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LITERATURE REVIEW

Tanzania SLOA Political Economy Analysis



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Literature Review: Tanzania SLOA Political Economy Analysis

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Front cover photo: Women carrying water from a well. Photo by makasana photo.

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Acronyms

CCM	Chama Cha Mapindizi (Revolutionary Party)
BMU	Beach Management Unit
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
CHADEMA	Chama Cha Democrasia na Maendeleo (political party)
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
GOT	Government of Tanzania
INRM	Integrated Natural Resource Management
NCS	Natural Climate Solutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PLUP	Participatory Land Use Planning
PNRM	Participatory Natural Resource Management
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SLOA	Sustainable Landscapes Opportunity Analysis
TCD	Tanzania Centre for Democracy
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VLFR	Village Land Forest Reserve
VNRC	Village Natural Resource Councils
VPLUP	Village Participatory Land Use Plans
WMA	Wildlife Management Area

Background

USAID's [Sustainable Landscape Opportunity Analyses \(SLOAs\)](#) provide national-level overviews to reveal the relative impact of options for reducing GHG emissions through land conservation, management, and restoration. While SLOAs may discuss co-benefits, they do not typically have a focused discussion on the political feasibility of specific emission reduction opportunities. Political economy analysis (PEA) can generate insights to help guide and refine program design and provide suggestions for thinking and working politically (TWP) during program implementation and monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

In 2023, INRM conducted a tailored PEA to complement the Tanzania SLOA. The PEA activity produced two documents: 1) a desk-based literature review, and 2) a PEA Annex to the SLOA based on findings from field-based interviews with stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector, and local communities. Analysis of the political feasibility of emissions reduction opportunities can help advance empirically grounded understanding of the nature and types of SLOA-PEA linkages and their implications for programming.

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review for the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) Annex is to provide background information on Tanzania's political development and environmental governance and—based on the findings of the Sustainable Landscapes Opportunity Analysis (SLOA) desk-based study—suggest preliminary research questions for the SLOA PEA Annex field research. The PEA Annex will provide input to the SLOA on the political feasibility of potential natural climate solutions (NCS) pathways in terms of fit and viability, considering Tanzania's prior experiences with decentralized environmental governance and its alignment with current USAID and Government of Tanzania (GOT) priorities.

The evolution of one-party dominance and democratic institutions in Tanzania

Tanzania's political economy is marked by cross-currents and apparent contradictions. It is formally an electoral democracy with a record of political stability and a strong average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 6.4 percent from 2002-2022. Yet, Freedom House rates Tanzania as just above the threshold to qualify as "partly free" with a score of 36 of 100 (Uganda, at 35, is "not free"), and the World Bank estimates that more than 40 percent of the population still lives in poverty. Four-fifths of the country's poor live in rural areas. Although Tanzania has officially been a multiparty democracy since 1992, politics have been dominated by one party—Chama Cha Mapindizi (Revolutionary Party), or CCM—which has won six consecutive general elections and has ruled by allowing greater or lesser political space, as long as it does not credibly threaten CCM's power. The country's macroeconomic performance has been steady, with relatively modest inflation ranging between three and seven percent over the past decade, and the World Bank projects a recovering 5.3 percent GDP growth rate in 2023. However, the productivity of Tanzania's agricultural sector, which engages nearly two-thirds of the country's population, remains low and is constrained by insecure land tenure.

The fusion of a dominant single-party system, national development goals, and centralized ideological messaging in Tanzania dates back to the era of President Julius Nyerere (1964-1985). The 1967 Arusha Declaration and the vision of *ujamaa*, or cooperative economics, called for a political economy modeled on socialism, self-reliance, equality, villagization, and nationalization. While health and education indicators saw some improvement, administrative coercion, limitations on dissent, and the failure of national economic planning led to a reversal of the model by the 1980s (Fouéré 2014). President Nyerere voluntarily left office in 1985, beginning a top-down democratization process and initiating policies for economic liberalization and privatization that gained momentum in the 1990s and 2000s. Political and economic liberalization contributed to the creation of new business elites and financiers, who developed mutually supportive patronage networks with factions of CCM (Cheeseman et al. 2021).

Tanzania achieved independence with little violence and without widespread political mobilization. Under the socialist regime, political power was largely retained within formal political institutions, a practice continued by CCM. As a consequence, "the distribution of political power in Tanzania maps onto the formal political institutions to a much greater extent than in other countries where power is organized along ethnic, regional, or class-based cleavages" (Gray 2015).

The political legacy is different in the heavily Muslim (95 percent of the population) and semi-autonomous province of Zanzibar, which united with Tanganyika in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania. There, political change came after violence and repression of the opposition party, leading to

more contentious elections and political polarization. A referendum in 2010 facilitated an eventual agreement between CCM and the main opposition party to form a coalition Government of National Unity (GNU). However, many Zanzibari political critics contend that Zanzibar is under-represented as well as politically and culturally marginalized at the national level (BTI 2022).

Political liberalization through multiparty politics and economic liberalization through market reforms empowered Tanzanian business interests, facilitated foreign direct investment, and recalibrated the country's politics from 1995 onward. A political coalition of party and economic elites brought money and power closer together. The launch of 'Vision 2025' in 2000 set Tanzania's goal of becoming a semi-industrialized, lower middle-income country less reliant on foreign assistance by 2025. The Tanzanian state under the leadership of CCM remained "insistently developmentalist" (Becker 2019) and coupled the goals of economic growth with the expansion of social reforms and service delivery in areas, like education, health, and other basic services (Nyaluke and Connolly 2013; Pedersen and Jacob 2019).

In the early 2000s, while political organizing and party activities outside CCM remained modest, intra-elite factions linked to business interests and financiers emerged within CCM. Several major corruption scandals, including contracts awarded in the energy sector and laundered payments made from banks to local firms, implicated senior figures in CCM and led to resignations of the prime minister and the governor of the Bank of Tanzania (Gray 2015). This created splits within CCM and energized the anti-corruption agenda and political prospects of the opposition party, Chama Cha Democrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), which had been engaged in local party-building efforts and cultivating supporters from the business sector. CHADEMA did not, however, fundamentally diverge from CCM on the broad goals of Vision 2025.

CCM's vote share in presidential elections steadily declined from 80 percent in 2005 to 63 percent in 2010 and 58 percent in 2015, when CHADEMA received 40 percent. Faced with a growing threat to its political dominance, CCM began to introduce legislation to limit political activities in advance of the 2015 general election, followed by a series of more far-reaching restrictions enacted under President John Magufuli. This included closing media outlets, banning political rallies, monitoring online information, and passing amendments to the Political Parties Act of 1992 that facilitated deregistration of political parties and effectively blocked political advocacy (BTI 2022). The government's economic agenda shifted back toward state-led industrialization, with policies to develop export-processing zones and large-scale infrastructure projects in transportation and energy.

The shift toward authoritarian rule under President Magufuli included a focus on corruption that garnered public support and changed the logic of political contestation. Magufuli sought to undercut the factionalism in CMM through a crackdown on party members' rent-seeking behaviors. Political contenders were thereby denied room to maneuver from either inside or outside the party (Paget 2017). As a result, CHADEMA's focus changed from anti-corruption to a sharper critique of CCM's anti-democratic actions. In September 2017, the leader of CHADEMA, Tundu Lissu, was nearly assassinated and later went into exile in Belgium.

The Magufuli presidency also posed challenges for civil society organizations and their understanding of the extent to which they were perceived as "being political" in a narrowing civic space. After the Non-Governmental Organizations Regulations of 2018, all NGOs in Tanzania had to be re-registered, causing

delays in project implementation and complicating donor relationships. As a practical matter, this could mean calibrating the promotion of citizens' rights and/or supporting community development, with the former more likely to "decrease the legitimacy of NGOs vis-à-vis powerholders." Kontinen and Ngayahambi (2023) place this calculus in the context of the historical challenge for civil society organizations in Tanzania to negotiate their legitimacy through "donor relationships, embeddedness in communities, focus on action, and being non-political."

The political opposition boycotted the 2019 local elections, and in the run-up to the 2020 general elections, many opposition candidates were disqualified and harassed. Voting was marred by accusations of irregularities (Collard and Paget 2020). The U.S. Embassy and other Western governments expressed concerns about the credibility of the voting, in which Magufuli received 85 percent and Lissu received 13 percent.

The erratic policies of President Magufuli in response to the COVID-19 virus generated further concerns and controversy, both at home and abroad. While he initially implemented WHO-recommended measures, he later opposed mask-wearing, stopped releasing health statistics, and denounced vaccines as Western imperialism, eventually declaring Tanzania free of COVID-19. (Ombuor and Bearak 2021). The Magufuli era came to an abrupt end, however, in March 2021, upon the president's death from heart problems.

With the swearing-in of President Samia Suluhu Hassan, Tanzania's first woman president, the country's politics were once again reframed, with the new president pledging to restore democratic freedoms and improve relations with Tanzania's neighbors and the international community. As a result, the question of the exact parameters of CCM's political model was again reopened, with early indications of greater political freedoms, although events also reflected continuing limits on political activities.

In addition to initiating a COVID-19 vaccine program, President Suluhu fast-tracked a major liquefied natural gas project, lifted the ban on four newspapers, released the chairperson of CHADEMA (who had spent seven months in detention), and, in January 2023, lifted the ban on public rallies as part of her 4Rs initiative (reconciliation, resilience, reforms, and rebuilding) (Ford 2023). However, some in the media complained of continued threats and intimidation and opposition leaders were barred from attending human rights rallies in September 2023 for illegal assembly (Minde 2023).

More fundamental political issues now revolve around possible reforms and first steps toward a new constitution, a discussion made even more salient by the approach of local elections in 2024 and the presidential election in 2025. The existing constitution grants the president vast powers, especially with respect to the appointment of senior officials, including heads of public institutions, judges, auditors, the inspector general of the police, and members of the electoral commission (Kwayu 2023). President Suluhu agreed to evaluate earlier taskforce recommendations (notably for an Independent Electoral Commission, political party independence, and civic education), in consultation with a Political Parties Council meeting for stakeholders.

A National Stakeholders Conference at the Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD) in August 2023 resolved that, "the government has delayed the process of reviving the new constitution-making process" and participants encouraged "multiparty dialogue as a means of consensus building" (Tanzania

Centre for Democracy 2023). Thus, with elections fast approaching, progress on a new constitution and further democratizing reforms supported by CCM remains uncertain, despite the president’s positive comments. At the Conference, with funding from the U.S. Embassy and Swiss Embassy, the TCD launched a project to “Strengthen Multiparty Dialogue and Enhance Participation of Women and Youth in Political and Electoral Processes.”

Environmental governance in Tanzania

The implementation of all potential NCS pathways identified in the SLOA desk-based study are likely to rely upon some form of participatory natural resource management (PNRM). PNRM is a broad term that, when applied in the Tanzanian context, includes Participatory Forest Management, or PFM (including Joint Forest Management/JFM and Community-Based Forest Management/CBFM), Wildlife Management Associations, or WMA (including Community-Based Conservation/CBC), Beach Management Units (BMU), and Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP).

As the SLOA desk-based study notes, “Tanzania has a unique legal framework, which could present novel opportunities for decentralized decision-making and locally driven natural resource management.” In order to take advantage of those opportunities, it is important to keep in mind the extensive literature on past experiences and challenges implementing decentralized environmental governance in Tanzania.

In 2022, USAID published [a systematic evidence review](#) of PNRM and democratic outcomes based on 151 studies between 2005-2020 covering forests, fisheries, and wildlife in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Thirty-one of the 151 studies examined PNRM in Tanzania, either in whole or in part. One of the main findings of the review, globally, was that, “the evidence shows that incomplete or flawed decentralization is one of the most widespread and persistent constraints on successful implementation of PNRM.”

Six recurrent obstacles were identified in the evidence review as limiting or blocking effective implementation of decentralized NRM, as listed below. Each of these problems—sometimes occurring in combination—were experienced at various times in Tanzania’s management of forests, wildlife, and fisheries:

1. Failure of state authorities to cede central power and revenues to local authorities and communities;
2. Parallel or duplicative institutional arrangements leading to power struggles rather than power sharing;
3. Mismatch between devolved responsibilities and locally available resources and capacity;

4. Creation of new (or reconstituted) institutional elites undermining downward accountability;
5. Local NRM institutions reproducing gender inequality and bias toward disadvantaged groups; and
6. Preferences of external actors with global environmental goals overlapping with, but not effectively in alignment with local needs and the complexity of local communities.

Incomplete decentralization

Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) in Tanzania are intended to provide rights to communities to manage and receive benefits from wildlife as an incentive for community-based conservation. One recent assessment of more than two decades of experience observed that in the past 20 years, “there has been limited progress devolving the rights and control over wildlife, and revenues from tourism and trophy hunting, in the way that the original policy reforms envisioned” (Nelson et al. 2021). The central government retains a significant portion of revenue from tourism, and cost- and benefit-sharing is contested. Conflicts with local communities frequently occur because of top-down restrictions on resource access and local land use practices (Bluwstein et al 2016; Moyo et al. 2017).

Two recent studies focused on grievances arising from the implementation of community-based conservation in the Burunge WMA, from which, “a picture emerges of de facto centralized and top-down management approaches that facilitate[d] private investments and favor[ed] conservation under a thin veil of win-win rhetoric” (Moyo et al. 2016). The WMA was created with a lack of transparency and a failure to provide full information to local people contributing village land to the WMA. Some residents did not realize they did not have reversionary rights if they wished to withdraw from the WMA. Disputes occurred over revenue and access to non-timber forest products. Village government won a court case seeking to withdraw from the WMA, but higher levels of government pressured it to drop its legal claims. Critics asserted that the powers of the WMA worked to “dispossess village communities by attenuating the authority of democratically elected village governments” (Kicheleri et al. 2021).

Another study looked at two WMAs bordering the Selous Game Reserve in Rufiji District. Under the current legal regime, the central government holds wildlife ownership and controls hunting and photographic licenses. WMAs and Village Councils, sometimes operating as parallel local institutions, have had disagreements over revenue and engaged in power clashes. Relationships between government, WMAs, and business “are actually characterized by competitive interactions taking the form of dominance by government” (Ponte et al. 2021). With pressures from population increases, human-wildlife conflict, and prohibitions on entering the game reserve for fishing or hunting, local communities have objected to surveillance and security measures that they believe reflect the prioritization of wildlife and tourism over community well-being (Noe et al. 2019).

MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE AND REASSERTIONS OF POWER

One important lens for framing possible NCS pathways in the context of decentralization is the “politics of scaling” in multi-level governance. Past experiences in Tanzania show how the location, interests, identity, and power relations among actors and institutions at different levels of NRM may be contested and subject to change. Case studies described by Kathryn Green (2016) show how multiscale village-district-regional-national government levels in Tanzania’s forest and wildlife sectors modified the institutional roles played by line ministries, Village Natural Resource Councils (VNRC), WMAs, Authorized Associations, Village Councils, NGOs, boards of trustees, and other local groups. District authorities used “scale-jumping” to contrive a role in VNRC elections, despite lacking a mandate to do so. One Village Council inserted a representative into the VNRC and claimed a role in forest patrol activities. Village Councils sought to re-scale investment and financial benefits away from the WMAs, creating conflicts over revenues. The evidence suggests that elites—at all levels—can be expected to seek new or reconfigured footholds to reassert their authority and self-interest within any new institutional configurations of environmental governance for NCS pathways.

ELITE CAPTURE AND EQUITY

The problem of local elite capture in decentralized environmental governance appears in various forms. It may result from the reproduction of existing hierarchies of social status, longstanding linkages to political power brokers, or traditional leverage over access to resources. Alternatively, it may be produced by selective training opportunities, the identification of leaders by project implementers, privileged access to information, or collusion among village committee members on the collection and distribution of benefits. In Tanzania, such patterns have appeared within PFM, sometimes leading to conflict and new forms of elite competition (Lund and Saito-Jensen 2013).

Viewed from the bottom up, low levels of participation in village assemblies, committee elections, and formulation of by-laws may reflect and reinforce dissatisfaction with the accountability and legitimacy of PFM management institutions. In two case studies from surveys of individuals in villages adjacent to a Village Land Forest Reserve (VLFR) in Kiteto District, PFM was found to have been “dominated by a very restricted ‘elite- within-an-elite,’ comprising only zonal leaders and close associates” (Magessa et al. 2020).

In PFM in Mihumo/Darajani, forest patrols overseen by the VNRC were infrequent due to a lack of resources. Formal rules for permits and fines inside and outside the VLFR were erroneously and erratically implemented by the VNRC. The handling of income and expenses was secretive, and villagers believed that patrols were used to levy fines for the committee’s or individual committee members’ benefit. Despite formal institutional structures, REDD+ villages continued practices contributing to agricultural expansion and unregulated harvesting. Tensions between VNRCs and village governments further exacerbated problems of weak enforcement (Scheba 2018).

Shortfalls in participation, representation, and accountability are linked to community concerns about benefit-sharing that are important to the viability and success of potential NCS pathways. While

generating sustainable income is a first practical concern, the allocation and channeling of payments are sensitive to (and often affected by) political considerations. Whether the distribution of benefits is handled by village governments, community organizations, or some manner of direct payments to individuals, there are practical trade-offs between transaction costs and perceptions of transparency and equity that are both technical and political. Past experience making individual payments in Tanzania under REDD+ produced vigorous opposition by government officials at the national level concerned about “unproductive” use of proceeds by community members (Blomley et al. 2017). Similarly, a review of community-based conservation in Tanzania found that, “the state assumes that communities cannot safeguard the sustainable management and use of resources” (Kiwango et al. 2015). Such reluctance and distrust runs counter to the increasing attention among donors to issues of [equity](#) and [localization](#) in NRM programming.

EXPERT CAPTURE

While the propensity toward elite capture is generally well recognized, less appreciated but still consequential is the problem of “expert capture,” which has been observed in PFM in Tanzania (and other countries). The lack of local capacity presents both a technical and political challenge for NCS activities reliant on scientific and technical expertise. The development of forest management plans, standardized monitoring patrols, and technical skills for accounting and reporting empower those with the requisite expertise—such as professional foresters—but amplifies asymmetries of education and assets that already limit participation and shared decision-making in local committees (Sungusia et al. 2020). Case studies further caution that the need for expertise is sometimes exaggerated in order to exclude certain groups (e.g., poorer community members resistant to bans on charcoal production) (Green and Lund 2015).

Similar exclusionary effects are produced by the dominance of technical and bureaucratic expertise of development experts, researchers, and district council members. After 20 years, villagers in the Angai Villages Land Forest Reserve were said to be still waiting for promised political and economic benefits. Cycles of short-term project funding brought “bureaucratic compliance,” to the detriment of “learning and understanding of local political conflicts, community power relations, and stakeholders’ competing interests in accessing and using the forest landscape” (Scheba and Mustalahti 2015).

WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS

As with PNRM in other countries, PFM in Tanzania has often reinforced existing gender inequality and unequal outcomes for disadvantaged groups. The participation of women increased in local committees as a result of affirmative action, which holds that one-third of committee members should be women. In addition to weak proportional representation, women have less formal power because they hold quota-based, rather than elected positions. Women participants remain constrained by structural issues related to their gender roles, such as time poverty (due to caregiving or home care duties, for example), taboos, and other gendered norms. Women are reluctant to speak when their husbands are present or when their opinions run contrary to the male-dominated group consensus. While participation in PFM committees through quotas was found to have empowered some women over time, “the majority of

the disadvantaged groups... remain at the 'blueprint' level of participation, and their role is merely to be present" (Hyle et al. 2019; Killian and Hyle 2020).

A study of Beach Management Units on Lake Victoria found that nominal representation of women on the executive committees was accepted and communities regarded women as more honest, less prone to corruption, and better able to connect with social counterparts through their trading networks. However, local gender norms and male domination largely prevailed over the participatory design of Lake Victoria's co-management institutions (Nunan and Cepić 2020).

LAND TENURE AND LAND USE

Land tenure and land use issues pose challenges for potential NCS pathways in Tanzania. The implementation of the Village Land Act has been complicated by a lack of financial resources, overlapping roles and responsibilities, and weak land administration. Land disputes between farmers and pastoralists as well as communities and investors are common (Massay 2016).

Powerful actors influence land use decisions. With the government's emphasis on commercial agriculture and mining, critics have asserted that land use plans favored state interests and investors at the expense of peasant farmers and pastoralist communities (Walwa 2017). In most villages, land is not mapped, demarcated according to use, nor registered.

The demarcation and approval of village land, land use plans, gazetting of VLFR, and forest management plans can be complex, contested, and protracted. For example, the Lindi and Mtwara Agribusiness Support (LIMAS) five-year program sought to establish VLFRs and promote sustainable commercial timber production, with a view toward the eventual sale of forest carbon credits. The final report of the LIMAS program stated that, "there have been continued delays to resolve boundaries between villages, and additional land use planning and forest management planning costs. In many instances, difficulties resolving boundary disputes have delayed the opportunity for communities to enter into PFM" (Scheba 2018).

However, in some instances, the use of Village Participatory Land Use Plans (VPLUPs) incorporating VLFRs appear to have been positive. In Kilosa district, one study found high levels of participation; 85 percent of respondents were satisfied with the implementation process of VPLUPs and 94 percent were willing to adhere to VPLUPs initiatives. Researchers concluded that VPLUPs can increase the likelihood of success in REDD+ and similar projects (Uisso et al. 2018).

USAID has extensive experience addressing land tenure issues in Tanzania that may provide important lessons applicable to the consideration of potential NCS pathways. The Feed the Future Tanzania [Land Tenure Assistance \(LTA\)](#) program worked to clarify and document land ownership, increase local understanding of land use and land rights, and support land use planning. The [Mapping Approaches for Securing Tenure \(MAST\)](#) activity uses participatory mapping approaches and flexible technology tools to empower communities to document and secure their land and resource rights and to lower the cost and time associated with mapping and registering customary land.

GOVERNANCE CO-BENEFITS OF PFM AND REDD+

The political feasibility of potential NCS pathways may be positively affected by their linkages to the broader (non-carbon) impacts of CBFM on *governance*. There seems to be a consensus that overall, despite challenges, PFM and REDD+ projects have helped to improve land and forest tenure rights.

Local stakeholders support CBFM when it gives them greater control of their forests, excludes outsiders, retains regular access to forest products, and engenders institutional pride (Blomley et al. 2017; Gross-Camp 2017; Corbera et al. 2020). Before and after surveys in 2010 and 2014 in Kilwa district showed positive effects on forest governance in relation to social cohesion and organization, quality of decision-making, and knowledge of PFM and its relationship to project activities (Corbera et al. 2020). In Zanzibar, the Hifadhi ya Miti ya Asili (HIMA) program failed to secure carbon revenue, but communities valued the delineation of boundaries in mangrove areas and protection from outside extractors for salt, lime, and timber. Further, HIMA was seen as strengthening identity, security, autonomy, and institutional learning. Researchers concluded that, “even when interventions stall, they have the potential to catalyze institutional responses among resource users and their partners that potentially lay the foundations for new solutions” et al. (Borgerhoff Mulder 2021).

In several projects, deepening the process of community consent was time-consuming but allowed for community feedback that more firmly grounded collective understanding and approval of REDD+ projects. In the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group/MJUMITA project, trade-offs between forest protection and other land uses were negotiated on the basis of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in developing Village Land Use Plans. In other REDD+ projects, community concerns about long-term, 30-year contracts were raised and addressed through “legal advice for villages, renegotiations, changing of terms and conditions, and incorporating the concerns of local parties to the agreement” (Blomley et al. 2017).

Similar results from implementing a more careful and patient dialogue around governance issues were found in wildlife community-based conservation. A controlled study found that longer term CBC participation predicted stronger village governance institutions, with more local civic organizations and small business enterprises (Salerno et al. 2020).

PRIORITIES OF DONORS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The literature indicates that assessing the political feasibility of potential NCS pathways also includes the need for a closer look at the fit between the overlapping-but-differing priorities of donors, who emphasize reductions in carbon emissions or forest protection, and with local communities (especially forest-dependent poor households), whose main concerns are sustainable livelihoods and food security. Ultimately, NCS pathways must work for local communities or they will not be viable as a practical—nor political—matter.

Given the opportunity costs of forest reserves that limit agricultural expansion, communities are often reluctant to allocate land on a long-term basis for climate mitigation. This is especially true for poorer, forest-dependent households, who also have weaker voices in community decision-making (Blomley et al. 2017). REDD+ alternative livelihood strategies, such as beekeeping, butterfly farming, and

conservation agriculture have not fared well. (Scheba 2018). Further pressures on land availability are produced by the demand for agricultural products, like sesame and cashew nuts (Lund et al. 2017).

REDD+ projects in Tanzania have not been able to produce verified carbon credits for sale in voluntary carbon markets and have relied on donors to sustain them as pilot efforts. While carbon market prices have improved, they remain uncertain (Twidale and Mcfarlane 2023), and the Tanzanian government's current policy of taxing carbon removals, rather than carbon emissions, is an additional constraint on potential income (The East African 2023).

These considerations from the literature—in combination with the need to address donors' and communities' priorities alike—appear to support the logic of the SLOA desk-based study's focus on combining environmental and economic goals through sustainable production of timber and charcoal, as well as efforts to realize the multiple benefits of mangrove restoration and protection.

Preliminary questions for field-based research

This short literature review has examined the evolution of the prevailing political configuration in Tanzania and some of the main challenges observed in the literature on the country's experiences with environmental governance. The interactions of the current political opening and approaching elections with lessons learned from past environmental governance challenges and continuing opportunities in Tanzania's natural resource management will help to frame the field-based research on the political feasibility of NCS pathways identified in the SLOA desk-based study.

OVERARCHING PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of support in government, the private sector, civil society, and local communities for the kinds of activities likely to take place under the potential NCS pathways identified in the SLOA desk-based study?
 - a. How do representatives of each of these groups view the costs and benefits (political, economic, and social) of the respective scenarios?
 - b. Who has institutional influence and decision-making power?
 - c. What are the likely state-society relationships (transparency, legitimacy, accountability) in these scenarios?
 - d. Who are the potential champions and mobilizers or dissenters and spoilers?
2. How do the approaching local and general elections affect the perspectives of each of these groups on the potential NCS pathways? In what respects do the elections present windows of opportunity or constraints on the development of new activities?

3. Given the centrality of land tenure and land use for NCS pathways, how are land issues likely to affect their political feasibility? Are there actions related to land and resource governance that can improve the political feasibility of the proposed NCS pathways?

TARGETED QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE SLOA DESK-BASED STUDY

For each of the main NCS pathways identified in the SLOA desk-based study (sustainable timber, charcoal, mangroves), the study identifies policy bottlenecks that may hamper or block their implementation. This leads to a set of more focused questions for the field-based research seeking to understand the political economy underlying these bottlenecks. The underlying question is, “Who are the actors and institutions (and their interests, motivations, and beliefs) that benefit from or favor regulatory decisions that—from the perspective of the proposed NCS pathways—appear counterproductive?”

These bottlenecks include:

- May 2019 regulation GN 417, which requires that communities pay royalties on charcoal harvested from Village Land Forest Reserves (NGOs have lobbied against timber/charcoal royalties);
- Mangroves treated as national land assets, managed by central government, with local benefit sharing possibilities therefore very limited;
- October 2022 regulations that tax carbon Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) rather than carbon emissions; and
- Government projections of large expansion of Village Land Forest Reserves (which could greatly facilitate CBFM), without an accompanying strategy in place.

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