



REDD+ SUDAN

برنامج خفض الانبعاثات الناتجة عن إزالة وتدهور الغابات



**Land Use and Land Tenure Study
Validation Workshop
Workshop Report**



13 June 2017

1. The Workshop

This workshop was intended as a validation workshop for the study of "land use and land tenure in Sudan" undertaken under the REDD + Sudan. The specific objectives of the workshop were as follows:

1. Sharing the study and its results with the project stakeholders;
2. Validation of the study
3. Provide a platform for the discussion of land use and land tenure issues
4. Soliciting and generating recommendations that are likely help he REDD + and other actors in natural resource management including Government of Sudan and its international partners and civil society organizations SCOs.

2. Participants

The Workshop was attended by 93 persons (Annex) out of whom 68% were males and 32% were females. The participants involved a wide spectrum of representation including staff of Forests National Corporation FNC; research institutions; Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources; private sector; related ministries (Ministries of Agriculture and Forests, Finance, Environment, Justice, Minerals, Oil and Gas, Animal Resources; Department of Wildlife); National Strategic Planning Council; Sudanese Agricultural Council; CSOs; the media; and interested researchers and environmental activists.

3. Workshop approach and methodology

The workshop was based on external facilitation and the effective participation of the participants through open discussion. To that end power point presentation of the study was prepared (in English), and the executive summary of the study was translated into Arabic and shared with the participants prior to the workshop.

4. The First Session

The Session was addressed by the Coordinator of the Programme who outlined the main features of the project in terms of objectives and main activities while setting the agenda of the workshop. A -5 minutes video on the REDD and its global aspects was presented to enhance understanding of the participants. The Coordinator was followed by the Director General of FNC who stressed the role of FNC and its sister departments and partner organizations in addressing the problem of land degradation. The challenges facing the FNC associated with severe land degradation and the rapid rate of deforestation were outlined. He also informed the participants that Sudan is now in the stage of preparing the national strategy to reduce emissions resulting from deforestation and forests degradation while preparing for the third stage and which will be informed by the study under the discussion, and which will focus on forests conservation while detailing the economic benefits to investors in forests and to communities living in or in the vicinity of forests.

In addressing the Workshop the Minister of Agriculture and Forests and who after welcoming the participants alluded to the importance of climate change issue for Sudan and its future as agricultural country. The role of agriculture in national economy, food security and the stablization of population was stressed. Land degradation and deforestation was described as one of the main challenges facing contemporary Sudan. Efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture and future plans to deal with the scale of the problem and the constraints to the agricultural sector, including the forests sector were mapped. The Minister declared the commitment of the Government of Sudan to the projects and to the operationalization of the recommendations reached by the participants. The need for strengthening and expanding partnership between the Ministry and the international community on climate change issues was stressed.

5. The Presentation:

Issues Presented

1. National Context of land use and tenure

- a. **Ecological:** Sudan as a dry country with 50% of total areas considered as desert; drought a recursive phenomenon and water the most limiting factor away from the Nile and its tributaries`
- b. **Social:** Sudan remains rural in social, economic and cultural outlooks with around 60% of the country's population living in rural areas; widespread human poverty; conflict over land and natural resources
- c. **Economic:** land as the foundation of livelihood for majority of population based on traditional crop farming and pastoralism; importance of land-based resources for national economy; NR as the backbone of other sectors of the economy (manufacturing, transport and trade); employability; main source of domestic energy, building materials and local industries; medium for wide range of social transactions and symbolic social capital
- d. **Political:** Role of land in national security; the inseparable link between land and struggle for power; land in the programmes of political parties

2. Current pressing issues: Severe land degradation; failure of transforming the potential of resources into broad based socio economic development in the country; spread of conflict and related population instability

3. Sudan Land Use: Main feature: the critical gap in knowledge and information; existing data challenges the mindset of Sudanese that Sudan having an abundance of renewable natural resources; mapping of the current main land use involving: (i) agriculture in its different forms (traditional rain-fed, rain-fed semi mechanized; irrigated, agro pastoral) covering more than 25% of the land excluding the 50% desert areas. (ii) oil and mining

sector as rapidly expanding sector; (iii) Forest sector covering around 11%; (iv) rangelands covering 25.6% of the land cover; (v) national parks with legal protection covering 8.1%; (vi) urban centres 0.4% and (vii) water bodies covering 0.7%.

3. Land use transformation and implications: Rapid conversion of forests and rangelands into agricultural lands or other uses (oil, gold and urban fringes) resulting in accelerated rural poverty; dislocation of population and economies; fuelling of conflicts and rising stakes over land; constitution of the politics of ethnicity and tribalism.

4. New demands for land: from climate change; the oil and gold sector; the IDPs; the separation of the South; issue of returnees from the South.

5. Land tenure: Confused regulations with the unresolved dichotomy between the statutory and customary laws (State Vs community); lack of clear legislations to sanction the right and entitlement of smallholders, both farmers and pastoralists to land and natural resource

6. Land governance issues: Confused legal framework; multiple actors; lack of law enforcement; weak institutional arrangements and poor capacities

7. Recommendations provided by the study

The study was presented by the Consultant. Placing land use and land tenure in wider ecological, economic, social and political perspective the major issues and conclusions reached by the study were presented

6. Main deliberations

The presentation was followed by 2 hours of open discussions. The main issues raised are summarized as follows:

- The study had portrayed a very gloomy picture of the situation. Everyone in Sudan knows the general situation and not the details but the study managed to effectively interrelate the various issues and to provide a comprehensive but a very scary picture where land has become a ticking bomb and if not genuinely and rigorously addressed will erode the survival of both society and the state.
- The study has vividly demonstrated that we need, as planners, decision makers and politicians to revisit the prevailing discourse about the abundance of natural resources and to replace that by the mentality of scarcity. This should be our entry point to land management and administration.
- Lack of recent and trustworthy information pertaining to land is a critical knowledge gap. Existing information is widely scattered and in most instances contradictory. It is high time for Sudan to develop its



information system that could annually be published as the main source of information about the country. The present study provides an important input towards that objective.

➤ Contradiction between the customary and statutory law is one of the main problem constraining effective land governance. It is also one of the factors delimiting the ability of the country to effectively manage its land and to tap its potentialities. This is besides being an important factor behind the apparent tribal polarization and the fuelling local level conflicts. This is an urgent issue to be addressed and the establishment of the national land commission could possibly help to address the issue.



➤ There is apparent gap in forests policy. Forests policy till 2000 could be described as one that that tried to accommodate national and global changes but since then we failed to come with any policy that is capable to effectively provide for the effective management and development of the forests sector in the country. This is a critical gap that needs to be addressed as quickly as possible.

➤ Existing forests legislations have proved irrelevant as they are against communities besides being a major cause of conflict. Concepts such as social fencing and the landscape approach should be introduced and applied to replace the existing approach based on policing, exclusion of communities, and appropriation of community customary rights and lack of recognition of other land uses. The current approach to forests management has neither contributed to the sustainable management of forests nor provided for the wellbeing of the communities.

➤ Existing institutional structure for land management has proved ineffective. There is lack of coordination and information sharing. In addition the institutions are fragmented between different ministries with minimum communication. Inputs of the integrated approach to land management are minimally adhered to.

➤ Existing legal framework to land tenure calls for legal reform. Although Sudan Interim Constitution 2005 provides an important impetus to sustainable land management but it still suffers certain weaknesses. The constitutional amendments of 2015 have also introduced new challenges that need to be addressed.

➤ The issue of land tenure falls at the heart of the relationship between the state and society, and is therefore a governance issue that needs to be addressed. The historical alliance between the few rich and the state apparatus and the resultant disruption of rural economies is just one of the manifestations of the problem.

➤ Land degradation and the declining yield of agricultural land is a major factor contributing to forests degradation as it forces farmers to expand the cultivated plots to compensate for the declining yields and incomes from land and by definition more clearance of forests and appropriation of range lands and livestock routes. In this way it also become a major factor fuelling conflict between pastoralists and farmers

➤ It is unfortunate that the recommendations of the workshops rarely considered or followed up after the end of the workshop. There is a hope that this workshop will be different. Even the well thought

results and recommendations of previous studies like that of Southern Kassala Agricultural project SKAAP in the mid-1990s and the study of the Sustainable Development of the Semi Mechanized Farming Sector in Sudan have been totally neglected and forgotten.

- The pastoralists have become increasingly marginalized as result of land use transformation and degradation. They have also issue become increasingly vulnerable to climate change. The pastoralists issue is one of national nature and a national conference on pastoralism is highly needed.
- There is a need to revisit between society and nature, Bringing people closer to nature, possibly through eco-tourism is an issue that needs to be considered. It is also high time to consider mainstreaming of the environment and love of nature in the academic curricula.
- lack of law enforcement is the main contributor to forests and land degradation
- The semi mechanized farming has remained the main enemy to Sudan forests. Expansion of the sector should be checked and its reform should be top priority.

7. Recommended Actions

i. Specific for REDD+ Project

- a. Full acceptance of the study and endorsement of its findings
- b. Translation of the study into Arabic and its dissemination for the benefit of the various actors including planners, decision makers, politicians, researchers and students
- c. Recognizing the limited public knowledge about climate change and its destructive impacts it is strongly recommended that the REDD+ project leads an orchestrated campaign of awareness raising using the different media channels, including TV, daily newspapers...etc A communication specialist may be needed to lead the process
- d. Establish, support and sustain a national think tank forum on land issues to generate discussion intended to support policy agenda and publish results (e.g., policy briefs)
- e. Spearhead the advocacy for the establishment of the national land commission
- f. Provide support for review of existing land tenure legislations, identification of gaps and recommendation of the reforms needed.
- g. Initiate and provide technical support to the establishment of national strategy to guide land use and administration in the country with the objective of reconciling the rights of the state and communities, provides for integrated land uses while promote the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources.
- h. Establish and capacitate a committee to follow up on the operationalization of the recommendations of this workshop

ii. General

- a. It is high time for the establishment of multidisciplinary centre for land research, preferably at the Faculty of Geography and Environmental Sciences, University of Khartoum. This also provides for recognition of the role of geographers since the time of Lebon and his publication "land use in Sudan 1961" in land research in the country.
- b. For the purposes of avoiding current discrepancy and contradiction of information about Sudan it is strongly recommended that Ministry of information publish annually an information book on the country, covering all aspects of life including land uses
- c. Taking into account the destructive nature of the unorganized and poorly controlled gold mining activities on land and communities full enforcement of the mining law and regulation has become top priority
- d. There is a need for the support of the national forests inventory that started in May 2017
- e. It is strongly recommended to take measures and actions for calculation of the contribution of the forests sector to the national and state level GDP
- f. The development of the forests national policy is top priority during 2017
- g. There is need for national conference on pastoralism in the country.

Annex: Participants in the Workshop

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