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"Development on the margin"

Implementation and Potentials of Certification Mechanisms on Biodiversity Conservation Projects in Kigoma Region and Coast Region, Tanzania

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) concepts and the implementation of biodiversity conservation projects in Tanzania with the focus on Kigoma Region and Coast Region. Biodiversity and the multifunctionality of ecosystems are closely connected, and there is a positive relationship between biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems. The high dependence of rural local population on ecosystem services is a major challenge for implementing conservation and sustainable management practices of these ecosystems. Already existing approaches such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) foresee the compensation of the local population by international payment schemes. Certification of protected areas and trading these certificates is another approach to implement market based systems for nature and environmental protection services.

For Tanzania biological diversity has important economic and social implications especially in rural traditional agricultural societies. Kigoma Region and Coast Region are important biodiversity hotspots with enormous flora and fauna varieties in wetland ecosystems. In Kigoma region, the study will concentrate on large wetlands formally designated as the Malagarasi-Moyowozi Ramsar site, which is important for the watershed protection for Lake Tangayika. In the Coast Region, the study focuses on Saadani National Park, which is Tanzania's only National Park bordering the ocean sea.

Linking local communities to global certification mechanisms enhances awareness of biodiversity conservation and the potential of external financing. On the other hand further challenges occur since most of the global certification standards yet have to prove their practicability, particularly in rural African contexts. By presenting challenges and prospects of biodiversity conservation projects institutional pre-conditions for the implementation of global standards for biodiversity and other ecosystem services are detected. In addition synergy effects of CO_2 mitigation and biodiversity conservation projects are identified.

The study bases on empirical research conducted in Tanzania between June and September 2011 within the framework of the international research project "Certification of Protected Areas" (CERPA) at the Institute for Environmental Economics and World Trade at the University of Hanover.

Keywords: Biodiversity, certification, payments for ecosystem services, Tanzania

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