



# Ministry of Green Economy & Environment

## Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project

Improving lives through Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

### Planning for collaborative restoration of Mpomwa Local Forest with the community - practice brief #5

#### **Context**

Protected Forest Areas within Eastern Province are increasingly under threat of deforestation and forest degradation. The ability of the State to control these through law enforcement alone is challenging. Community forestry is one of the Government strategies to promote collaborative management of local forests and other protected forest areas. Objective 1 of the National Strategy to Reduce Deforestation and Forest Degradation, 2016, is by 2030, threatened and unsustainably managed protected areas are effectively managed and protected to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and contribute to ecosystem services across selected landscapes.

The Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project (ZIFLP) is a Government initiative in the Ministry of Green Economy & Environment, supported by the World Bank and partners. The project is supporting the Forestry Department to engage local stakeholders and agree new strategies for management and restoration of selected protected forest areas in Eastern Province. Mpomwa Local Forest is one Government forest where a process of multi-stakeholder engagement and planning has been initiated in partnership with the Forestry Department. This is the fifth Practice Brief that shares approaches and learning from the pilot in Mpomwa Local Forest.

#### **Establishing a partnership**

Following a series of key stakeholder meetings of representatives from the surrounding Chiefdoms and building a consensus for tackling the issues and agreeing a way forward, the community forestry process was initiated by the Forestry Department with support from ZIFLP. As the Local Forest cuts across a number of chiefdom boundaries, a unique governance arrangement was agreed with equal representation in the Community Forest Management Group (CFMG). This group developed a vision, a constitution, and with consent from the respective Royal Highnesses, were recognised by the Director of Forestry in July 2022. Further community level meetings were held and the group with technical support from the local Forest Officers, developed a simple forest management plan with forest rules that set out how to manage the forest in a way that balances protection, development and

use. The Community Forest Management Agreement was signed by the Director in March 2023, effectively transferring control use and management of the reserve to the community. During the first quarter of 2023, the community Honorary Forest Officers were trained and then appointed by the Minister for Green Economy and Environment in September 2023. The locally developed and agreed rules are being enforced in order to support restoration of the functions of the forest in line with the original reason for reservation in 1958. Mpomwa is the source of a number of locally important streams which rise in the hills. The original files from the 1950s indicate a consultation process with the respective traditional leaders.

#### **Assessing the condition and use of the forest**



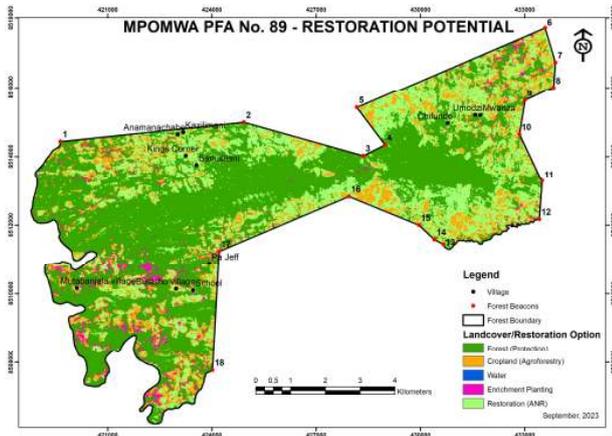
In order to restore the ecological functions of the forest as well as the socio economic needs of the local community, the project supported the Forestry Department and ZAMSTATS to conduct forest inventory and forest livelihoods economic survey in late 2021/2022. This indicated that approximately one third of the forest was remaining, with one third in severe degradation and the remaining under informal settlement and cropping. The pressure on the forest is high and risk of further loss and degradation severe.

#### **Zoning the forest to control access and use**

The Forest Officers facilitated a participatory process to zone the forest based on uses, users and conditions. The community identified different zones and listed permitted and not permitted activities for each zone. However, more a thorough assessment was needed.

## Restoration mapping

In view of the forest condition and threats, the Forestry Department supported by the project undertook a forest restoration mapping exercise to determine the current condition using remote sensing tools to identify and prioritise areas for restoration activities, combined with ground truthing and physical mapping.



Using QGIS and ArcGIS, false colour composite Sentinel-2 images were analysed by adding training points for each land use category as observed in Mpomwa Local Forest. Google satellite Base maps with high resolution imagery under was also used to select areas of interest which the team used to ground truth

The exercise attempted to define categories of current land use: forest by condition; bare land by condition and use ie abandoned/ fallow; Agricultural cropping by use/ crop type; Settlement by type, temporary, permanent, household/ institution – school/clinic. This would allow the Department with the community to decide various restoration interventions such as: Natural regeneration through protection; Assisted natural regeneration; Agroforestry; Reforestation through planting in plantation – indigenous/ exotic. There would then need to be agreement on the management arrangements for each type of land parcel and regeneration process; benefit arrangements for future benefit flows – include agroforestry, plantation, carbon payments; Institutional arrangements – responsibilities, conditions applicable for continued or modified land use practices.

| Landcover/Option                            | Area (Ha)       | Percentage   |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Forest (Protection)                         | 3,574.36        | 53.4         |
| Cropland (Agroforestry)                     | 982.49          | 14.7         |
| Settlement/Cropland                         | 562.31          | 8.4          |
| Water                                       | 81.11           | 1.2          |
| Enrichment Planting                         | 202.24          | 3.0          |
| Restoration (Assisted Natural Regeneration) | 1,295.49        | 19.3         |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>6,698.00</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

## Bringing back trees and tree cover

The forest restoration plan should focus on promoting agroforestry in cultivated lands that are completely

bare of trees. It is anticipated that some form of incentive and reward system will be needed for the community to take up this option in an effort to increase tree cover and restore degraded areas. As the tree grows, options of carbon trading can be explored under the anticipated Eastern Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Programme (EP-JSLP).

Further, to achieve the proposed restoration of the forest, there is need to regularly monitor that areas of cropland do not increase further. The CFMG should put in place measures that would ensure that further allocation or expansion of farm areas is not allowed within the reserve. Innovative mechanisms are needed to enforce local by-laws to ensure compliance. Although ultimate sanction is enforcement of the Forest Laws including cancellation of the CFM Agreement and any rights withdrawn, Mpomwa Local Forest offers an opportunity for performance based incentive and reward mechanisms under the EP-JSLP.

## Turning policies and strategies into practice

ZIFLP is assisting the Forestry Department to implement the policies and strategies that will result in reduced deforestation and forest degradation through promoting collaborative management of selected forest reserves in Eastern Province with surrounding communities. This approach is also a pilot for dealing with the extensive encroachment and settlement that is found in many of the reserves in the Province. Restoring ecological function while meeting the social, cultural and economic needs of the local community can only be achieved through the shared management of critical resources of local and national importance.

The steps and learning are being documented through a series of **Practice Briefs**. Please use the link below for further details and copies.

**Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project** is a GRZ initiative which provides support to rural communities in the EP to allow them to better manage the resources of their landscapes so as to reduce deforestation and unsustainable agricultural expansion; enhance benefits they receive from forestry, agriculture, and wildlife; and reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

The ZIFLP is a product of cooperation between the Government of Zambia, the World Bank & partners.



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