



Ministry of Green Economy & Environment

Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project

Improving lives through Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

Early restoration successes in Mpomwa Local Forest through community effort - practice brief #6

Summary

Following a series of key stakeholder meetings with representatives from the surrounding Chiefdoms, a consensus was reached to tackle the issues affecting forest loss and degradation of Mpomwa Local Forest. The Forestry Department with support from the Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project (ZIFLP) initiated the **Community Forestry** process as a means collaborate over the protection and management of the forest. Early engagement with local leaders identified issues of settlement and cropping within the forest reserve which provides essential goods and services to the surrounding communities. Through these meetings it was agreed that abandoned fields would be identified for tree planting. One area was planted towards the end of the 2012/2022 planting season as a local commitment to the restoration of the forest. Now in 2024, 2 years on, the planted area has regenerated bringing back tree cover and soil protection to the site. This set a good marker for the future potential to restore a larger area of the forest.



Context

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. This is the sixth Practice Brief that shares approaches and learning from the pilot in Mpomwa Local Forest.

Establishing a partnership

Pressure on the forest is high and risk of further loss and degradation severe. During a meeting of Indunas with the Forestry Department and ZIFLP team in early 2022, it was agreed that fields that are abandoned or newly cleared would be planted as part of the process to restore the forest cover in the Local Forest. At the late time of this action in the 2021/22 planting season, limited seedlings were available, however, one field area was planted with support of the local officers.



Further community level meetings were held and the group with technical support from the local Forest Officers, developed a simple forest management plan local rules that set out how to manage the forest in a way that balances protection and development.

The Community Forest Management Group (CFMG) was formed, recognised by the Director of Forestry and a Community Forest Management Agreement was signed by the Director in March 2023. This effectively creates a partnership between the Forestry Department and the community over the control, use and management of the reserve.

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. This indicated that only 53.4% of the reserve is covered by forest, 19.3% is degraded forest and 27.3% is under other land uses including cropping and settlement.



Bringing back trees and tree cover through community efforts

Mpomwa Local Forest was originally reserved to protect the sources of a number of locally important streams. Innovative mechanisms are needed to reverse the forest loss and ensure cropland does not expand further. It is anticipated that some form of incentive and reward system will be needed for communities here and elsewhere in the Province to take this up at scale to increase tree cover and restore degraded areas across the landscape. Mpomwa Local Forest offers an opportunity for performance based incentive and reward mechanisms under the forthcoming Eastern Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Programme (EP-JSLP). As the tree grows, options of carbon trading can be explored. EP-JSLP is a Government initiative developed to incentives and reward climate change mitigation and adaptation

actions to reduce emissions coming from unsustainable land practices across the Province.



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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