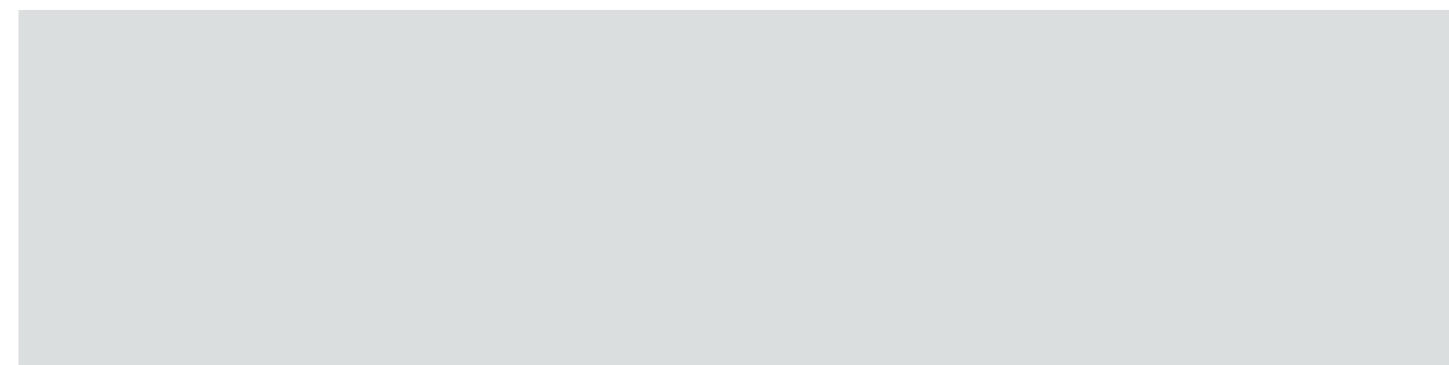


Recommendations

The October 2007 Conference of IGAD Directors of Conservation and Directors of Finance and Planning on the Environment and Natural Resources as core Assets for Sustainable Development made the following recommendations for consideration:

1. The IGAD Sub-Regional Environment Action Plan (SREAP), the IGAD Sub-Regional Action Plan (SRAP), the IGAD Environment Outlook (IEO), and the IGAD Environment and Natural Resources Strategy should all be implemented;
2. IGAD should create an *ad-hoc* task force from the region to address important environmental issues including briefing sessions for Members of Parliament from the region;
3. IGAD should initiate a process towards a common regional approach on the governance of natural resources as a core asset and of strategic value as well as being a part of the African Peace and Security Architecture;
4. IGAD should conduct a regional inventory of the biophysical, socioeconomic and cultural assets of, especially, the arid and semi-arid lands which is the dominant ecosystem in the IGAD region. Knowing what the region has will allow appropriate governance systems, marketing channels,

Natural Resources – the Foundation for Sustainable Development and Peace in the Horn of Africa



The seven IGAD member states of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda make up the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region which is among the poorest region on earth. It is a region with high levels of conflict and insecurity, environmental degradation and lowest income per capita and heavy external debts. The situation is exacerbated by high temporal and spatial rainfall variability resulting in periodic droughts, floods that cause famines. However the region is endowed with rich variety of fauna and flora making an environment that contributes to livelihoods and national economies and can have an enormous impact on development, but whose contribution and potential has rarely been factored into policy decisions.

What contributions make natural resources assets to livelihoods and national economies?

Natural resources are overlooked as major contributors to rural people's livelihoods and drivers of poverty reduction in the IGAD region. The majority of the population of the IGAD region is rural and depends directly on natural resources for their survival. These include the need for natural resources to meet such basic needs as food, clothing, water, energy, shelter, health, cultural wellbeing and security. What is their contribution to national economies and to national GDPs? What would national governments have to pay if these natural resources would no longer be available? Six national reports from the IGAD region indicate a general lack of awareness on these important assets as well as a paucity of natural resources economics and natural resources accounting. As a result, the contribution of the environment is routinely under-reported. Challenges include a lack of capacity in environmental assessment, accounting and monitoring. The figures and examples below indicate the need to better reflect the contribution of natural resources and the environment in national GDPs and to consider the real opportunity costs of ignoring the environment in development:

- In Kenya, the arid and semi-arid lands support 70% of the national livestock population with an estimated value of about USD 1 million¹.
- In Eritrea, riverine forests generate more value per capita for the local population than any other form of landuse².
- In Sudan, national energy surveys indicate that forests contribute 70.8 % of the country's national energy balance. In addition, Sudanese forest contribute an estimate of 33 % of the total feed requirement of the national herd and provide critical emergency food in times of drought (Hamid 2006)³.
- In Eritrea in 1999, Doum Palm generated 1.2 USD/person/day compared with wage labour on irrigated farms of 1 USD/person/day (MOA/SOS Sahel 1999)⁴.
- 80% of the people in Kenya depend on traditional medicines which are based on natural resources

What role do natural resources play in creating wealth for poverty alleviation and the achievement of the MDGs and PRSPs?

While it is clear that natural resources make a very important contribution to the basic needs of rural people, a major question relates to how they contribute to poverty reduction in terms of official figures. While much of the data is broadly lacking as national accounting systems do not properly trap the value of the environment and natural resources, there are serious poverty and social inequities which constrain sustainable development in the IGAD region. The equitable, efficient and tYf•

What are some of the challenges to boost the contribution of natural resources to poverty alleviation?

Examples of tradable natural resources products available in the IGAD Region. Source: adapted from Kazoora (2007)

Ecosystem	Products
Wetlands	handicrafts, furnisher, fish, medicines, dyes, building materials (fencing, timber and thatch), bricks and pottery
Forest	butterflies, Aloe Vera, orchids, honey, and beeswax, drums, fiddles, juice, Ocicum oil, wine extracts, medicinal plants and tree barks, bamboo shoots, timber, pet animals (snakes, frogs, chameleons, lizards, tortoises, birds)
Savannah	shea butter, tamarind, medicinal plants, Gum Arabic, mushrooms, timber, thatching grass
Open Water	fish, and fish products, ornamental fish, hydro electricity, etc.
Farm land	moringa, neem, bird eye chillies, <i>Prunus africana</i> , mangoes, papaya, oranges, guava, etc.

