



What restrains Ethiopian NGOs to participate in the development of policies for natural resource management?

Adenew Taffa Ariti^{a,b,*}, Jasper van Vliet^a, Peter H. Verburg^a

^a Environmental Geography Group, VU University Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

^b Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Proclamation
Governance
Network
Land policy
Land use change
Oromia
Sustainable land management

ABSTRACT

By law, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Ethiopia are severely restricted in their activities towards policy development. In this study we explore to what extent these restrictions have affected NGOs in Natural Resource Management in the Oromia regional state of Ethiopia. We quantitatively analyzed 106 semi-structured questionnaires, in order to assess 1) the general characteristics of these NGO, 2) the role of NGOs in natural resource management, 3) the factors that constrain their activities, especially in relation to the proclamation, and 4) the cooperation between NGOs as well as other stakeholders. Results indicate that NGOs are mainly involved in policy implementation, including afforestation, forest management, and soil and water conservation. We find that a more active role in agenda setting and policy formulation is hampered by the 2009 proclamation, which explicitly restricts the role of Ethiopian Residence Charities/Societies (ERCS) and Foreign Charities (FC). Consistently, NGOs, as well as their donors, often avoid involvement in policy development, in fear of potential collusion with the government. In addition, NGOs listed legal and administrative barriers, poor networking and cooperation among NGOs, lack of capacity, lack of information, and a lack of clear role on policy issues as constraints for influencing policies for natural resource management. The extent to which these factors affect NGOs is dependent on their type and the source of their funding.

1. Introduction

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in natural resource management (NRM) in developing countries (Banks et al., 2015; Brass, 2012; Cook et al., 2017). Their involvement comes in a variety of forms, including policy advocacy, expert advice and analysis, mobilization of public opinions, representation of the voiceless, service provision, monitoring and assessment, consultation and policy dialogue with policymakers (Barnes and van Laerhoven, 2014; Brass, 2012; Gugerty, 2008; Jepson, 2005). Participation of NGOs in the public policy making for NRM could improve the implementation of policies on the ground (Mukamunnana and Brynard, 2005; Ohanyan, 2009). However, most developing countries only partially use this opportunity and NRM policies are developed with little or no participation of NGOs (Nichols, 2004). In those countries where NGOs are allowed to engage in the policy development process for NRM, their views are rarely accepted by governments (AUC-ECA-AfDB-Consortium, 2010). Governments of developing countries often assume that most of the NGOs are dependent on, controlled by, and accountable to donors rather than their members and objectives. They also assume that the plan

and objectives of NGOs directly reflect the plans and objectives of their donors (AUC-ECA-AfDB-Consortium, 2010; Dupuy et al., 2016; Hailegebriel, 2010). Yet, many NGOs aim for autonomy and their own identity in their activities, despite donors attempts to maintain control over NGO agendas (Brinkerhoff, 2003; Igoe, 2003; Makuwira, 2006).

While NGOs had some presence in Africa in the post second world war period, it was really only in the 1980s and 1990s that NGOs flourished. This flourishing followed the structural adjustment programmes which were imposed across Africa by the international financial institutions and development agencies (Bratton, 1989; Shivji, 2007). The lack of capacity to serve their people in the remote rural areas became a staging ground for the increase of NGOs in the newly independent African countries (Obiyan, 2005). Many of the NGOs in post-colonial African countries have been involved in environmental service delivery, largely as a result of the inability of governments to provide such services (Princen and Finger, 1994).

Conservation activity is arguably the first environmental policy area in which NGOs were actively involved (Burgess, 2017; Princen and Finger, 1994). For instance, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), traces its origins to the formation of the Natal

* Corresponding author at: Environmental Geography Group, VU University Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

E-mail addresses: amanuelamen@gmail.com (A.T. Ariti), jasper.van.vliet@vu.nl (J. van Vliet), peter.verburg@vu.nl (P.H. Verburg).

Game Protection Association (NGPA) in 1883 (Burgess, 2017). In 1982 twenty-one African environmental NGOs formed the African NGOs Environment Network (ANEN), whose membership reached 530 in 45 countries by 1990 (Princen and Finger, 1994). Recently, NGOs have been playing different roles in the areas of NRM in Africa and other parts of the world. For example, in the conservation and management of natural resources in countries like South Africa, Guinea, Cameroon and Tanzania (Fischer, 2000; Fonjong, 2006; Levine, 2002; Musavengane and Simatele, 2016), in the formulation of bylaws for NRM in Tanzania and Uganda (Mowo et al., 2016), community based NRM and ecotourism in protected areas in Cameroon and Kenya (Sawhney et al., 2007; Tantoh and Simatele, 2017), and soil and water conservation in Burkina Faso (Atampugre, 1997). Despite the increase in number and influence of NGOs in Africa (Hearn, 2007), their role in land use governance is still restricted in most of the countries, and their views are either ignored or not fully considered by policy makers (AUC-ECA-AfDB-Consortium, 2010^a; Hearn, 2007).

NGOs have been present in Ethiopia since the 1960s. However, they were slow to take root under the empire, and then severely restricted during the Derg period (1974–1991) until the famines of 1973–1974 and 1984–1985 pressed the government to open their door to international and local NGOs (Dupuy et al., 2013). Following a regime change in 1991, the government introduced a new guideline which provided guidance for NGOs to align their programmes and activities with government priorities. This was very much welcomed by NGOs as it supports collaboration with the state. Due to their relative freedom, NGOs grew in size and in number, which drew the attention of government officials like in other African countries (Bratton, 1989). As a consequence Ethiopia as well as several other sub-Saharan African countries have issued a restrictive policy to control the activities of NGOs (Dupuy et al., 2016).

From 1993–2012 nearly a quarter of the world's low and middle income countries, including nearly one third of the African countries, adopted a laws to restrict foreign funding for to locally operating NGOs (Dupuy et al., 2016; Mukamunnana and Brynard, 2005). Ethiopia is among those countries which has issued a proclamation to limit the flow of foreign funding to local NGOs. Unlike other countries, the law puts restrictions on a specific types of NGOs from involving in advocacy activities (Dupuy et al., 2016). Proclamation No. 621/2009 divides Ethiopian NGOs into three types, based on their place of origin, source of income, members' citizenship, and control. Ethiopian Charities/Societies (ECS) refers those NGOs that are formed under the laws of Ethiopia, all of whose members are Ethiopians, generate more than 90% of their income from Ethiopia, and are wholly controlled by Ethiopians. Ethiopian Residence Charities/Societies (ERCS) are those NGOs that are formed under the laws of Ethiopia, consist of members who reside in Ethiopia, but who receive more than 10% of their fund from foreign sources. Foreign Charities (FC) refer to those NGOs that are formed under the laws of foreign countries, which consist of members who are foreign nationals, are controlled by foreign nationals, or receive funds from foreign sources. The proclamation, introduced in 2009, prohibited ERCS and FC from engaging in advocacy and governance activities. The law also restricted NGOs spending on administrative activities, which explicitly includes expenses related to policy advocacy, to a maximum of 30% of their total budget. Hence, in the current situation, NGOs are severely restricted in their contribution to developing policies for NRM in Ethiopia. Yet, it is unknown how this situation affects their activities.

The aim of this paper is to assess what determines the role of NGOs in NRM policies. Based on the 2009 proclamation, we expect that the involvement of NGOs to NRM policies differs according to their type, and that these types also affect constraints they are experiencing (Dupuy et al., 2016, 2013; Hailegebriel, 2010). Consistently, we expect that the way NGOs work and plan differs between these different NGO types, depending on their funding source (Ohanyan, 2009). Specifically, we expect that ERCS and FC have a smaller role in the development of

policies, as the law does not allow them to involve in policy advocacy. We also expect that ERCS and FC are more influenced by donors' interests than NGOs that receive national funding. We further hypothesize that there is a difference between the NGO types and the impacts of the new law as well as the coping strategies used by NGOs to overcome impacts (Dupuy et al., 2016).

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Study area

The Oromia regional state is the largest region in the federal state of Ethiopia, with a total area of 353,690 km², and a high variety of landscapes. The region contains 75% of Ethiopia's highlands, large parts of Ethiopia's remaining forests, and various rivers which can be used for power generation and irrigation (OEB, 2005). Forests, bushes and croplands are the major land use types covering 9%, 60% and 28% percent respectively. Most forests, protected areas, lakes and parks are managed by government while other lands are managed by smallholder farmers.

Within the past two decades, the population in Oromia has increased from 25 million to 36 million (OEB, 2005; CSA, 2014). About 85% are from the Oromo ethnic group, while small minorities are from other ethnic groups. Because 90% of the population depends on agricultural activities for their livelihoods, this population growth has also increased the competition for land. As a result of this, local livelihoods have changed from pastoral livestock herding to sedentary mixed and cropland farming. These developments, together with urban expansion, have led to a marked decrease in forests and natural areas, and a degradation of the available natural resources, including freshwater sources (Ariti et al., 2015; Garedew et al., 2009).

Institutional responsibility for the management of natural resources is distributed over a number of regional and federal institutions. Specifically, the Oromia Bureau of Rural Land and Environmental Protection (BoRLEP), the Oromia Bureau of Water, Mines and Energy (BoWME) and the Oromia Forest and Wildlife Enterprise (OFWE) are the most important regional offices that are responsible for NRM, while national parks, lakes and protected areas are managed by federal institutions, such as Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority and Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy. Oromia regional state has passed a number of laws and regulations for NRM, such as for rural land use and administration (130/2007, 147/2009, 151/2012), water (162/2003), and irrigation (162/2009, 180/2013) under the framework of the federal laws and regulations. The rural land use and administration proclamations aim for the sustainable use of rural lands through tenure security, land use planning, conflict management, and conservation. The water and irrigation policies prescribe how to utilize, conserve, protect, and control water resources and irrigable lands.

Despite the implementation of a number of regional policies, degradation of natural resources, such as soil erosion and deforestation, remain a major problem in Oromia, due to unsustainable management and poor enforcement of existing laws (Garedew et al., 2009; Meshesha et al., 2012; Yeshaneh et al., 2013). Instead, some land policies have been named as causes of unsustainable land use changes (Ariti et al., 2015), while they have also been a source of political grievances (Deininger et al., 2008; Ariti et al., 2018) and sometimes civil unrest (Andargie, 2015). Since 2015, the study area has experienced repeated public protest and violence against the implementation of the Addis Ababa-Oromia special zones integrated master land use plan (Andargie, 2015; Challa, 2016). This is mainly because farmers in the study area have the perception that the expansion of the city to adjacent agricultural land would gradually evict them out of their land leaving them landless (Ariti et al., 2018).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/11005274>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/11005274>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)