



Achieving multi-level, integrated governance of coastal ecosystems in Zanzibar

Key points

- Integration and coordination of objectives, policies and management approaches is widely seen as essential for the effective governance of coastal zones. Yet, developing an integrated and coordinated approach within government and with other actors, working at multiple levels and locations, is extremely challenging. The breadth of sectors, policies, actors, management approaches and levels may not always be appreciated or taken into account.
- Viewing governance in terms of 'multi-level governance' would encourage greater attention to the many administrative levels, government sectors and non-governmental actors involved, and interactions between them.
- Understanding of multi-level governance requires analysis in three areas:
 - The multiplicities of levels, actors, policies and rules.
 - The existence of, and opportunities and challenges for, vertical and horizontal interaction.
 - Assessment of governance through the application of governance principles.

Characteristics of renewable natural resources

Natural resources have a number of characteristics that make governance a challenge:

- There are often multiple uses, users, management approaches and objectives for any one given natural resource.
- Natural resources may cross administrative boundaries and therefore require neighbouring administrations to cooperate.
- Natural resources and livelihoods are affected by policies, law, plans and decisions made at multiple administrative levels – international, regional, national, sub-national and local.

Accordingly, the governance of natural resources is often fragmented, uncoordinated, under-resourced and affected by many actors, decisions and rules. Achieving a coordinated, coherent approach at all levels and between all sectors is challenging. Due to the multiple ecosystem services provided by coastal areas and the diversity of benefits received, the lack of coordination and integration is problematic for the sustainability of the resource and for associated livelihoods.

The complexity of natural resource governance suggests that a **multi-level governance** perspective is needed to help understand who is involved and how actors interact, and to identify opportunities and challenges for greater cooperation. Understanding multi-level governance requires analysis in three areas:

1. The multiplicities of levels, actors, policies and rules.
2. The existence of, and opportunities and challenges for, vertical and horizontal interaction.
3. Assessment of governance through the application of governance principles.

The aim of this brief is to provide a guide to mapping and investigating the multi-level landscape of natural resource governance, and enable the identification of challenges to and opportunities for greater coordination and cooperation.



Analysing multi-level governance

Multiplicities of levels, actors, policies and rules

As well as the complexity of natural resource systems leading to a need for a multi-level governance perspective, two other trends in governance make a multi-level perspective essential:

1. In many countries, functions and powers of government have been decentralised, with the formation of local government structures, sometimes at multiple levels.
2. The adoption of collaborative forms of natural resource governance has brought other actors into the governance framework, including resource users, NGOs and the private sector.

As there may be multiple government sectors involved in the governance of a natural resource, policies, legislation, management objectives and approaches associated with these sectors will impact on the condition of the natural resource and how people access and benefit from the natural resource. At all levels, there will be rules and norms, formal and informal, that influence governance; these may be linked across levels, but they may also contradict and confuse.

The existence of, and opportunities and challenges for, vertical and horizontal interaction

Analysis of cross-level (vertical) and within level (horizontal) interactions is essential for understanding to what extent and how actors already work together. Such analysis can also identify opportunities for encouraging interaction and challenges that might make cooperation difficult to achieve. Interactions may include information sharing, participation in cross-level or cross-sector working groups, and undertaking joint activities. Challenges to interacting include competition for resources and status, lack of incentives for cooperation and some actors or structures exerting more power and influence than others, making equity in collaboration difficult.

Assessment of governance through the application of governance principles

An assessment of how well the system is working and performing is essential. In a multi-level system, delivering on transparency, participation and accountability, for example, may be particularly challenging. Literature on 'good governance' identifies many governance principles, such as: legitimacy, transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. Inclusiveness includes an assessment of the system of representation of different actors at each level, how participation of all stakeholders can take place and whether all groups have a voice in decision-making. The accountability of a multi-level governance system can be challenging because of the many levels, government sectors and actors involved. Accountability downwards, particularly to local communities, is often ignored. A range of mechanisms for, and frequency of, accountability may be needed. Legitimacy of the system, the actors and organisations within the governance system, and of the decisions made is essential if governance is to be effective. Legitimacy may partially come from having a legal mandate, but acceptance by stakeholders also results from information sharing, transparency, demonstrating accountability and commitment to delivering on agreed aims and objectives.

Using the brief descriptions above, the following table provides an illustration of the complexity of the governance of coastal ecosystems in Zanzibar.



Multilevel governance of coastal ecosystems in Zanzibar

Multiplicity of levels, types of actors, policies and rules	Vertical and horizontal interactions	Governance performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government sectors include: Department of Fisheries Development, Department of Forestry and Non-Renewable Natural Resources, Department of Environment, Zanzibar Environment Management Authority, Zanzibar Commission for Lands, Zanzibar Commission for Tourism Four main administrative levels: national, regional, district and Shehia (ward, with several villages) District Commissioners office and additional sector officers assigned to district level Multiple policies, legislation, strategies and plans associated with integrated coastal zone management, environment, fisheries, forestry, tourism, land, planning. Sectors may have different ways of looking at the same resources, with different aims, objectives, priorities and management approaches. Multiple committees found at the village (Shehia) level, associated with forestry (CoFMA: Community Forest Management Area), fisheries (SFC: Shehia Fisheries Committee), environment (Conservation Committee) and others Informal rules, norms and social relations influence decision-making at all levels, including personal networks, gendered relations and ways of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal communication between government department directors to request collaboration in meetings, policy development and field visits Government officers in one department have to be knowledgeable about legislation associated with other sectors Joint activities often dependent on donor project funding District sector officers link community to national level District sector officers have double report lines, reporting monthly to District Commissioners and to their respective departments People use their social networks to make contact and collaborate with other sectors Secondments to Marine Conservation Areas from forestry and environment assisted cross-department working Executive Committee of Marine Conservation Areas contains different sector representatives Much interaction between government departments and between levels is <i>ad hoc</i> and reactive rather than planned for, unless activities are multi and interdisciplinary project funded Little interaction between sector-related committees at the village level Some evidence of contradictory laws, e.g. Zanzibar Investment Authority (ZIPA) able to issue permits for development without ZEMA approval. COFMAs involve formal agreements between community forest committees and DFNR. 	<p><i>Legitimacy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation sets out the remit of government departments and their management approaches. Policy statements provide details of aims and objectives. Legislation provides legal mandate for collaborative natural resource governance and remit of community-based collaborative structures, such as the CoFMA committees. Legitimacy may be undermined by corruption, social relations and weak and or lack of enforcement of policy and legislation. <p><i>Inclusiveness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The composition of community-based committees is directed by legislation. There are no formal structures that bring government officers and community-based committees together. Little representation of communities in higher levels beyond <i>ad hoc</i> workshops and consultations. <p><i>Accountability and transparency</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based structures report to the Sheha (head of the ward) but not to the rest of the community. Most accountability is upwards through reporting to the next level.



Challenges to a more coherent multi-level governance approach

Challenges towards taking a more coherent, coordinated approach include the following:

- Government departments and other actors (e.g. NGOs and donor agencies) want to keep funding and activities so that they are associated with the activities and with success that follows. They need to be able to report on their activities and demonstrate achievements – this is important for accountability and securing additional funds.
- Changes in where departments are located within ministries affect the ability to work together. When the natural resource departments were under one ministry, the heads of departments met regularly, which facilitated information exchange and joint working.
- At times, different government departments go to the same communities without consulting each other, causing confusion and over-burdening communities.
- Inadequate government budgetary allocation limits sector officers from field activities and working with each other. Some donor funding comes with administrative restrictions on crosscutting activities.
- The separate formation and functioning of committees at local level limits the development of a more integrated approach. Each sector department lays procedures for community engagement that often conflict with and/or duplicate jurisdictional mandates of other sectors' frameworks.

Opportunities for greater coordination

- The 2015 Environment Act allowed for the introduction of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), which falls under the remit of the Climate Change Technical and Steering Committees. A national level platform for collaboration between natural resource related departments could meet under the mandate of ICZM.
- ICZM committees at the community level draw on members of the other committees, including forest conservation, fisheries and environment, providing an opportunity for information sharing and joint working. This is a new initiative and they have not been formed all over the island to date.
- The 2015 Environment Act also recognizes climate change as a crosscutting policy issue and requires the formation of Environment and Climate Change Units in all Ministries and Local Authorities. These have the potential to coordinate natural resource related activities.
- There is experience in seconding officers from departments to joint activities and initiatives, particularly with non-state actors and in forming taskforces across departments. These experiences can be drawn on for greater collaboration for the governance of coastal ecosystems.
- Participation of community-based committee members in higher levels of government decision-making through a system of representation would strengthen collaborative governance and encourage greater interaction – horizontal as well as vertical.

Conclusion

This brief has shown that whilst the geographic scale and many uses of renewable natural resources makes coordinated governance a challenge, thinking through the multi-level nature of the governance situation can reveal opportunities and challenges for a more coordinated approach. Using the structured approach set out in this brief can guide analysis and understanding, and help plan for greater interaction within and between levels, whilst encouraging greater inclusivity, legitimacy and accountability.

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