

CBNRM Net

The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network

Item: Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East, overview May 1998

This Item contains a broad overview of CBNRM for Francophone Africa. The overview is adapted from the findings of a regional working group at the 10-14 May 1998 International CBNRM Workshop, consisting of participants largely from that region (see the workshop website, section Regional Working Groups, for details).

Principal resource types

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify the principal resource types in their region. The resource types are (listed in the order given):

- [no information provided]

Special regional context and characteristics

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify special regional contexts and characteristics in their region. The regional contexts and characteristics are (listed in the order given):

- Economic and political transition,
- Limited and highly degraded natural resources,
- Immature environmental policies, institutions and legislation, and
- Limited public and local communities' involvement in NRM (policy and decision-making process). Nevertheless, increasing democratization leads to favorable conditions for local initiatives and community involvement, and empowerment of NGOs.

Major messages

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify the major messages they wanted to give the CBNRM community in terms of how they assessed the situation in their region. The major messages are (listed in the order given):

- Further democratization and decentralization is a necessary precondition for CBNRM,
- CBNRM requires appropriate institutions and clearly defined property rights in order to be effective,
- Effective working partnerships need to be developed between communities and national and local governments in the management of natural resources, and
- Increase understanding of communities and governments of CBNRM for the sustainable use of natural resources.

Key policy issues

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify the key policy issues they wanted to give to the CBNRM community in terms of how they assessed the situation in their region. The key policy issues are (listed in the order given):

- Recognition of the rights of people to utilize natural resources for their livelihood in the context of environmental conservation and sustainable development,
- Empowerment of individuals and communities to play an active role in policy and decision-making and in the management of natural resources,
- Increase government transparency and accountability to the public,
- Develop and strengthen the institutional framework for CBNRM, including public, civil and private sectors,
- Develop and upgrade legislation to provide a framework for community-based actions, including freedom of information and property rights, and
- Increase awareness of the concept, principles and practice of CBNRM at the level of both policy-makers and the public.

Strategies

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify strategies that addressed the key policy issues identified earlier. The strategies are (listed in the order given):

(A) Recognizing the rights of the people

- Develop and upgrade legislation to provide a framework for community-based actions, including freedom of information and property rights,
- Review and amend legislation to recognize the rights of resource user groups and access to information and property rights, and
- Develop a secure land tenure system.

(B) Transparency and accountability

- Review and professionalize public sector organization to be more receptive to CBNRM and to favor partnerships with communities,
- Increase media coverage and develop 'open meeting' laws, and
- Capacity-building for government and community institutions.

(C) Awareness raising

- Inform and educate the civil population of their rights and possibilities for CBNRM, and
- Develop national programs on issues of sustainable natural resource use.

Actions

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify actions, directed at the workshop participants, and to be implemented upon returning home. The actions are (listed in the order given):

- Lobby decision-makers for legislative and institutional changes,
- Organize national/sub-national workshops on CBNRM,

- Disseminate workshop lessons and materials in respective countries through media and networking, and
- Initiate or develop community-based groups in own neighborhood.

Recommendations

The Regional Working Group was asked to identify recommendations directed at: (i) governments and other public agencies, and (ii) the World Bank and other donors. The recommendations are (listed in the order given):

(A) Governments and other public agencies

- Enact legislative changes and endorse appropriate conventions,
- Integrate CBNRM into government policies and practices, and
- Support public campaigns in CBNRM.

(B) World Bank and other donors

- Provide technical and financial support for CBNRM initiatives, including training, monitoring, research and implementation,
- Support pilot projects in CBNRM,
- Make CBNRM a priority in project portfolios, and
- Facilitate policy dialogue, information exchange and networking.