

# INTERACT-BIO TANZANIA DIALOGUE SUMMARY: NGOs

Identifying gaps in vertical and horizontal integration in planning and decision-making to enhance the implementation of biodiversity targets.



27 November 2017 | BORDA offices, Rose garden Road, Dar es Salaam

**INTERACT-Bio**  
Integrated action on biodiversity



### 1. Framing the context

An interactive dialogue with selected NGOs in Dar es Salaam was held to identify gaps in vertical and horizontal integration in an effort to enhance the implementation of biodiversity targets, within the context of official processes for planning and decision-making. This dialogue was facilitated by ICLEI Africa. The NGOs present at the session included: NipeFagio; Bremen Overseas Research and Development Association (BORDA); Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI); Tanzania Civil Society Forum on Climate Change (FORUMCC); and Sanitation and Water Action (SAWA). The dialogue adopted an investigative approach whereby information was gathered during discussion led by a few guiding questions. This dialogue forms part of a series of dialogues to serve as a vehicle for promoting and strengthening biodiversity mainstreaming. Furthermore, these dialogues are intended to bring together national, subnational and local actors for a vertically and horizontally integrated dialogue on the importance and benefits of biodiversity conservation, as well as providing an opportunity for knowledge sharing and information exchange on the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Urbanisation has become a large and permanent feature of our present and future global landscape. However, with rapid urbanisation, important natural features in cities are disappearing. Urban ecosystems and their accompanying biodiversity need to be incorporated into land use planning and decision-making processes in order to continue supplying important ecosystem services including supporting human well-being. It is therefore,

imperative for local government to incorporate nature's benefits into urban planning and development. Sustainable urban development implies an equitable, participatory and aligned approach to planning. The role and contribution of NGOs to this change process is their understanding of the issues on the ground, understanding the local voice and implementing change. Then to gather the evidence of change to drive policy improvement in government.

This dialogue has strong links to multilateral global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In terms of SDGs, the dialogue aligns with Goal 11 to make cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable as it seeks to merge private sector imperatives with a holistic understanding of how nature can be harnessed to benefit a city and its citizens. The dialogue also aligns with Goal 15 to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss. Lastly, in terms of Aichi Targets, the subject at hand closely aligns with Target 2, which promotes the integration of biodiversity values into national and local development and planning processes.





## 2. Emerging themes & lessons learned

### 2.1. What are there some of the insights and lessons on this topic?

#### The size of the city affects engagement

The size of the city is important. In smaller cities, there is less political interest and more interest in citizens. It is also easier to reach the ministry and to reach communities and networks. It is, therefore, easier in cities like Mwanza and Iringa. There is greater complexity in larger cities as the interests of people are forgotten. Dar es Salaam is regarded as a large and complex city as it contains 5 municipalities. Therefore, engagement needs to occur with the different local councils. The openness of government also makes a difference. Relationships are very important, and one needs to be patient and persistent.

#### Mainstreaming efforts are influenced by land issues

The issue of land is also apparent in Dar es Salaam. The city of Dar es Salaam is around 70% unplanned. The allocation of land is a problem as land is sold on an ad hoc basis, and there is no space left for green space or even pipelines or power stations. While the responsibility of land use allocation now sits with the local government, the Ministry of Lands signs off on this. Therefore, it is important to integrate with the work of this Ministry. In addition, while Environmental Impact Assessments do occur in Dar es Salaam, there is no clear formal link with Municipal Councils. The cost and ownership of land is also very important. Any natural asset plan needs to ensure maintenance.

#### Citizens want green open spaces – local level engagement is key

City Council plays a strong coordinating role. However, it is best to engage local councils directly to reach communities. There is a need to engage more with communities, but also manage expectations. It seems the citizens want green open spaces. Engagement with the governance system at the Mtaa and village level together with wards and municipal councils is important in terms of creating buy-in and impact. In addition, there is a need to share learnings between cities and also engage with Regional Administrative Secretariat (RAS).

#### 2.1.1. What are some of the challenges in guiding the integration of nature into the development of infrastructure?

When asked about the NGO experience of vertical and horizontal integration in government for incorporating nature into cities, it seems that the NGOs face a serious challenge. NGOs are uncertain about government roles and responsibilities. There are many levels of governance in Dar es Salaam, and NGOs and stakeholders

do not know or understand who plays what role and it is also difficult to find out. For example, the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) is very important but there is a lot of uncertainty regarding their role. While they say they only enforce large projects, are they policy makers? The NEMC is not connected in government machinery and not linked to communities. They are also understaffed and underfinanced. There is also uncertainty on the role of the local government's Community Development Officers. There is a need to look deeper into the policies supporting CDO practice in development. The relationship between the Regional Administration Secretariat (RAS) and the local government is also not explicit. Co-ordination is a very big issue, and the Regional Administrative Secretariat (RAS) must co-ordinate. It is also difficult to sustain participation as people lose interest over time and you need money for meetings.



As a result, NGOs are finding it increasingly difficult to influence decision-making in a city and bring in the voice of the communities. There is also a level of disconnect between government and NGOs and this leads to missed opportunities to influence change. This leads to further unplanned development and loss of natural assets, as well as missing countless opportunities for better integration with the environment in Dar es Salaam. NGO solutions can also get blocked by government. Therefore, there is a desperate need to build a relationship between government and NGOs which can be used to enhance collaboration both horizontally and vertically.

### 2.2. What was the most pressing theme that was discussed?

The take-home messages from the dialogue relate to the recurring and unavoidable need for more inclusive development and meaningful collaboration between government and NGOs in Dar es Salaam. This theme was further emphasized and unpacked by the following insights:

- Urban growth has outstripped the City's planning ability;
- Policy and implementation measures are not well-enforced in the city;
- NGOs are uncertain about government roles and responsibilities
- The allocation of land does not follow a clear process.

### 2.3. What are some of the solutions?

NGO forums can help to connect NGOs with each other and deal with the challenges faced in Dar es Salaam. NGOs need to table issues more strongly. A number of mechanisms were mentioned, some of which have been tested and are working well:

- 'Open court' is issue-based and addresses how communities are being affected by issues. Government facilitates the meetings and legal people, and the media are included.
- There are official government forums, for e.g. Tanzania Water and Sanitation Network (TAWASANET) (NGO) — has managed to influence the official forums and have a seat there (Technical Working Group 4).
- Formal (government) dialogue mechanisms — e.g. water and sanitation technical group, but solid waste not well articulated in the water and sanitation sector.
- Environmental committees need to figure out how to organize representation such that the community voice is coordinated for better impact at other levels of governance.
- It would be good to initiate community profiling (gather information from communities): around

community needs and understanding the benefits of natural assets and their uses: green spaces, rivers, coastal areas.

### 2.4. How can ICLEI improve the issues identified above?

This dialogue highlighted numerous opportunities. It would appear that ICLEI can assist most effectively through facilitating a closer relationship between government and NGOs in Dar es Salaam, as well as perhaps engaging with government directly to encourage and educate the necessity of nature-based solutions in sustainable planning and future development. INTERACT-Bio's pilot demonstration projects provide tangible opportunities for NGOs to interact with local government in the exercise of collaborative planning and the incorporation of nature-based solutions.

### 3. Implications for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Going forward, the dialogue and the points raised can be viewed through the lens of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, specifically in point 5 of ICLEI's 10 Point Framework, which promotes the creation of an enabling environment that supports the mainstreaming of the multiple social and health benefits of nature at the local and subnational levels to improve the quality of life and resilience of communities, enhance social cohesion and lead to financial benefits and savings for both individuals and governments. In addition, point 3 promotes the creation of an enabling environment for significantly increased private sector investment and development aid in nature-based solutions at local and subnational levels, as these level of governance are closer to the mainstreaming sectors and best positioned to build and sustain functional and resilient ecosystems and urban-rural linkages.

Furthermore, the dialogue relates to points in the CBD Action Plan for the long-term approach to mainstreaming biodiversity. These include: action 1.1: where governments at all levels systematically apply strengthened biodiversity assessment, valuation, and accounting tools and methodologies for biodiversity mainstreaming, and use results to inform decision making; and action 3.3: where governments at all levels, rightsholders, the private sector and civil society collaborate to establish and strengthen mechanisms to encourage and promote business commitments to biodiversity and partnerships which enable collaboration and communication at all levels.

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Finally, the Pathways for the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity is relevant in this case as 'The Sustainable Cities and Infrastructure Transition' indicates that Deploying 'green infrastructure' and making space for nature within built landscapes improves the health and quality of life for citizens and reduces the environmental footprint of cities and infrastructure. This transition recognizes the dependency of urban communities on well-functioning ecosystems, the teleconnections between cities and nearby and distant ecosystems, and the importance of spatial planning to reduce the negative impacts on biodiversity of urban expansion, roads and other infrastructure.

### INTERACT-Bio project at a glance

**Full title:** Integrated subnational action for biodiversity: Supporting implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans through the mainstreaming of biodiversity objectives across city-regions

**Funded by:** The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI)

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[www.interactbio.iclei.org](http://www.interactbio.iclei.org)



[biodiversity@iclei.org](mailto:biodiversity@iclei.org)



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