

Potential follow-up research and capacity building work

John Mugabe

1. Sustainability-oriented Innovation (SOI) in African Natural Resource Sectors

‘Sustainability-oriented Innovation’ (SOI) is gaining currency in academic and policy circles around the world, particularly in developed countries. It is about the induction and/or integration of sustainability considerations into innovation activities, processes and policy.

GSTM@UP and University of Turku, Finland are exploring/designing a ‘potential’ research project on extent to which the concept of SOI has been successfully ‘domesticated’ in African natural resource sectors and the kinds of outcomes of the various policy, programmatic and project initiatives on SOI or ‘innovation for sustainability’

SOI Project objectives

- The project objective is help build a knowledge and information base on conceptualizations and effectiveness of SOIs in different natural resource sectors, and help to inform innovation policy for SOIs. This initial phase of the long-term project will:
 - (a) Clarify/provide conceptualizations and enhance understanding of the concept(s) and processes as well as application of sustainability-oriented innovation (SOI) in globally and in African contexts;
 - (b) Map research trends and foci on SOIs in African natural resource sectors—fisheries and mining;

- Provide a tentative analysis of how SOIs is integrated in national policy frameworks and instruments; and
- Conduct a tentative evaluation of a selected number (2-3) African natural resources based SOI initiatives in fisheries, aquaculture and mining.

Lead researchers (co-PIs) on the SOI project are Prof. Jussi Jauhiainen, University of Turku (Finland) and Prof. John Mugabe, GSTM University of Pretoria, and doctoral students (Oliver Tommasi, Uni Turku, and ??? GSTM

2. Political economy of innovation and NRM policy-making in Africa

There is really limited information/analysis on 'how' African countries (and communities) engage in innovation and natural resource management (NRM) policy-making. Not much is known about why the countries are investing resources in many policy events and processes on STI and NRM; who are the key actors and their interests (and influences) in policy processes

Project conceptualization and objectives

- Using John Kingdon's Multiple Streams Approach (MSA), we will identify key actors and where in the policy processes their influences are pronounced. MSA appreciates/acknowledge that:
 1. There are many ways to frame any policy problem;
 2. Problems have competition for attention (few problems reach the top of the agenda);
 3. An imperfect selection of policy issues and options;
 4. Actors are many and have limited time (which forces people to make choices before their preferences are clear); and, 5. Policy processes are neither 'comprehensively rational' nor linear.

Project conceptualization and objectives

- Working on fishery and aquaculture policy processes in Namibia, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia, we will identify political economy factors that influence the design (agenda setting) of policy processes, selection and engagement of different actors, framing of policy problems, selection of specific policy options, and implementation of policy.
- Aim is to help improve the quality of innovation and NRM policy, stimulate 'innovation in policy and policy-making' and promote policy learning

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