

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 What this NFP document is about

This document describes Malawi's National Forestry Programme (NFP). The NFP is an *agreed strategic framework of priorities and viable actions for improving forestry and livelihoods*. It aims to link policy and on-the-ground practice so that both are continuously improved in favour of good forest and tree management for alleviating poverty and improving livelihoods in Malawi.

The NFP has been building up steam for several years and consists of both a *process*—with institutional mechanisms pursuing priority actions—and some *products*—notably this framework document. Other written products—including a range of detailed background papers—are listed in Annex 1.

This document is quite short—some readers might even think that it is too short for a programme with such a large ambition. But Malawi's NFP is trying to learn the lessons from elsewhere, and avoid the pitfalls of some other approaches which produce a thick report with a 'wish-list' of project proposals unrelated to real priorities or the motivation and support needed to realise them.

Following this introductory section, the aims and process of the NFP are spelled out (section 2). This is followed by a summary of the roles which now need to be played to achieve the NFP aims (section 3), and by twelve agreed strategies, each with a number of priority actions to implement them (section 4). Finally, the document outlines the next steps needed and the way in which the NFP can be monitored and its impact continuously improved (section 5). Malawi's NFP is thus geared to motivate a wide range of actors in the forest sector to pursue initiatives with sufficient flexibility over a long enough period to make them work.

## 1.2 Why Malawi needs a National Forestry Programme

Malawi is essentially a nation of rural smallholders. The vast majority of smallholding households draw on a wide variety of forest goods and services in their daily lives. However, a complex mix of local and external in-fluences currently diminishes these goods and services and contributes to rural livelihoods becoming more and more insecure.

- **Degradation of natural resources exacerbates poverty.** With four times more people per square kilometer than Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, of whom four fifths depend on agriculture, population puts more pressure on Malawi's natural resources than in many other African countries. Ninety-five per cent of rural households have 1 hectare or less and the average in the Southern Region is

just 0.4 ha. About 50% of the 2.3 million farm households have been classed as food insecure. The population grows at 2.9% per year and this, combined with rural-to-rural migration from densely to sparsely populated regions, means farmers often have no way to tackle their food insecurity and expand their operations except to cut woodland on customary land or to encroach upon the forest reserves.<sup>1</sup> This threatens Malawi's considerable stock of biological diversity, and reduces the actual and potential forest goods and services on which its people can draw.

- **Fuelwood problems hit women and children the hardest.** Apart from demand for land, the greatest demand on forests and trees is for energy—an estimated 93% of all energy used is derived from biomass. Inadequate fuelwood is a chronic problem, which, given the inability of poor households to buy substitutes, has resulted in the: diversion of household time (particularly female labour) away from productive activities to the search for fuel; the burning of crop residues and available biomass to the detriment of soil fertility; and reduced consumption of energy through less frequent cooking—with attendant adverse nutrition consequences, particularly for children. Women comprise more than 70% of the farming population, as men often migrate to cities to find wage labour, yet much of their work is invisible in the national accounts that register only formal employment.
- **National demand for forest products is much greater than supply.** Aggregate annual consumption of forest products, estimated at 15 million m<sup>3</sup>, far exceeds the potentially sustainable supply from current sources of 7-8 million m<sup>3</sup>. A chronic supply and demand imbalance has consequently emerged, resulting in increasing shortages at the household level. The situation is gravest in Malawi's south. There (reflecting population distribution) the long-term loss and degradation of forest cover has been greatest—particularly on communal land on which the poorest are most dependent.
- **Potential benefits from plantation forests are being missed.** Malawi's industrial (plantation) forest estate, dominated by state ownership (about 78,000 ha) should produce an annual sustainable volume of around 1.2 million m<sup>3</sup>. Utilisation however, has been minimal, probably around 0.25 million m<sup>3</sup>, with little development of value-adding processing industries. Investment by the private sector in forestry operations is negligible, reflecting an inappropriate incentive structure caused in large part by government's predominant role. A significant opportunity for off-farm employment and much needed industrial development in a sector in which Malawi enjoys a comparative advantage (by virtue of its good tree-growing conditions and economic labour), is thus being missed.
- **Broader threats to national sustainable development are particularly damaging to the forest.** Increasing inequality in society — exacerbated by certain macro-economic policy prescriptions such as currency devaluations—and insecurity of law and order are national problems which impact on rural smallholders to a great degree. Whilst some government decisions to tackle these problems—such as liberalising maize markets, withdrawing restrictions on burley tobacco and other agricultural policies—have produced encouraging gains for smallholders, they have also put additional pressure on forests by stimulating agricultural expansion at the expense of forest resources. Such trends

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<sup>1</sup> Malawi's 9,400,000 hectares of land fall into three main tenure categories: state land - protected areas and agricultural schemes (21% of the land); private land - freehold and leasehold, mostly estates (13%); and customary land (65%). In addition, 1% of the land is in urban areas.

reduce the possibility of smallholders investing their precious land, time and cash in the forest and tree resources which could help them stabilise and improve their livelihoods.

- **Policy innovation is being accompanied by capacity degradation.** The National Forest Policy of 1996, and Forest Act of 1997 (see section 1.4), call for communities and the private sector to be given a greater role in managing and using forests, and for government to focus on regulating, planning and providing guidance. But whilst policies have been much improved, civil service reform and shrinking budgets have contributed to a collapse in capacity in some key areas, and on-the-ground realities are revealing the costs. Whilst plantations are receiving little management attention, other natural woodlands are being poorly managed and people's energies—in government, communities, NGOs and the private sector—are not being brought to bear to improve matters.
- **Existing institutions are poorly fitted to the changed roles which stakeholder pressures and new policies demand.** An increasing number of independent groups—in government, communities, NGOs and the private sector—bring motivation and demands for a greater role in decision-making about forestry and livelihoods. At the same time the related drives for *private sector involvement* and *decentralisation* are creating pressures for change amongst government agencies, and new responsibilities for other stakeholders. Privatisation of the commercial plantations offers an opportunity to revitalise a crucial resource through private sector capital injections, and to remove the distorting influence that public ownership has on private sector development both in growing and processing timber. Effective decentralisation demands a quite radical devolving of decision-making, capacity and resources to district and sub-district level.

Forest goods and services can and should contribute to *alleviating poverty and improving livelihoods in Malawi*. For all of the above problems, considerable thinking about the solutions has already been done, and there are many examples of good practice which can be built on. Institutional motivation to deal with the above needs, opportunities and pressures is building in sectoral agencies like the Forestry Department, in the private sector and in civil society, and considerable efforts have already been made in some areas of research and skills development. There is also considerable high-level political support; and a number of donors are keen to collaborate to pursue new initiatives. The NFP aims to draw on this, to find common ground and develop a shared vision on what the priorities are, then to provide a framework for ensuring that the right changes occur in the right place, for the right people at the right time.

### 1.3 How the NFP has been developed

Discussions on the development of a National Forestry Action Plan began in 1992. The process was later able to build on the findings of the Forestry Sector Policy Review carried out in 1992/93 and in 1995 the first multi-stakeholder meeting was held. In 1998 the NFP Co-ordination Unit became active under the Director of Forestry and began to pursue the process of stakeholder collaboration and communication with a set of concrete inputs and outputs shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.<sup>2</sup>

A large number and range of organisations, groups and individuals have been involved in developing the NFP to date, these are described a little more fully in Annex 2. Much of the work involved making



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existing information more useful for decision-making processes, then aiming to reach agreement on the top priority issues and the strategic actions needed. Initial work analysed information on: macro-economic effects and influences from other sectors on forests; national policy statements affecting forests; international consensus on sustainable forest management; and local-level priorities for forest goods and services. This allowed identification of **common goals** which already exist, and the main constraints and opportunities (**boundaries**) on possible ways forward. In addition, a process of **'ground-truthing'** the NFP at local level was entered into to ensure relevance to the needs of all stakeholders, particularly rural households (see Box 1).

**Working Groups** have been active on five key themes:

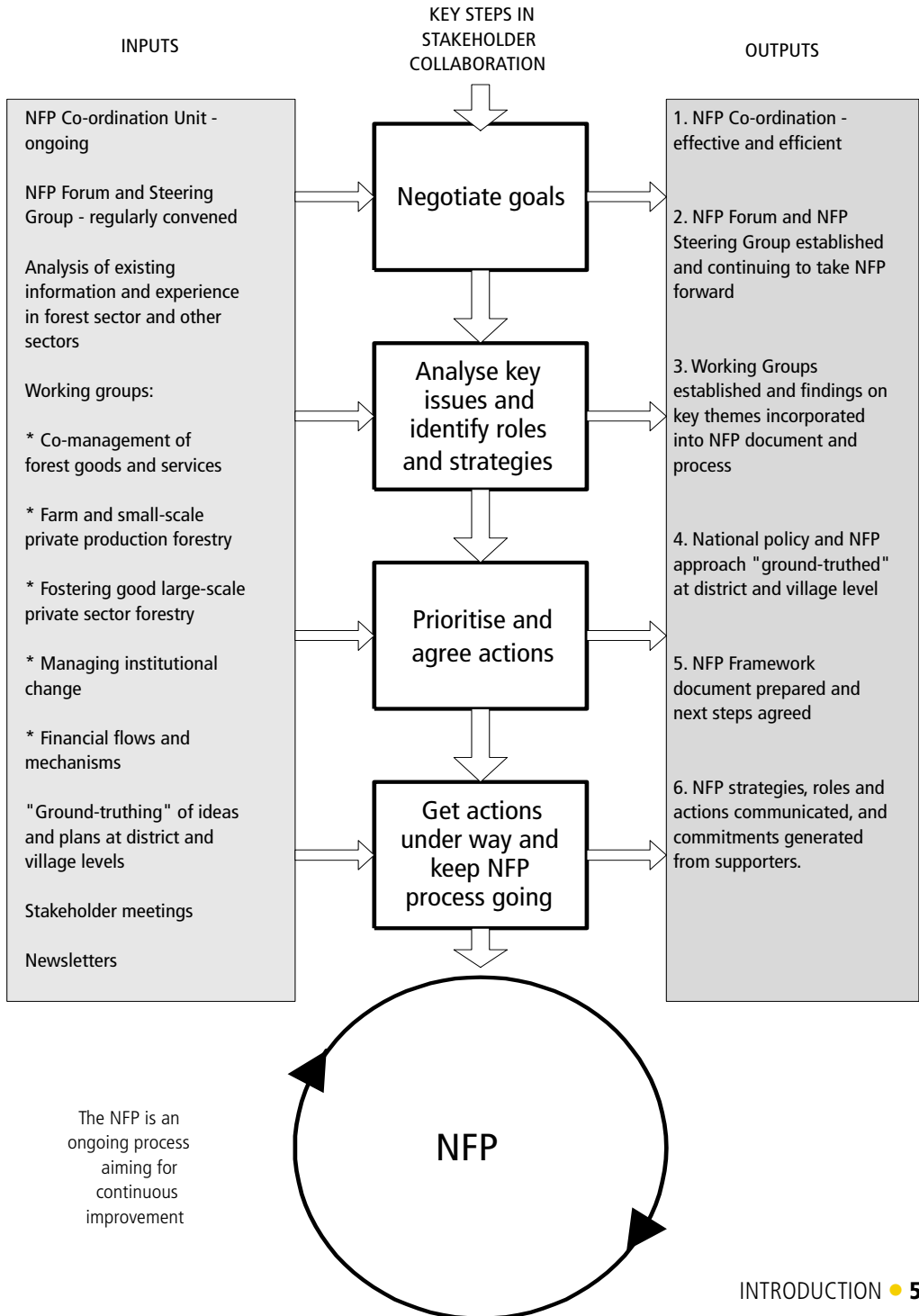
- a. Co-management of forest goods and services
- b. Farm and small-scale private production forestry
- c. Fostering good large-scale private sector forestry
- d. Managing institutional change
- e. Financial flows and mechanisms

Reports from each of these working groups are available from the **NFP Co-ordination Unit** on request (and are listed in Annex 1). The NFP Co-ordination Unit, based in the Forestry Department organises and co-ordinates the NFP process. In addition to the Working Groups there are three other mechanisms which provide the NFP with ideas and keep it on track: the **NFP Forum** consisting of key stakeholders from government, the private sector, NGOs and donors, which meets to generate ideas, debate progress and build commitment for further action; the **NFP Steering Group** composed of senior staff of the Forestry Department plus a few key stakeholders nominated by the NFP Forum, which is responsible for strategic decision-making and operational guidance for the whole process.

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<sup>2</sup> Support for initiating the National Forestry Action Plan came from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID, then ODA), and the Forest Sector review was jointly carried out by the Government of Malawi, the World Bank and FAO. Support for the NFP since 1999 has been provided by the Government of Malawi's Forestry Department, DFID and the UNDP Programme on Forests (PROFOR). Other agencies have begun dovetailing their support within the NFP framework - such as the EU in support of social forestry training and development, and the Finnish Government in support of community forestry and the commercialisation of forest plantations (see Annex 3). This indicates progress towards a sector-wide support programme based on the NFP (see section 5).

**Figure 1 Developing Malawi's National Forestry Programme**



## Box 1 'Ground-truthing' the NFP

The realism and credibility of the NFP depend on how 'true' it is 'on the ground'. In other words, the NFP needs to mean something to people at district and village level, and it also needs to be developed and shaped by those people—to reflect their ideas and priorities. **Actions** to 'ground-truth' the NFP included:

- *Information from existing initiatives and processes.* Information on local priorities from a variety of existing project reports and consultation exercises has been drawn on (notably those involved in the development of the national environmental action plan, and biodiversity plan).
- *District-level workshops.* Six workshops and several other district-level meetings have been held to bring all the country's District Forestry Officers (DFOs) together with others at district level to discuss the NFP and gather ideas.
- *Understanding village-level forest priorities.* Through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) work, the NFP has worked with villagers to examine their priorities for forest goods and services, and how they see their roles and responsibilities with respect to others. This has allowed comparison of 'village forest policy' with national policy to see the similarities and differences—and thus see where the key challenges really lie. The NFP also developed further PRA work to gather local views on the proposals that have emerged from the NFP Working Groups—to see if they make sense at local level. A total of 21 villages in 9 districts have been involved.

Key **findings** from ground-truthing include:

- Considerable *indigenous knowledge and skills* for managing forest goods and services are often available at village level
- Households will not invest precious labour and time nurturing trees when there are more pressing needs for food security. Thus, often the most significant support which can be given to 'forestry' at local level is to focus on *improving labour efficiency and food security*—with forestry extension information and inputs only having much impact when such improvements have already been made
- Dependence on wood from government plantations is high in some communities, and these *subsidised resources are a disincentive* for many other communities to invest in forestry
- *Diversity of village-level institutions* which can be effective in managing forest resources needs to be recognised—and a flexible approach to developing Village Natural Resource Management Committees is needed, rather than forcing conformity to a blueprint
- Demand for improved forms of *farm forestry* and limited forestry extension services is high, and a focus is needed on improving *the quality and targeting of forestry extension*, as well as expanding capacity
- Capacity of the FD at district level is low compared to some other government agencies and NGOs, and district forestry offices are often overlooked in local initiatives. The potential for *partnerships between the FD and other forestry-related institutions* at district level is high.

The findings from ground-truthing have considerably influenced the way the NFP process has proceeded and have shaped the strategies and actions presented in section 4.

## 1.4 NFP in the national and international context

Malawi laid some solid foundations for good forestry linked to improved livelihoods with its 1995 **Constitution** and with the passing of the **National Forestry Policy** in 1996, and the **Forestry Act** in 1997. The main emphases of the Policy and Act can be summarised as:

- strengthening core roles of government (planning, programming, monitoring, regulating, extension, managing conservation/protection areas)
- increasing involvement of private sector and civil society
- empowering communities to manage forest resources on customary land and, in collaboration with government, on reserves
- engaging with international obligations and processes
- co-ordinating with other sectors.

Clearly, the challenge is to put these sentiments into practice, and a *main function of the NFP is to provide the essential means to operationalise the National Forestry Policy and Forestry Act.*

It is worth checking how Malawi's policy framework measures up with the evolving international consensus on the main elements of sustainable forest management. From interpretation of forestry experience in a wide range of contexts internationally, drawn on in the NFP process, the *functional needs* of sustainable forest management can be identified and summarised. Table 1 relates the Policy and Act to these functional needs of sustainable forest management and makes a 'snapshot' assessment of the degree to which these documents appear to enable stakeholders to support each need.

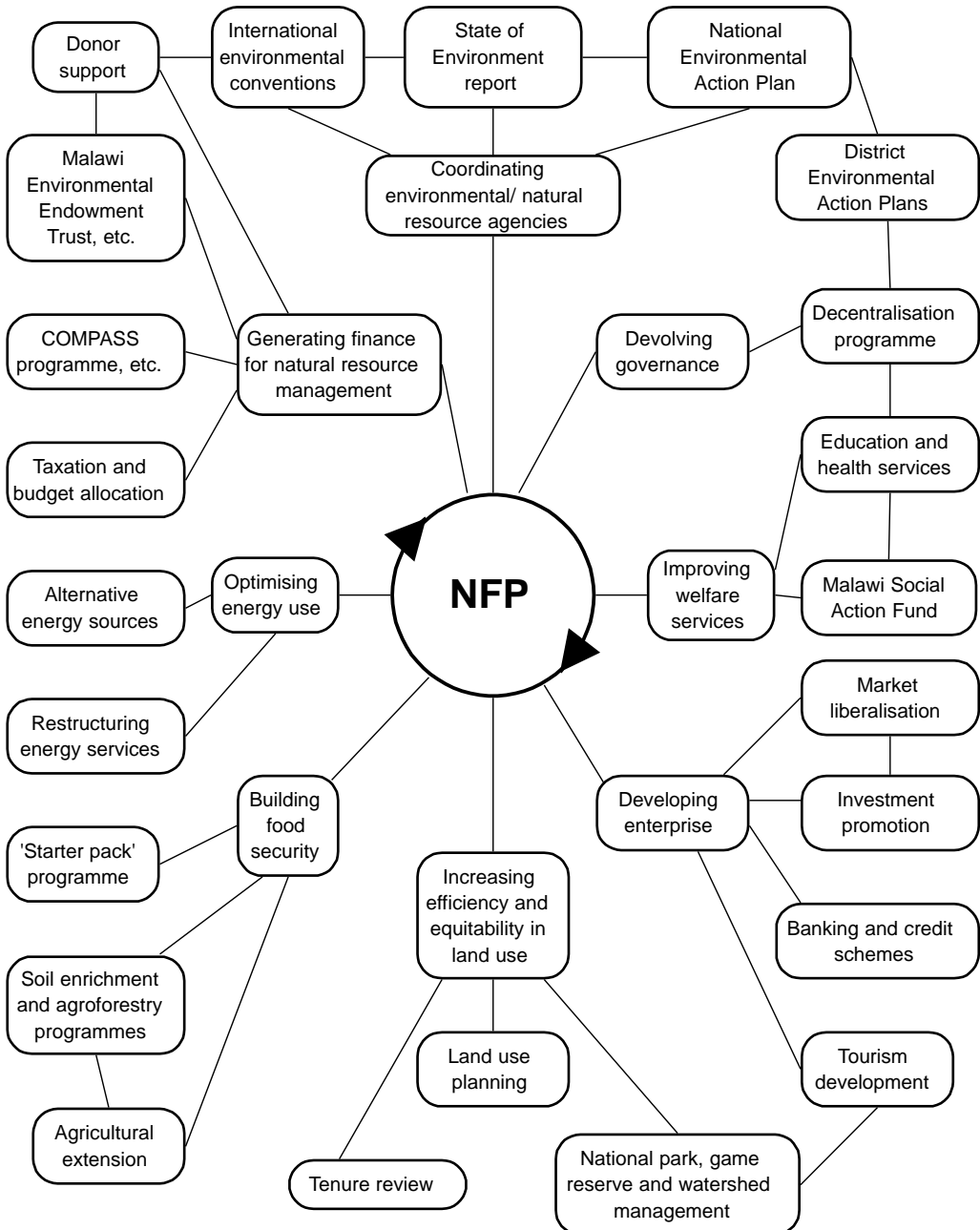
**Table 1 Degree to which Malawi's National Forest Policy and Forest Act support development of the functional needs of sustainable forest management**

Functional needs of sustainable forest management	Policy	Act
Clarifying stakeholder roles and procedures	*	**
Securing property rights	**	***
Building staff capacities within institutions	**	*
Integrating multiple objectives	**	**
Making choices between objectives	*	*
Building and sharing forest knowledge	***	*
Dealing with uncertainties	**	**
Ensuring communication and participation	***	***
Covering the costs	*	*

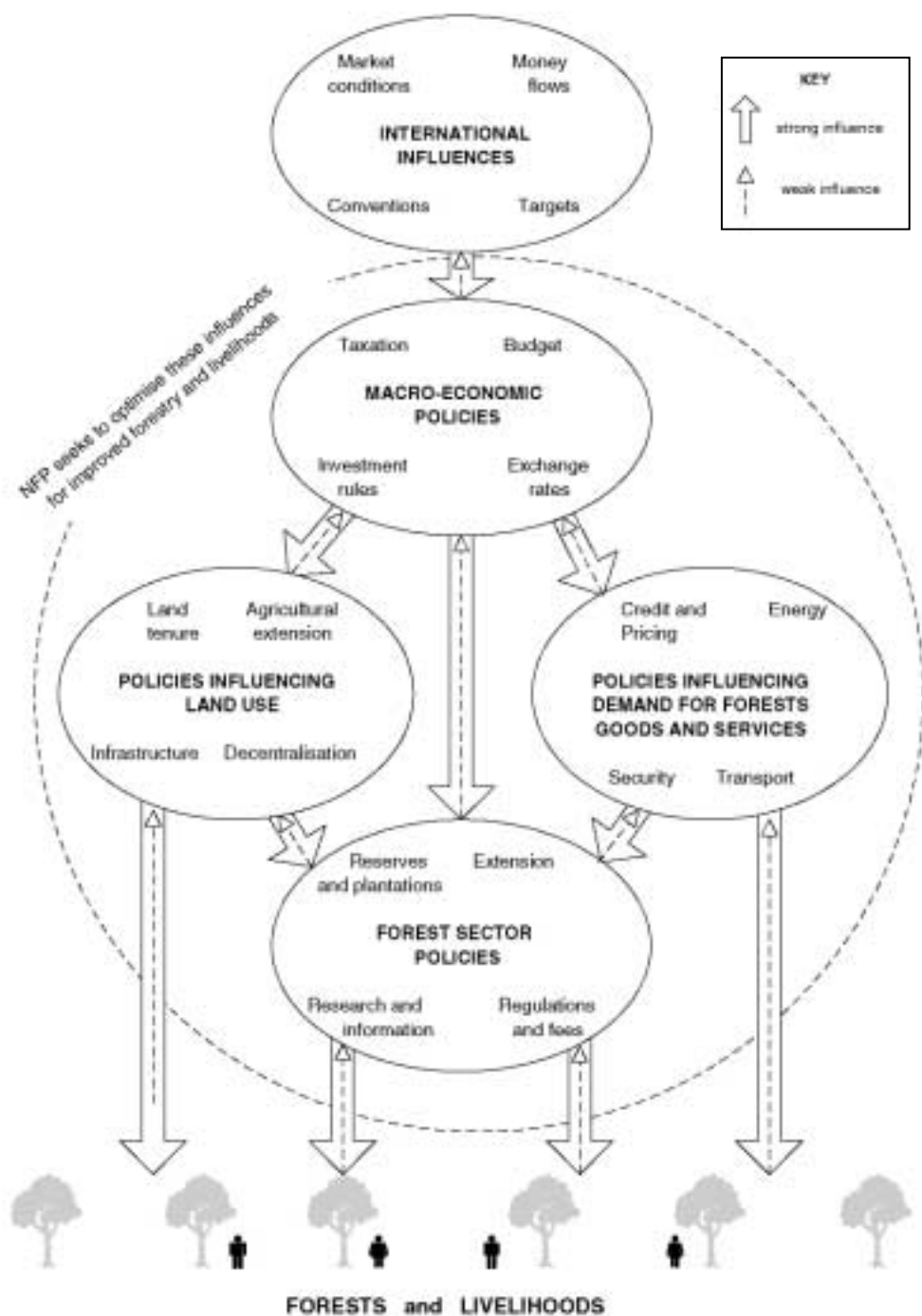
Explanation of the columns in the table: **Policy**. The degree to which the National Forest Policy of Malawi (1996) appears to provide a good basis for stakeholders to pursue sustainable forest management.

**Act**. The degree to which the Forestry Act (1997) appears to support the National Forest Policy and further contribute to the basis for stakeholders to pursue sustainable forest management. \*\*\* = High, \*\* = Medium, \* = Low.

**Figure 2 The NFP's linkages to other initiatives, and its contribution to Malawi's national goal of poverty eradication**



**Figure 3 Policy influences on forests and livelihoods**



The ways in which policies from beyond the country's forest sector relate to each other and influence Malawi's forests and people is shown in Figure 3. These policies include the international commitments and financial conditions, national macro-economic decisions and programmes, and policies from sectors like agriculture and industry that have major impacts on land use, and shape what is possible in forestry. Figure 3 also indicates that the NFP seeks to optimise these influences so that they are focused on improving forestry and livelihoods.

It is also important to recognise the international dimension as a source of stimulus to producing the NFP. Many countries developed National Forestry Action Plans (NFAPs) from the mid 1980s onwards—following an FAO model which emerged from the global Tropical Forestry Action Plan of that time. But many NFAPs remained exercises on paper only—lasting only as long as donors propped them up—they failed to catalyse the detailed actions expected of them. In general, this was because they were not able to engage with political and economic realities to show not only *what* needs to change, but also *how* it can change.

International debates have incorporated some of the lessons learned from NFAPs and now emphasise in-country *programmes* which are enabling and strategic in ways which make sense for the country concerned. The notion of a 'programme' incorporates policy and strategy, as well as planning, and implies mechanisms, instruments and processes, as well as products. All of these elements are required in the kind of framework now needed to guide action in Malawi.

The advantages and imperative to develop national forest programmes have been spelled out in recent proposals of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). The IPF's proposals were agreed upon through intergovernmental negotiations and, since the IPF comes under the aegis of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, which in turn reports to the UN General Assembly, countries (including Malawi) are under political obligation to give effect to the IPF's proposals at national level. The IPF put the highest importance on development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national forest programmes. It defined national forest programmes as covering a wide range of approaches to conservation and sustainable management of forests, which have to be seen as contributing to long-term iterative processes in the context of each country's socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental situation.

The IPF turned into the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests in 1997, which in turn reported to the CSD in 2000, and established the UN permanent Forum on Forests (UNFF), which will review commitments already made—national forest programmes in particular. National forest programmes will thus be under the spotlight for the next few years, and there is an internationally recognised need to share learning between countries on how they can and should be done. Thus, by developing its NFP, Malawi is signalling its intention to fulfil its international commitments as well to provide a source of lessons from experience which will be of considerable international interest.

## 2. AIMS AND PROCESS OF THE NFP

Consensus has settled on the following goal for the NFP:

**GOAL: Sustainable Management of Forest Goods and services for improved and equitable livelihoods**

This goal draws on the findings of the NFP process to date and complements the National Forest Policy and other key statements which reflect what society wants from forest goods and services. A set of principles for Malawi's NFP have also been generated which appear to be in tune with international consensus at this level:<sup>3</sup>

### Principles:

- Communication and transparency
- Building capability and motivation
- Making use of 'good-enough' information
- Learning from success and failure – continuous improvement
- Inter-sectoral and intra-sectoral consistency
- Strategic and tactical action (not comprehensive project wish-lists)
- Negotiation and prioritisation of objectives and actions
- Devolution to effective levels
- Collaboration and partnerships to realise roles
- Energetic process and practical outcomes

The ongoing **process** of the NFP can be seen as a '**cycle**' – aiming at continuous improvement. The cycle connects the core **elements** in the process:

- **Negotiating goals and roles** – stakeholders understanding each other and hammering out core aims and positions

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<sup>3</sup> Building on some 'basic principles' for national forestry programmes developed by FAO in 1996, the IPF came up with the following 'key principles' for national forest programmes:

- National sovereignty and country leadership
- Consistency with national policies and international commitments
- Integration with the country's sustainable development strategies
- Partnership and participation
- Holistic and inter-sectoral approaches

- **Building institutions and prioritising actions** – developing and organising the capacity around the agreed roles and deciding the relative importance and urgency of all the actions needed
- **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods** – securing support for the prioritised actions and carrying them out
- **Monitoring and learning** – tracking and reviewing implementation to ensure learning and adaptation (which in turn should enable goals and roles to be refined and further developed)

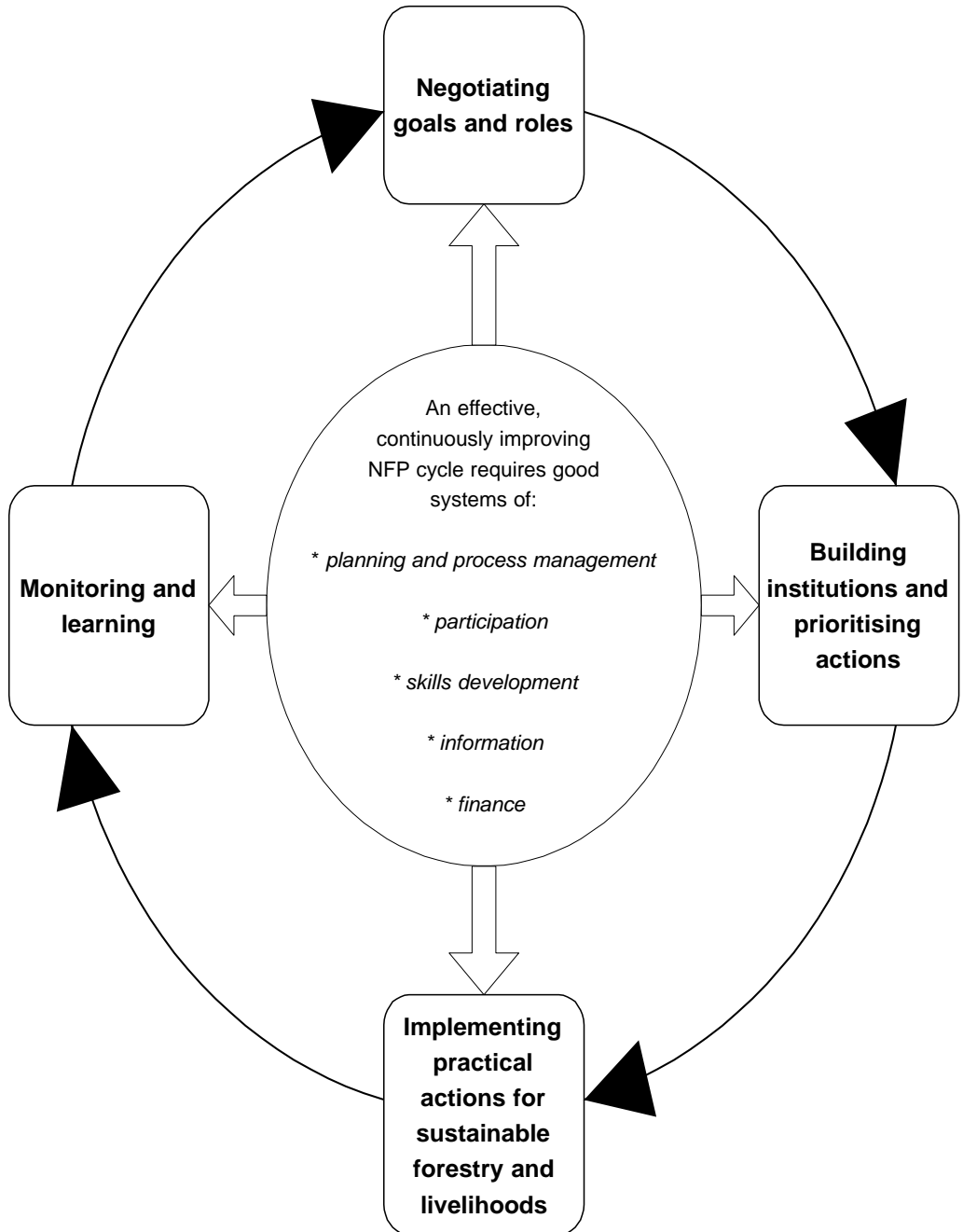
This NFP document can thus be seen as capturing the thinking in the initial round of the cycle—it captures the results of ‘one round’ of negotiating goals and roles and one round of prioritising actions. The process should continue to complete this first cycle and to ensure further rounds of improvement take place.

The cycle can only be made to work if effective **systems** are put in place:

- **Information:** Systems for information generation, flows and use. These cover forest assets, potentials, stakeholders, demands, markets, technologies, uses, pressures and hazards.
- **Participatory mechanisms:** Systems for participation, consensus-building, conflict management, empowerment and devolution amongst stakeholders. These enable stakeholders to develop, assess and adapt SFM goals and approaches, and to work together in implementing them.
- **Finances:** Systems for generating, allocating and controlling finances for SFM. This includes means to access, create, participate in, and sustain markets for goods and services.
- **Skills:** Human resource development systems. Experience and learning which improve skills, motivations and interactions.
- **Planning and process management:** The above four systems are an essential part of sector development, but leadership and co-ordination is also required so that the sector continuously improves through country-led vision. This needs to be based on clear evidence, a strong priority-setting process, a future orientation, and to be focused on the added requirements for sustainability.

Figure 4 shows how these elements and systems constitute the NFP process, which, underpinned by the NFP principles, aims to achieve the desired outcome—the NFP goal.

**Figure 4 Malawi's National Forestry Programme – an ongoing process**



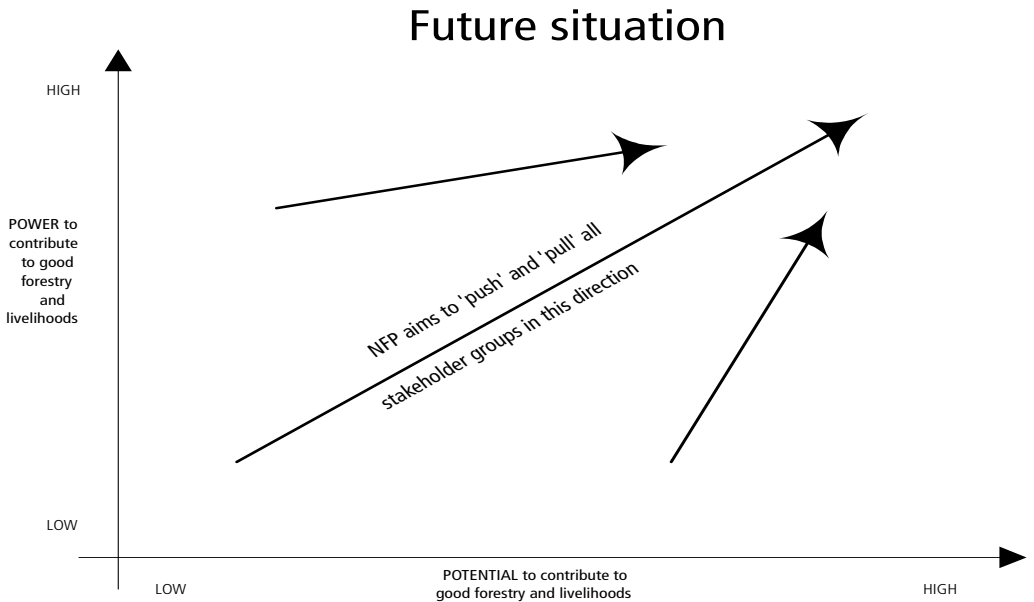
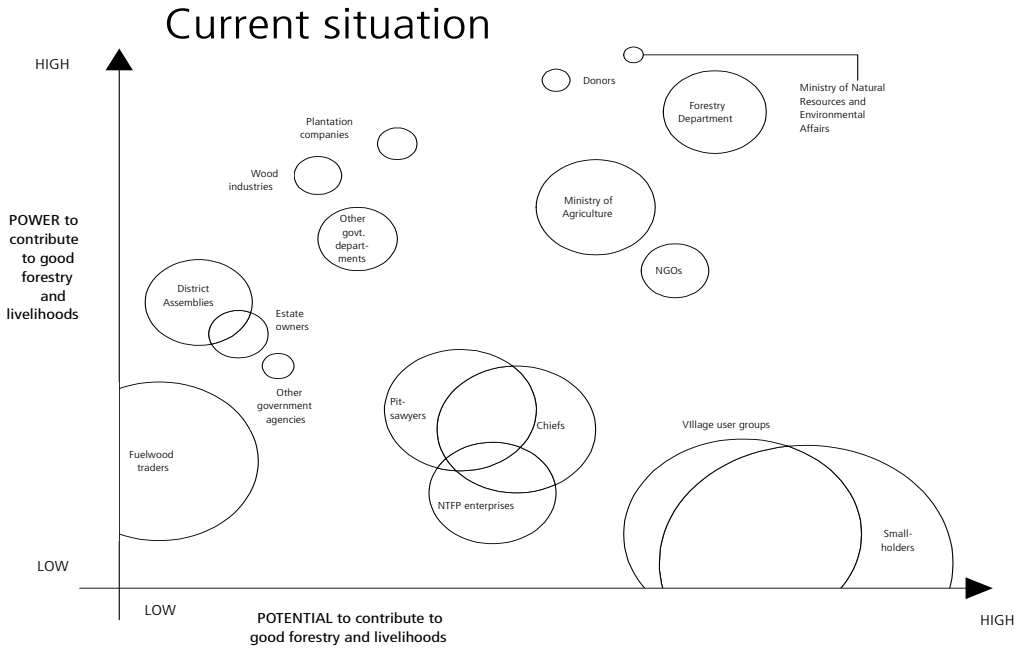
A final important point to make about the process of the NFP is that **stakeholder groups have very different degrees of power**. They vary in their capability to control decisions that actually have major effects on forests and livelihoods. **Stakeholders also vary in their potential** for good forestry and livelihoods. Potential for good forestry and livelihoods lies in factors such as: knowledge about forest management, proximity to forests, dependence on forest goods or services, viable forest enterprise, cultural linkages to forests, and existing rights. Some stakeholders have considerable potential to bring about good forestry and livelihoods, yet have little power to do so. Others, by contrast have lower potential, yet have considerable power. Figure 5 is an attempt to illustrate this point. In the figure, the various main stakeholder groups in Malawi's forest goods and services are shown by circles—the larger the circle the greater the number of people in the group.

Figure 5 shows the scale and direction of the challenge for the NFP— to push and pull stakeholders towards matching up power with potential. The remaining sections of this document are designed to pick up on the **challenge** highlighted by the above diagram: **increase the power of those with potential and increase the potential of those with power!**

This challenge needs to be addressed in all areas within Malawi, although the general **tactics** will differ slightly in each:

- **In areas of relatively low population density**, efforts will focus on ensuring that natural forests on customary land, forest reserves, proposed forest reserves and freehold land (estates, etc.) are managed to maximise productivity and conservation benefits.
- **In areas of medium population density**, efforts will focus on good management of both natural and planted forests. Potential exists for the private sector (estates) in these areas to play a leading role, given their prominence and capabilities (financial and technical) and given the interdependency of forests and agriculture.
- **In areas of high population density**, efforts will focus on managing trees on farm land and increasing productivity of planted and remnant indigenous forests as there is no room for expansion. Potential for increasing production largely rests with the smallholder farmers through various forms of social forestry.

**Figure 5 Stakeholder groups: size, potential and power to contribute to good forestry and livelihoods**



Picture: Martin Skottke



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# 3. ROLE-BUILDING TO IMPROVE FORESTRY AND LIVELIHOODS

Consensus is developing around the general roles that need to be played to ensure improved forestry and livelihoods in Malawi, and the appropriate responsibilities for playing these roles. There are four main groups of role-players, and for each group there is a general 'direction' in which activities should be moving to make the roles work:

## **Central government**

*Who:* Forestry Department headquarters plus centralised research and training institutions, and key line agencies in agriculture, wildlife, environment, etc., at central level.

*Main role:* regulating, planning, managing reserves, providing guidance and enabling others to play their roles

*General direction:* restructuring and strengthening of existing core roles.

## **Local government**

*Who:* District, Town and City Assemblies, including District Forestry Offices, and their linkages with traditional authorities

*Main role:* enabling forest management and providing forestry services.

*General direction:* responding to the imperatives and opportunities of decentralisation with respect to forest management.

## **Private sector**

*Who:* profit-oriented forest-based industry, estate owners and small-scale enterprise.

*Main role:* developing and using markets for delivering the forest goods and services that people want.

*General direction:* increasing private sector capacity and participation in forest management, investment and production of forest goods and services.

## **Civil society**

*Who:* NGOs, community-based groups and smallholders.

*Main role:* developing local capacities and alliances for improving forestry and livelihoods.

*General direction:* empowering people to fulfil these new roles.

In addition to these main groups of role players in Malawi, the donor agencies and other organisations making up the **international community** represents a fifth group with important roles to play. The main role for this group is to support the Government of Malawi's agreed priorities for improving forestry and livelihoods, to develop a co-ordinated sector-wide approach to provision of support for these priorities, and to work with the other four groups to ensure integration with international agreements and the global services which forests can provide.

Table 2 outlines the roles required of the four main Malawian groups, and the responsibilities which need to be firmly taken up to make these roles work.

<b>Table 2 Roles and responsibilities for improving forestry and livelihoods in Malawi</b>				
<b>ROLES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>			
	<b>Central government</b> <i>Restructuring</i>	<b>Local government</b> <i>Decentralising</i>	<b>Private sector</b> <i>Commercialising</i>	<b>Civil society</b> <i>Empowering</i>
<b>Formulation and revision of policy and legislation</b>	Lead responsibility	Contributor	Industry representatives, estate owners, pit-sawyers and other enterprises to contribute	Communities, individuals and NGOs to contribute
<b>Development of national forestry strategies, standards and planning</b>	Lead responsibility	Contributor	Industry representatives, estate owners, pit-sawyers and other enterprises to contribute	Communities, individuals and NGOs to contribute
<b>Conducting and maintaining inventories of forest resources</b>	Establishment of data standards and quality control; collation, analysis and dissemination of inventory data	Lead responsibility; dissemination of forest resource information to the public	Private sector plantation managers and processors to maintain records and submit planting and logging data	Communities and NGOs to contribute where involved in co-management
<b>Forestry research</b>	Lead responsibility	Secondary role in supervising field trials	Secondary. Private sector may be involved in on-site trials, and conduct own cost-effectiveness and market research	Secondary. NGOs and community groups may conduct own research and be involved in on-site trials
<b>Management of information systems</b>	Lead responsibility	Contributor	Contributor	Contributor
<b>Forestry extension, including participatory forestry and agro-forestry</b>	Preparation and dissemination of extension materials; quality control	Lead responsibility, with particular emphasis on the development of co-management	Increasing private sector involvement in provision of inputs where tree-planting and agro-forestry becomes commercially viable	NGOs and community organisations may conduct extension and provide inputs

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES			
	Central government <i>Restructuring</i>	Local government <i>Decentralising</i>	Private sector <i>Commercialising</i>	Civil society <i>Empowering</i>
Development of smallholder forest resources	Collaboration between line agency extension services	Advisory role	Private sector may initiate contract tree-growing, small-scale enterprise and consulting services	Lead responsibility
Development of forest management agreements	Party to the agreement; technical assistance in developing management plans	Liaison role; interface between HQ and village institutions	Small-scale enterprise may develop	Village institutions party to the agreement; partnership with NGOs may help develop agreements
Enforcement of the Forestry Act and forestry management agreements	Monitoring; training; liaison with the courts; guidance to District Assemblies	Lead responsibility in areas not covered by a management agreement. Otherwise secondary or back-up role	Contributor through implementing, and monitoring compliance of others, in management agreements	Village institutions to be primary enforcement agents in VFAs covered by a management agreement
Forest protection	Lead responsibility for biodiversity conservation and phytosanitation	Lead responsibility for fire prevention	Contributor to protection under lease arrangements	Village institutions active in fire prevention and other protection activities
Management of Forest Reserves and Protected Forest Areas	Lead responsibility initially, although this may be progressively devolved at a later date	Secondary responsibility, i.e., day-to-day management under the direction of the Director of Forestry	Private sector may be party to management agreements within protected areas	Village institutions and NGOs may be party to management agreements within protected areas
Management of plantations on government land	Lead responsibility to facilitate transfer to private sector through leases	Advisory role	Increasing private sector participation, then lead responsibility under leases	NGOs and communities may contribute to monitoring

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES			
	Central government <i>Restructuring</i>	Local government <i>Decentralising</i>	Private sector <i>Commercialising</i>	Civil society <i>Empowering</i>
Management of private plantations	Provision of guidance in accordance with national standards for forest management	Advisory role	Lead responsibility	NGOs and communities may contribute to monitoring
Licensing of activities under the Forestry Act	Licensing of the import and export of forest products, activities within Forest Reserves	Lead responsibility for customary land not covered by a management agreement. Otherwise a monitoring role	Contributor through implementing, and monitoring compliance of others, in management agreements	Village institutions may licence activities within a VFA covered by a management agreement
Training for forestry staff	Lead responsibility	Contributor to in-service training	Companies or consultancies may be contracted to provide training	NGOs may provide training, particularly in participatory approaches
Integration with regional and international forest and land use policy initiatives	Lead responsibility	Contributor	Contributor	Contributor
Development of new investment and trade in forest sector	Lead responsibility to make enabling investment rules and procedures, and foster partnerships	Scrutiny of investment proposals, possible brokering of investments and partnerships, and monitoring of cross-border trade	Lead responsibility to develop investments, partnerships and associations for market research and promotion	NGOs may support enterprise development, brokering and monitoring of partnerships and investments
Policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation of implementation	Lead responsibility	Contributor	Contributor	Contributor

Roles are not the same as job-descriptions. Whilst job-descriptions are highly specific, handed out and often ‘cast in stone’, roles are more dynamic, requiring interpretation and development by the role-player. Roles evolve and become more effective over time as role players discover new opportunities and dimensions in them. To play a role well the role-player needs to identify with it, and work towards ‘owning’ it. Thus, the roles and their attendant responsibilities outlined in Table 2 need to be steadily ‘internalised’ through pursuit of strategies and practical actions. These strategies and actions are the subject of section 4.