Tropentag, September 20-22, 2023, hybrid conference

"Competing pathways for equitable food systems transformation: Trade-offs and synergies"

Actor-network theory for eco-resources species *Ziziphus mauritiana* (Masau) management in Zimbabwe

Anyway Katanha, Itai Offat Manyanhaire

Zimbabwe Open University, Dept. of Geography and Environmental Studies, Zimbabwe

Abstract

This paper presents a critical analysis of the applicability of the actor-network theory to natural resource governance in semi-arid regions which depend on specific eco-resource species such as *Ziziphus mauritiana* (Masau-zm) and its role in national policy integration using a case from Muzarabani area of Zimbabwe. Based on the Dambakurimwa community from Muzarabani the results revealed that natural resource governance is complex and the theory has self-regulatory characteristics. Rural resilience and sustainability benefit from initiatives that foster actor-network theory-based analysis of natural resource governance networks using a multipurpose fruit tree useful to a natural hazard-prone community in Zimbabwe. Many sub-Saharan countries are developing regulatory frameworks, policies, and laws that ensure fair and efficient management and trade of natural resources in remote areas. Networks resource governance, is characterised by the increased role of diverse actors that include state and non-actors as well as and external networks. The main thrust of networked governance is to develop synergies between diverse competence and knowledge bases to solve complex as well as interrelated challenges. In many developing nations, it has been well documented that the main challenge of natural resource governance like wild fruits is linked to the diverse interest of various actors directly or indirectly involved in the use of, trade, and overall management of the natural resource products. The involvement of different actors reflects multiple subsistence, commercial, social, ecological, and conservation agendas as well as multiple actors both state and non-state and all facilitating the same goal. The inclusion of diverse actors in the matrix results in natural resource governance of wild fruits being fragmented and at times engrossed in diverse sectors or being at the centre of polycentric institutions and actors that induce tensions, conflicts, and ambiguity that may degrade the resource. In an effort to comprehend this dilemma, systematic characterisation of the governance structures for diverse natural resource species is necessary. In respect, the characterisation of these governance types can aid in policy issues identification and development that further seeks policy attention.

Keywords: Actors, eco-resources, governance, network

Contact Address: Itai Offat Manyanhaire, Zimbabwe Open University, Dept. of Geography and Environmental Studies, Bindura, Zimbabwe, e-mail: offatmanyanhaire@gmail.com