institutions and actors, and as an institutional structure defining the capacities and responsibilities of different actors involved and the rules of their interaction' (Vatn and Angelsen 2009). Whereas the type of actors involved in the interaction (characterized by their power and resources, their rights, interests and responsibilities) influence the outcome, similarly, the type of interaction between actors affects the capacity of the overall system (Vatn and Vedeld 2011). In this study, the terms 'REDD+ architecture' have been used interchangeably with the words 'REDD+ governance structures'.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the REDD+ governance structures that have been proposed through the national REDD+ governance process and other climate change initiatives in

Tanzania are highlighted and discussed. The characteristics of actors involved in the national REDD+ process at both national and local levels are then described. Finally, the power and power struggle as well as legitimacy concerns that are likely to arise in the national REDD+ governance process are highlighted and discussed.

Key actors participating in the governance structures process in Tanzania

In Tanzania, there are many actors with different motives participating in the REDD+ architecture setting up process at both national and local levels. These actors reflect different power bases and sources as well as power relations. The typology of actors involved in the REDD+ governance structures process and their subsequent patterns of interaction have been classified by Vatn and Angelsen (2009) and Vatn and Vedeld (2011). According to Vatn and Vedeld (2011), the type of actors involved in the REDD+ process are characterised by their capacities and competencies. Actors at national level include the private and public (i.e. the State and State bureaucracies and Municipal/District Councils) (individual households and firms), and community organizations (Village Councils, Non-Governmental Organizations - NGOs and other community based organizations-CBO) and Development Partners/Donor Communities (Vatn and Vedeld 2011, URT 2013). Vatn and Velded (2011) emphasize that the important distinction between actors concerns the capacities or powers they command in the REDD+ initiative. For example, the States being political actors play three different roles in policy formulation and implementation. Secondly, they manage state owned lands and forests. Thirdly, they are responsible for handling of conflicts among actors (the individuals, firms). Therefore, States as political actors are absolutely important



since they are responsible for formulating and setting up goals and define the rights which form the basis for economic actors. However, there is a concern that State accountability in many countries is weak due to bad governance and corruption (Vatn and Vedeld 2011) and it can thus affect the process.

Furthermore, Vatn and Vedeld (2011) describe private sector in the REDD+ context to include individuals and firms, which are mainly interested in serving the economic interests of the owners and are at the receiving end of the REDD+ policy since they own forest land and may also be buyers of credits. Other actors include individuals which are part of the communities with less formalised entities, but they are also at the receiving end of the REDD+ policy and they also have economic interests. Moreover, NGOs as actors in the REDD+ process are expected to play different roles in the REDD+ initiative such as advocacy or project development and they may be active in defending interests of member groups or land users. NGOs may also act as intermediaries between buyers and sellers of carbon sequestration services in REDD+ (Vatn and Vedeld 2011). Therefore, different types of actors described above may interact/coordinate their activities via various means such as trade, negotiations, command/legal regulation, redistribution and voluntary cooperation (Vatn and Vedeld 2011).

In Tanzania, the actors involved in the REDD+ process include public sector such as the REDD National Task Force, Government sector ministries and technical departments, Local Government Authorities, economic actors i.e. private sectors, local forest owners and forest dependent communities, NGOs and International /Development Partners/Donor Organizations (e.g. UNDP, FAO, UNEP), the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Tanzania) (URT 2010, URT

2011, URT 2012, URT 2013). The national REDD+ Strategy reveals that all these actors were involved in one way or another. The political actors such as Members of Parliament from both Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar also participated in the REDD+ process consultation (URT 2012).

Proposed REDD+ governance structures and their establishment process in Tanzania

According to Vatn and Arild (2009), realizing REDD+ presupposes a national REDD+ architecture or governance structure that facilitates comprehensive actions and delivers carbon mitigation outcomes that are effective, efficient and equitable. Vatn and Arild (2009) describe the key functions to be undertaken by the national REDD+ governance structures. However, the long-term legitimacy of the governance system also hinges on the ability to deliver well on the co-benefits, particularly poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihood (Vatn and Arild 2009).

The REDD+ governance structures proposed in Tanzania at both local and national levels are highlighted in the National REDD+ Strategy (URT 2013) and are discussed by Manyika *et al.* (2012). Through the National REDD+ process, Tanzania proposes to establish National REDD+ Trust Fund (NRTF) and National Carbon Monitoring Centre (NCMC), which are both still underway (URT 2013, URT 2009, LEAT 2010, URT 2010a, URT 2010b, URT 2012). The NRTF is expected to consolidate and distribute funds to different stakeholders at national level (URT 2012). On the other hand, the proposed NCMC is expected to provide technical services on MRV of REDD+ activities and will serve as a repository of data and information on REDD+ (URT 2012). While the NCMC was already officially launched in mid-



March 2013, NRTF is yet to be launched despite the completion of the in-depth studies since 2010.

Other national REDD+ related initiatives in Tanzania include preparation of National Climate Change Strategy, which is intended to help the country to effectively adapt to climate change and participate in global efforts to mitigate climate change with a view to achieving sustainable development (URT 2012). Similarly, through the national climate change strategy preparation process, among others, some governance structures have been proposed. These include establishment of a National Climate Change Fund (NCCF) and a special climate change window under Basket Fund to ensure availability of resources for climate change activities (URT 2012). Like the national REDD+ initiative, the National Climate change strategy initiative is led by the Vice President's Office. A similar Fund is also proposed in the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in its climate change project initiative (MoF 2012). However, over and above the Fund proposal, the MoF proposes an institutional arrangement for the NCCF, which will be chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry. The MoF proposes an institutional arrangement through a project under the Ministry known as National Climate Change Financial Mechanism. The proposed institutional structures by the MoF include the National Steering Committee (NSC), the National Taskforce (NTF), and the Technical Functional Team (FT) (MoF 2012). In addition, other governance structures related to climate change are proposed under a project called mainstreaming climate change into national plans under the Vice President's Office, Division of Environment (VPO-DoE).

Furthermore, at local level, some parallel governance structures for REDD+ are

proposed and emerging through NGOs' pilot projects (Manyika *et al.* 2012). Tanzania has approved a total of 9 demonstration projects which are supported through the Norwegian REDD+ initiative since 2009 (URT 2013). In the study, the local led governance initiatives from two pilot projects have been analysed. The two projects are titled: (i) Making REDD and the Carbon Market work for Communities and Forest Conservation in Tanzania; and (ii) Combining REDD, PFM and Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC) in South-Eastern Tanzania. These projects are being implemented by the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) and Mpingo Conservation and the Development initiative (MCDI). Interestingly, both projects propose governance structures geared to assist the local communities to tap international carbon credit benefits. However, while TFCG proposes a Carbon Cooperative through *Mtandao wa Jamii wa Usimamizi wa Misitu Tanzania* (MJUMITA), a network of community groups involved in participatory forest management in Tanzania (TFCG 2008), MCDI intends to establish a Group Certification of REDD+ Carbon credits (MCDI 2009) as their respective and appropriate financial governance structures. In addition, both TFCG through MJUMITA and MCDI propose technical REDD+ governance structures that will be responsible for assessing, measuring and reporting of REDD+ in their areas of jurisdictions. Moreover, both TFCG and MCDI have already signed some contracts with either Regional or International Organizations which facilitate sale of their Carbon credits from REDD+. TFCG/MJUMITA has established regional and international networks with organisations such as Katoomba Group, Forest Trends and CARE that will assist in selling Carbon to the international markets. Similarly, MCDI have signed contracts with local farmers and Carbon Tanzania, an NGO based in



Arusha, Tanzania but with international affiliation so as to assist in selling Carbon credits that will be produced by the project. According to the contract, Carbon Tanzania will act as a broker of Carbon credits from the project. Thus, Carbon Tanzania will connect local offset producers to global markets for offsets generated from local forest conservation and management projects (MCDI 2009, Manyika *et al.* 2012). By signing the contractual agreements with international business partners, these actors are protecting their economic interests at both national and local levels as they engage in REDD+ initiatives. This is because these regional and international networks do have the required capacity, including legal support to defend their interests. Both the international networks and other private firms may also have the financial resources to invest and engage in REDD+ related business activities and they can also provide the necessary support, including technical and financial to facilitate their local partners to venture in REDD+ activities.

Power, emerging power struggles of actors and legitimacy concerns in the REDD+ process

In this section, both the source of power and power struggles of the aforementioned actors participating in the national REDD+ governance process in Tanzania have been analysed. The legitimacy concerns that might arise from the actors' participation and/or non-participation in the process have then been projected.

As REDD+ governance structures emerge concurrently at local and national levels, it is argued that while initiatives at both levels are legitimate processes within the context of environment and natural resource management, some potential power struggle to capture the benefits are likely to occur among participating actors. For example, the Environmental

Management Act (EMA) Cap 191 [R.E. 2002] gives legal and institutional power to the Ministry responsible for Environment (VPO-DoE) to coordinate climate change mitigation activities, including REDD+ (URT 2004). In addition, the Forest Act Cap 323 [R.E. 2002] gives legal and institutional power to the Director of Forestry and Beekeeping to manage all forests in Tanzania (URT 2002). The Forest Act provides for joint forest management agreements to be signed between local communities and other partners as they strive to conserve forest resources (URT 2010b). Since forest management falls within two main management authorities, namely the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) through the Division of Forestry and Beekeeping/or the current semi-autonomous agency- Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) as well as the Local Government and Regional Administration under Prime Minister's Office (PMO-RALG) (URT 2002), Vatn and Velded (2011) recommend that the two Ministries are appropriate for REDD+ activities. Both Ministries are key actors and both economic and political interests can be attributed to their mandates. Therefore, power struggle may arise on who will manage and coordinate the proposed NRTF. Such power struggle may also involve the Ministry responsible for environment (VPO-DoE).

Furthermore, the NCCF establishment through the national climate change strategy under VPO-DoE and MoF may present another centre of power struggle in the national governance process. Even though the national climate change strategy process advocates for the establishment of NCCF by 2015 (MoF 2012), it does not clearly reflect how it treats the NRTF and the NCMC, which are the key governance structures in the national REDD+ process. Moreover, while the MoF is positioning itself to manage and coordinate the NCCF through its



climate change project, the other possible candidates for hosting the NRTF, namely PMO- RALG, MNRT or TFS (URT 2010b) are also leading such initiatives through the National REDD+ governance process. Even though VPO-DoE is mandated by EMA Cap 191 [R.E. 2002] to coordinate REDD+ might have strong arguments during discourse on who can supervise or manage both the NRTF and NCCF, the MoF is strategically positioned and is solidifying its position and power by proposing a governance and institutional arrangement which is chaired and dominated by representation from this Ministry. The MoF has the legal power and mandate to oversee flows of funds in the country. Meanwhile, the concerns on which Government body will host the NCCF are also reflected in the workshop report by the MoF (date of the report), thus reflecting the potential power struggle on the management and coordination of the Fund that may emerge in the near future. However, it is argued that MNRT/TFS, VPO-DoE, PMO-RALG and MoF are key actors for the establishment and operationalisation of both the NRTF and NCCF based on their institutional power and mandates. They all play role as economic and political actors in the REDD+ governance process. It is argued further that VPO, the MoF, the MNRT through the Forestry and Beekeeping Division or TFS and the PMO - RALG all have the institutional power that can influence the National REDD+ governance processes. However, the MoF may to use its strategic power to liase with other actors and Development Partners to directly support its bid to house the NCCF or influence the process in a direction favourable to the Ministry. MoF is currently leading the national process to harmonize the proliferation of emerging proposed funds in the auspice of climate change. Therefore, successful launching and operationalization of the proposed Funds (i.e. NRFT and NCCF) will depend on how their interests (both political and

economic) are factored in both the process and outcome.

Moreover, some studies (URT 2010b, Dyngeland and Ericksson 2011) reveal overlapping mandates within the existing REDD+ related governance structure in Tanzania. These overlapping mandates coupled with increasing varied interests of the stakeholders on REDD+ can fuel conflict and power struggles between these Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (Manyika *et al.* 2012).

Furthermore, another power struggle can be reflected within NGOs' pilot governance and the national governance processes. Cognizant of the ongoing national REDD+ governance process and the potential REDD+ benefits, the interests, sources, power and power struggles in the process have been examined. It is argued that some NGOs piloting implementation of REDD+ are strategically positioning themselves technically and politically to benefit from REDD+. Given the fact that the motivations vary across both types of actors and forms of interaction in the institutional structures, some actors are staging strategically during the national governance structure establishment process so as to advance their own interests. Such strategic behaviours were also reported by Bushley and Khatri (2011) and Jjunju (2011) in Nepal (REDD+ Initiative) and Uganda (Clean Development Mechanism - CDM initiative), respectively. Similarly, in Tanzania, NGOs/Civil Societies working on REDD+ initiative have succeeded to push for reconstitution of the National REDD+ Task Force which includes NGOs/Civil Society representative (TRNF 2012). Even though the reconstituted National REDD+ Task Force expanded the membership from key sectoral ministries from both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar (URT 2013a), powers of the representative from CSOs is at the centre



of focus in this study because of their piloting role in the national REDD+ governance process. It is argued that the piloting role given to the NGOs during the strategy development process have bolstered their power bases at both the local and national levels. It is needless to say that their lessons learnt and experience acquired from implementation of the REDD+ pilot projects provide an important input to the development and implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy (URT 2013). In this regard, it is argued that as key actors, NGOs have accumulated sufficient strategic power to influence the REDD+ governance process at both national and local levels. Since NGOs are the ones implementing the actual project, they currently have got the strategic position to influence the National REDD+ governance process through both technical and advocacy arguments during the process.

As the establishment of the national REDD+ governance process progresses, monetary and monitoring REDD+ governance structures have been proposed at local levels as well. Through their pilot projects, NGOs piloting implementation of REDD+ aim to develop Carbon cooperative and Group Carbon certification as well as their own assessment and reporting approaches (Manyika *et al.* 2012). However, analysis of the various proposed REDD+ governance structures suggests that governance structures which are proposed through the NGOs seem to contradict what has been proposed at national led REDD+ governance process. Specifically, the two case studies projects reviewed in this paper reflect that pilot projects envisage selling Carbon credits directly to the international markets, and thus propose establishment of their own local/project level Carbon credit marketing strategy, which does not necessarily link with the NRTF proposed at national level (Manyika *et al.* 2012). Given this parallel process, it is argued that

since NGOs have been working closely with the local communities and individuals who own forests, their proposed governance structures may be easily accepted by the local communities. Furthermore, owing to the historical weak power relations between both Central and Local Governments, particularly on forest ownership (MNRT 2009), NGOs which work with local communities through PFM have strong power bases and are better positioned to succeed in their bid.

Furthermore, by proposing their own local/project level Carbon credit marketing strategies which aim at capturing Carbon benefits/profits through retention in their respective cooperatives and group certification scheme, it is argued that these NGOs (MJUMITA in Kilosa and MCDI/Carbon Tanzania in Kilwa) have strategically transformed themselves into 'Economic actors' and strategic 'Power brokers' between the Government and local communities. That is why for the purpose of strengthening their powers and position, they have already signed contracts with either local people or Regional and International Organizations (MCDI 2009, TFCG 2012). The signing of the contracts is legitimate under the auspices of the Forest Act Cap 323 [R.E. 2002) which provides for joint contracts to be signed between committees and other partners as they strive to conserve forest resources (URT 2010b). However, a legitimacy concern is likely to arise from both the national and local authorities as their proposed REDD+ governance structures seem to disconnect themselves from what is being proposed at the national level. Specifically, it is argued that their concerns may arise with regard to the financial arrangement, particularly when REDD+ funds to the project beneficiaries start flowing (Manyika *et al.* 2012). Currently, there is inadequate awareness on the REDD+ process among many stakeholders, including key actors at national and local levels in Tanzania (URT



2010b). According to Rantala and Vihemäki (2011), the perceptions of local communities' rights change as the level of awareness and understanding of the process continue to grow. Similarly, findings by Mustalahti *et al.* (2012) from two communities neighbouring Angai Forest in southern Tanzania show that REDD+ is seen as something new and is generating new expectations among communities. The high expectations can be linked to economic interests they expect from REDD+ initiatives. Consequently, such high expectations from REDD+ returns, incomplete knowledge and understanding of the payment calculation and process can lead to legitimacy concerns (Rantala and Vihemäki, 2011). For example, it is stated in the MJUMITA proposal that 'a small share of the carbon sales' will be retained by the MJUMITA secretariat to support the organisation to continue to serve its network (TFCG 2008). However, the proportion of retention is not very clear at the moment. Moreover, in some areas, key stakeholders, particularly the pastoralists are reported to have not been consulted during the preparation of land use plans in lieu of REDD+ implementation (Kajembe *et al.* 2012). Kajembe *et al.* (2012) further warn that development of land use plan in one village may not necessarily have accommodated needs of other villages at stake. Therefore, it is argued that the payment arrangement proposed and the signed contracts by CSOs are likely to be questioned not only by the political actors, but also by local communities or individual participants of the projects.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, various emerging REDD+ governance structures, the actors participating, their interests, power bases and power struggles in the national

REDD+ process in Tanzania were explored. However, since most of the pilot projects are still at their early stages of implementation, the highlighted concerns may not be at the centre of focus by many actors at the moment. Thus, further studies will need to be undertaken to understand the sole implication of the proposed REDD+ governance structures in Tanzania. Obviously, since the proposed governance structures have not been operationalized, it can be concluded that much work needs to be done to assess which REDD+ governance structures will finally be agreed upon and how it will function at various levels. Thus, the volatile interests, power dynamics and characteristics of actors across the entire process may be of essence along the continuum.

As far the REDD+ governance structures process continues to evolve in Tanzania, the study amply has showed that there is strong vested interest among the participating actors at both local and national levels. Consequently, some actors are strategically finding and solidifying their respective positions in order to strengthen their power bases. Such strategies include transforming themselves from non-economic actors to economic actors and becoming power brokers. However, it is concluded that as the REDD+ governance structures continue to evolve, power struggles at both national and local levels are also intrinsically taking their toll. Therefore, both strategic behaviour and power struggles may lead to political legitimacy concerns and subsequently affect the effectiveness of the chosen governance structures during full implementation phase of REDD+ initiative. It is therefore argued that strategic interventions/decisions need to be taken by the government to facilitate smooth process and avoid the stalemate that can be caused by emerging power struggles in the national REDD+



governance structure development process in Tanzania.

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