

Using Local Capacity for Improved Land Resources Planning: A Case from Ethiopia

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SUMMARY

Government land resources intervention planning has been weak in many countries because of several reasons, among which are lack of adequate institutional capacity at various levels of government service agencies, and lack of appropriate information to be used for planning. Periodic monitoring of the environmental impact of government interventions, thereby monitoring the status of natural resources is fundamental to generate adequate information for planning and policy-making for their sustainable management. This paper provides an overview of a new framework based on local characterization of land resources problems in defined planning units for supporting a land use, management and conservation planning systems in resource poor environments. It begins with a discussion of existing paradigms in land resources planning and intervention. The new conceptual framework is then outlined with a case study in Alaje *Woreda*, Tigray Region, Northern Ethiopia signifying the steps necessary for effectively implementing the planning tool and possible representation and use of information in the planning process. An application of the tool is demonstrated by producing various outputs made by the local planners and their evaluation. Finally, we present issues relevant to the design of improved land resources planning methodologies and support tools and the challenges facing governments of developing countries. Our conclusion is that a planning support tool that is simple, user-driven, based on existing institutional capacity, and has the commitment of local planners for using the tool in policy design and development interventions is more likely to be successful.