Institutional Linkages for Landscape Level Governance: The Case of Mt. Marsabit, Kenya

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Misfit, and the interest in Landscape

- Recognition of fragmentation, spatial misfit, and the fact ecosystems don’t respect human boundaries
- Created an interest in landscape approaches and EBM
- Misfit is not only misfit of particular institutions but misfit of governance systems
Linkages, Governance, Landscapes

- Commons and landscapes are embedded in a multi-level world
- Multi-level biological, social, economic systems; we need multi-level governance systems to address the challenges
- In this study, we investigated the role played by institutional linkages
  - In relation to other dimensions of governance
  - In landscape governance systems
Mt. Marsabit

- A massive shield volcano in northern Kenya
- Between 2x and 5x the precipitation levels of the surrounding lowlands
- Is a “water tower”
- Contains community land, settlements, farms and pasture land, and two state-governed protected areas
An Array of Ecosystem Services

- Wildlife habitat
- Agricultural land
- Water sources on the mountain
- Water in the lowlands downstream
- Pasture
- Emergency forage in the forest
### Governance Actors and Forums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marsabit District</td>
<td>ALRMP, NEMA, DSG, DEC, DSC, County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Marsabit</td>
<td>MECOG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Reserve/National Reserve</td>
<td>KFS, KWS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>EMCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Ward Councilors, Traditional Institutions, NGOs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organizations:**
- ALRMP
- NEMA
- DSG
- DEC
- DSC
- County Council

**Other Keywords:**
- MECOG
- KFS
- KWS
- EMCs
- NGOs
- Ward Councilors
- Traditional Institutions

**Logos:**
- ILRI
- CGIAR
Role of EMCs in the Governance System

- Modern/customary hybrid
- High level of legitimacy, accountability and responsiveness
- But limited resources, limited formal legitimacy
EMCs

Accountability: Med.
Legitimacy: Strong

Traditional Institutions

Community Actors

Elected Representatives

Accountability: Med.-Strong

Technical Committees & Forums

Government Actors

Provincial Administration

ALRMP

KFS

KWS

NEMA

NGOs

MECOG

Resources: Weak-Med.

Resources: Weak-Med.

Legitimacy: Strong
Conclusions

- Where accountability and legitimacy were strongest was also where ability to generate resources was weakest.

- Institutional linkages did little to rectify this.
Conclusions

- Many dimensions of governance suffered
- Legitimacy of traditional institutions and EMCs were an untapped potential
Implication for Landscape Governance

In fostering effective governance systems, linkages that

- give community actors a voice in decision-making at higher levels
- connect up strengths in different aspects and dimensions of governance

may be more important than having a governance mechanism that is a perfect fit with biophysical conditions.
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