

AFRICA NATURAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTING POLICY FORUM: Using Natural Capital Accounting and Analysis to Inform Policies for Development, Climate Change and Nature Protection

Nairobi, Kenya
September 6-7, 2023

I. Introduction

The Africa Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) Policy Forum is a regional event aiming to identify common challenges and opportunities and to discuss how countries can support each other in mainstreaming natural capital considerations into policy. The first NCA Policy Forum took place in November 2019 in Kampala, Uganda where the Regional Community of Practice on NCA for Africa (Africa NCA CoP) was formed.

The CoP has provided a much-needed space/platform for African countries to learn, seek or share knowledge and brings together professionals from governments, institutions, non-governmental organizations and academia that are interested in or working on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) and related policy analysis in Africa. It is financially and technically supported by the World Bank's Global Program on Sustainability (GPS), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in collaboration with several other partner institutions including the African Union.

Building on the first Forum in Uganda and the work of the Africa NCA CoP since then, the 2023 Africa NCA Policy Forum is being organized to provide African countries, organizations and interested stakeholders a space to discuss and share experiences on the use of NCA and related analysis as well as the challenges and opportunities for use of these tools at national level to generate evidence and insights that will inform or support development, climate and environmental policies in African countries.



II. Thematic focus and rationale

Natural capital and ecosystem services are key foundations for sustainable economic development, poverty reduction and resilience to climate change. Renewable natural resources and ecosystem services also offer crucial opportunities for climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition to environment and climate benefits, investment in conservation and restoration of natural capital and ecosystems can generate positive economic returns, create income multipliers, and provide practical green recovery options (World Bank 2021). Therefore, it is important to assess the role of natural capital to meet inter-linked societal objectives and the synergies and trade-offs between policies and investments in climate, nature and development. This includes identification and prioritization of nature-based climate solutions that produce positive nature and development co-benefits.

African countries are working to promote this agenda through various instruments and plans. This includes the global agendas on climate change and biodiversity: the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Supporting these agendas require data and tools that are designed to assess trade-offs and synergies across the economic, environmental, and social objectives that these agendas include.

For example, land use change and degradation are major drivers of ecosystem and biodiversity loss, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, which calls for cross-sectoral solutions. Landscape management is at the heart of these issues. Among broad tools for improved management of natural capital, natural capital accounts, in particular land and ecosystem accounts, are proposed in many countries to inform land use planning, support implementation of land restoration and conservation efforts, and to put in place policy instruments such as payments for ecosystem services to incentivize actions. In addition, nature-based approaches can be “no-regret” options, as they are often cost-efficient and allow

for flexibility in dealing with a constantly changing climate and its associated risks. Investments in natural capital and 'nature positive' policies have climate adaptation and mitigation features, and vice versa. This will involve aligning, tracking and measuring nature and climate goals, something that the integrated environmental-economic framework of NCA is uniquely placed to inform.

Against this backdrop, the 2023 Africa NCA Policy Forum will focus on how natural capital accounting and related approaches can inform the climate change, nature and development nexus and actions that enhance synergies. This will include the role of better data and analysis on natural capital for integrating economic development, climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as protection of ecosystems and biodiversity.

The event will take place at the margins of the Africa Climate Week. Noting that climate change is already having a significant impact on Africa's ecosystems, economy, and society, the Africa Climate Summit (held September 4-6) will focus on adaptation and resilience. Opportunities for cross-fertilization between related events will be pursued, to explore options on how NCA and related data and analysis can support the climate agenda.

III. Dates and format

The Africa NCA Policy Forum will be held on September 6-7, 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya. It will be hosted by the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and organized in collaboration with World Bank and UNSD.

Format: The Forum will be an in-person event, but to accommodate participants and organizations that will not be able to join this policy forum physically, the sessions will be livestreamed online.

Target audience: The Forum is expected to attract policy makers, practitioners, academics, regional and international experts as well as the private sector engaged in natural capital.



IV. Overall objective of Africa NCA Policy Forum

The overall aim of the forum is supporting the mainstreaming of NCA and related data and analysis into development planning and policy processes, in particular how such data and analysis on natural capital could inform the triple challenge of development, climate change and protection of nature.

V. Specific objectives of the Africa NCA Policy Forum

1. Stocktaking of progress in NCA development and use in Africa, including exchange of experiences and peer-to-peer learning, including institutionalization, capacity building and mainstreaming of NCA and related analysis into policy
2. Knowledge sharing on using data and analysis on natural capital to address economic-environmental issues, with a focus on informing the challenge to achieve goals for development, climate change and nature protection
3. Discuss needs and priorities for building capacity on NCA and related analysis in Africa, in particular the future of the Africa NCA CoP

VI. Expected Outcomes

- Improved learning network and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange among countries and participants on use of NCA and related approaches to support synergistic climate, nature, and development outcomes
- Closer collaboration, cooperation and support between countries in developing and using NCA and related data and analysis for planning and decision-making
- Priority next steps and strategy for strengthening the Africa NCA CoP



PRELIMINARY AGENDA		
Time (EAT)		
Day 1 (September 6, 2023)		
8:00 - 8:30	Participants arrival to the venue	
8:30 - 9:00	Registration	
9:00 - 9:05	Welcome	
9:05- 9:20	Opening statements and remarks	
9:20 – 9:30	Introduction of the agenda (2 co-facilitators)	
Time	Session	Objective and modality
9:30 - 10:30	Day 1: Session I Setting the scene: the climate and nature nexus	Presentation and panel discussion to give an overview of the challenges are African countries facing to address climate change and protecting nature while also developing their economies
10:30-10:45	Day 1: Session II Ice breaker	Getting to know each other and share thoughts on the NCA/climate/nature nexus
10:45 – 11:00	Health Break/Refreshment	
11:00- 12:00	Day 1: Session III Country experiences: addressing the global agendas through natural capital data and analysis	Panel discussion: governments sharing country experiences – how are they using data and analysis to meet e.g. the NDCs, SDGs, NBSAP and national development plans
12:00-12:30	Day 1: Session IV NCA in Africa and around the world	Presentations giving an overview of NCA development and use in Africa, including presentation of pre-Forum survey results
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:30	Day 1: Session V Clinic on starting up and institutionalizing NCA-organization/institutionalization in countries, data needs, and challenges	Panel and open forum: Knowledge sharing between countries with different level of experience on NCA to learn how to set up a sustainable NCA program
15:30 - 16:00	Health Break/Refreshment	
16:00-17:30	Day 1: Session VI NCA experiences in Africa: using NCA to inform policies on climate change mitigation and economic development	Presentations showcasing how NCA can be used to address climate/development issues including macroeconomic policy, NDCs and SDGs
18:30 - 20:30	Dinner Reception for all participants	

Day 2 (September 7, 2023)		
9:00-10:30	Day 2: Session I NCA experiences in Africa: Using NCA to inform policies on climate change adaptation and nature protection	Presentations on how NCA can be used to assess impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity as well as to inform policy instruments to address nature/ climate issues, including informing NBSAPs, Global Biodiversity Framework and SDGs
10:30 - 11:00	Health Break/Refreshment	
11:00 - 12:00	Day 2: Session II Plenary discussion	Panel and open forum: Towards key ingredients for success with NBSAPs, NDCs and related agendas.
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 - 14:30	Day 2: Session III Way forward for the Africa NCA CoP	Overview presentation and reflections from panel: what assets have the Africa NCA CoP created, opportunities moving forwards and discussing vision for next steps for the CoP
14:30 - 15:00	Health Break/Refreshment	
15:00 - 16:00	Day 2: Session IV Breakout group discussion on the way forward for the Africa NCA CoP	Breakout groups discussions and report back: To elicit demand and priorities from participating countries and individuals; identify possible contributions from organizations. The breakout groups will be tentatively based on the following themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability: Priorities and next steps for the sustainability of the CoP2. Regional blocks, networks, and organizations: Linking up to the regional blocks, networks, and organizations on the continent3. Enhance CoP communications and engagement
16:00 – 16:30	Conclusions	Summarizing the outcomes of discussions; arriving at a proposal for the continuation of the Africa NCA CoP
16:30 - 17:00	Day 2: Session V Closing session	Closing remarks

