

POLICY BRIEF

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Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy



Centre for Environmental
Policy and Advocacy



UTVIKLINGSFONDET

Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

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Background

Malawi adopted the National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy in 2000. Its overall goal is promoting efficient, diversified and sustainable use of land based resources for both agriculture and other uses so as to avoid sectoral land-use conflicts and ensure socio-economic development.

Agriculture remains the largest land use in Malawi and it affects and is affected by other land uses. On the other hand, high population growth has led to inter-generational subdivision of land and reduction in the land holding size per capita. The policy recognizes the need for policy guidelines on the conservation and management of land resources as their depletion or degradation may affect food security and sustainable socio-economic growth.

Expected Outcomes

The national land resources management policy and strategy is developed to assist in:

- Balancing requirements for different land uses and regulating the competing demand for land by different sectors;
- Designating the best use of land for optimal socio-economic development;
- Providing guidelines and strategies for the sustainable utilization of the land resource base;
- Defining roles of different players in land resources management issues, guide the formulation and review of sectoral policies and legislation related to land use and its management; and
- Enabling the country to determine the priority application of both internal and externally provided resources.

The policy also serves as an instrument for conservation of land for agriculture and indicates land use and management measures that will help balance and regulate the competing land use for different activities such as forestry and human settlements.

Policy Goal

The policy goal is to promote efficient, diversified and sustainable use of land based resources both for agriculture and other uses in order to avoid sectoral land use conflicts and ensure sustainable socio-economic development.

Strategies

The policy outlines 16 specific objectives in different areas of interest together with strategies that will be able to help achieve the objective under each area of interest.

Among others the policy presents the following objectives and strategies:

i. Land Productivity

The policy's objective is to improve and sustain productivity of land for agriculture and other alternative land uses. In order to achieve this, the government of Malawi intends to promote appropriate soil and water conservation practices; provide information for proper land use planning and management; develop methods for participatory approach in conservation farming, evaluate area specific recommendations on soil management, provide guidelines on stocking rates and productions and disseminate appropriate building technologies.

ii. Land Rehabilitation

The objective of the policy is to ensure that degraded land is rehabilitated for agriculture and other purposes. To achieve this, government will map of degraded areas to identify priority areas, provide guidelines for rehabilitation and regeneration of vegetation will be promoted in degraded areas; encourage local communities to form conservation committees to rehabilitate degraded areas with government offering technical assistance to the communities. In addition collaboration with other stakeholders in rehabilitation, provision of incentives for successful rehabilitation and conservation, voluntary resettlement of people and farming on unsuitable land.

iii. Public Awareness in Land Management

Public awareness is intended to instill a sense of responsibility and commitment towards management of land resources in the public. To achieve this, the government intends to do the following:

- Publicising land resources management policy and its implication on the community through regular awareness campaigns on sound land resources management practices;
- Strengthening and enhancing land conservation modules and curricula as well as reviewing training approaches in schools, colleges and relevant institutions;
- Involvement of all stakeholders in public awareness campaigns and
- Formulation of programmes on impacts of population growth.

iv. Surface Run-Off

The objective of the policy is to control surface runoff water for agriculture and other land uses through promotion of technologies that will minimize run-off, water harvesting and soil management technologies, catchment conservation, and campaigns against bushfires.

v. Community Initiatives in Land Resources Management

The policy aims to provide an enabling environment for community initiatives in managing their land resources. The strategies for achieving this include:

- Development of appropriate extension methods
- Formation of community farming groups
- Develop land use and management training manuals; and

- Formulation of contractual agreements between communities and the Department on conservation activities.

vi. Technology Development in Land Management

The objective of the policy is to develop technologies that are economically viable, ecologically sound and socio-culturally acceptable through promoting demand driven and holistic research in land management; encouraging participatory technology development; and on farm testing of proven research and carrying out demonstration for farmer training and appreciation.

vii. Institutional Coordination

The policy's objective is to enhance coordination among institutions involved in land resources management. This will be achieved through:

- Development of strong institutional linkages
- Provision of technical support to other institutions in resource conservation
- Ensure consistency in related policies
- Decentralization of land use planning and management
- Creation of a statutory National Land Use and Management Board to advise government on land issues
- Provision of contractual services on land resources conservation activities
- Strengthening function on relevant committees and bodies.

viii. Institutional capacity building

The policy's objective is to strengthen the capacity of the institutions to effectively plan, implement, monitor and evaluate land resources management through:

- Provision of training to staff involved in land management and provision for conducive work environment.
- Provision of materials and equipment for effective and efficient functioning of the department.
- Empowerment of rural communities to effectively manage their land resources
- Develop the human resources required for the implementation of the policy and optimum utilization of managerial, technical and scientific talent

ix. Environmentally fragile areas

The objective of the policy is to protect and preserve environmentally fragile areas by identifying and mapping fragile areas; providing appropriate guidelines on their use and management; publicising ecological functions of these areas; and proposing the areas for gazetting as protected areas.

x. Legislation

The policy aims to provide a legal framework to support land resources conservation and management policies for rational and informed management of land resources. The strategies to attain this include:

- Formulation of a legal framework for the implementation of the land resources conservation policy
- Encourage maximum community participation in formulating, reviewing and

- updating sectoral laws relating to land use, planning and management.
- Making legal provision for punitive measures and incentives relating to soil management practices.
- Empower traditional leaders to authorize the use and occupation of customary land and ensure its sound use and management.
- Establish land use and management appeals tribunal
- Prepare a report on land use patterns and conservation status

xi. Land Resources Information

The policy objective is to improve the acquisition and utilization of land resources information for proper planning and management of land resources for agriculture. Therefore, the government will:

- Provide high quality data and ensure adherence to standards in land resources data collection, analysis and management;
- Ensure periodic acquisition of aerial photographs and satellite imagery and maps for purposes of updating land resources information
- Publish and disseminate land resources information
- Establish and maintain land resources information centres
- Strengthen linkages for information sharing and expertise exchange with national and international centers involved in land resource information generation and analysis.

xii. Incentives in Land Management

The objective of the policy is to promote the use of incentives which encourage communities to undertake soil conservation measures through:

- Development of guidelines on the type and use of reward schemes in land resources management,
- Encourage use of incentives to successful land managers
- Provision of loan guarantees for compliance with leasehold covenants;
- Provision of tax rebates for establishment and maintenance of soil conservation measures;
- Establishment of a mechanism for linking agricultural credit worthiness of land users to good land management practices.
- Monitor and evaluate impact of the incentives

xiii. Natural Resources

The policy is aimed at promoting management, conservation and utilization of natural resources for sustainable land and ecosystem productivity. This can be achieved by

- Conducting environmental impact assessments where impacts on natural resources are anticipated;
- Using educational curricula and media to raise awareness on the importance and wise utilization of natural resources
- Promoting monitored and controlled access to natural resources by local communities' for their own socio-economic benefits e.g. national parks and inland water systems.

- Developing and implementing forest management measures
- Including natural resources conservation in sectoral policies
- Promoting fisheries resources through control of pollution of lakes and rivers

xiv. Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and Local Communities

The overall objective is to compliment government efforts in promoting sustainable land use and management practices by:

- Training local communities in sustainable land use and management practices
- Disseminating information to communities and help source funds for community initiatives on sustainable methods of land utilization.
- Identifying mechanisms to enable local communities to prepare and submit self-help programmers for improvement of land use and management
- Identifying, analyzing and incorporating positive traditional knowledge in land use and management systems
- Promoting off-farm employment opportunities to reduce pressure on land

xv. Women and Gender

The objective of the policy is to integrate gender issues in policy and decision making on land to ensure shared responsibility over sustainable use and management of land resources. To this end, the policy provides for utilization of positive indigenous knowledge of women in sustainable land use and management; development and implementation of policies that recognize and enshrine the legal rights of women to land on an equitable basis; and promoting women perspectives in land use and management.

Developed and designed by:



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