



VITAL SIGNS

Draft: Vital Signs Kenya Stakeholders Workshop Report

Fairview Hotel, Nairobi
11th August 2015
9.00 A.M-1.00 P.M.

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Acronyms:

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa- (AGRA)

Conservation International- (CI)

Food and Agriculture Organization- (FAO)

Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization- (KARLO)

Kenya Forest Service- (KFS)

Kenya Meteorological Department- (KMD)

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics- (KNBS)

Kenya Wildlife Service- (KWS)

Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport- (LAPSSET) corridor

National Environment Management Authority- (NEMA)

Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development- (RCMRD)

System for Land Based Emissions Estimation in Kenya- (SLEEK) project

The Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries- (MOALF)

Vital Signs- (VS)

Introduction

Vital Signs (VS) is an integrated monitoring system for ecosystem services in agricultural landscapes. It is currently implemented in Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda and Rwanda and is poised to expand operation in additional African countries soon. Vital Signs is working alongside the government of Kenya in engaging in international initiatives which address sustainability in environment and agriculture. One of those commitments, the Gaborone Declaration, has recognized Vital Signs as the implementing regional monitoring system for achieving its goals. With funding from the Barr and Schooner Foundations, Vital Signs will utilize this opportunity and begin operating in Kenya this year (2015).

To gather information on current monitoring efforts and data needs, a stakeholder workshop was convened in Nairobi on the 11th of July 2015 at the Fairview Hotel.

In total, 28 stakeholders attended the workshop representing relevant government institutions (14) and Non-Governmental Organizations (14). A full list of participants can be found in Annex I.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Introduce Vital Signs to the stakeholders;
- Obtain stakeholder input on data and decision support needs;
- Receive feedback on key monitoring systems in Kenya; and
- Gather ideas on where to locate the landscapes for monitoring in Kenya.

Opening Remarks

The workshop was officially opened by the Senior Operations Director of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ambassador Julius Kandie, who was representing Prof. Judy Wakhungu, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources in Kenya. He stated that implementing Vital Signs in Kenya is a critical venture because of the importance of sustainable agriculture for the Kenyan economy. Furthermore, food security is a priority for the Kenyan government, especially as the population continues to grow and changing climate presents new threats to vulnerable populations. The integrated measurements which Vital Signs collects can help describe the benefits people receive from a responsibly managed or conserved environment.

Ambassador Julius Kandie noted that the impacts of climate change are essential for action and encouraged participants to use the Vital Signs workshop to share information in order to reduce such impacts.

Introduction to Vital Signs

A detailed introduction to Vital Signs' objectives was made by the Vital Signs Executive Director, Dr. Sandy Andelman. She described the sampling design for Vital Signs measurements, development of indicators, case studies, and background on countries where VS is currently operating.

Stakeholder Input

The participants raised issues of concern for Vital Signs:

- Farmers are sometimes constrained by the costs of inputs such as fertilizers or better storage facilities.
- Vital Signs should ensure that they make use of already existing data in Kenya, for example, institutions like Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization have crop suitability data.
- One of the main challenges in Kenya is convincing the decision makers to see the need for national, time series data on ecosystem services, agriculture and human well being. In some cases, they do not have the capacity to be able to use the information. A challenge VS can address is explaining data to decision makers in an easily understandable way, so that they will actually use the information presented.

Additionally, participants asked questions, which were answered by Vital Signs staff:

- How is Vital Signs capturing local knowledge, such as on agricultural management?
 - That information is captured in the agriculture management survey questionnaire to farmers.
- How sustainable is the VS monitoring system?
 - VS monitoring is established in each country in such a way that we ensure standard protocols are used. The VS business model works to build the technological and scientific capacity of the VS team. A longer-term goal of Vital Signs is to transition the monitoring systems to ownership by their respective countries.

Existing Monitoring Efforts

The participants stated that data on agriculture is being collected by various research and government organizations in Kenya. However, it was noted that one of the unique characteristics of Vital Signs is its integration of data on agriculture, ecosystems and livelihoods. Therefore, using already existing agricultural data, Vital Signs could synthesize information from different institutions and integrate it with data on nature and livelihoods to show how the elements interact in Kenya.

The following institutions were identified as key holders of information from which Vital Signs should synthesize different forms of data on agriculture and the environment:

- Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KARLO),
- Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources,
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),
- World Bank,
- National Drought Management Authority,
- World Food Programme (WFP),

- Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD),
- Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA),
- Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD),
- Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS),
- Kenya Forest Service (KFS),
- National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
- Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)

Specific activities in agricultural data collection:

- The Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (MOALF) has data on crops, livestock and fisheries. The MOALF is also conducting a farmer registration process countrywide through the Kenya Census of Agriculture Program.
- Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KARLO) collects data on soil fertility, crop suitability and yield estimates.
- National Drought Management Authority and the World Food Programme collect data on drought risks and measures for alleviating droughts.
- Data on food security is aggregated from counties' food balance sheets (availability vs consumption rates) on a monthly basis, and from the FAO on an annual basis; the data is maintained by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
- AGRA has aggregated soil information in 18 countries, stored in the National Soil Health Consortium.

Specific activities in environmental data collection:

- The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources (RCMRD) collects remote sensing and satellite imagery information.
- The System for Land Based Emissions Estimation in Kenya (SLEEK) project is developing a land use map.
- The Kenya Forest Service is collecting data on forestry activities as well as farmers' tree planting efforts. It is also currently involved in the National Forest Resource Assessment with RCMRD, which will be conducted every five years.
- Kenya Wildlife Service has a department that collects scientific data on wetlands, forests and rangeland.
- Kenya Meteorological Department has 40 fulltime synoptic (automatic) stations and 700 rainfall stations. It also does climate scenario mapping, and is currently involved in a pilot project in Nyeri to develop vulnerability maps.
- NEMA collects environmental information that is aggregated in the State of Environment report annually. It is also planning to conduct a profile of the major environmental problems facing each county.
- The Kenya Private Sector of Young People is developing a mobile messaging system for smallholder farmers to provide information which will reduce vulnerability to climate change.

The Way Forward

The participants identified a strategy for moving forward with Vital Signs in Kenya.

The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources was nominated to collaborate with Vital Signs in forming a committee of key contacts from the government, counties, civil society organizations and the private sector.

The participants noted that Vision 2030 has a robust measuring system as well as flagship projects in various parts of the country. Because it is a key policy guide in Kenya, the participants suggested that Vital Signs should explore how it can feed into Vision 2030 as well as consult with the Vision 2030 committee.

Vital Signs should synthesize Kenya's existing data, determine its quality based on the details, frequency and consistency of the way it is collected and produce a status report. The report will enable Vital Signs to identify and begin filling information gaps

Vital Signs should involve the counties when selecting the landscapes on which to focus. The Council of Governors will be an important starting place for identifying sample counties in which to begin. Vital Signs should consider the changing land use patterns when selecting landscapes, for example, in the central regions where agricultural land is being converted to residential development as well as urban agriculture.

Further, Vital Signs landscapes should incorporate areas considered hotspots of change to show the interaction between agriculture, livelihood and nature. Suggested hotspots include the Victoria Basin, Northern side of the Yala Swamp, arid and semi-arid areas, the Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia (LAPSSSET) corridor, as well as priority water shed areas such as the Aberdare Forest. The significance of each area is explained briefly below, and the areas are mapped in Annex II:

- The Yala River Delta is a wetland area where commercial rice growing activities create a delicate balance between ecosystem services and agricultural intensification. The area also hosts a variety of unique endangered bird species.
- The Amboseli region has many wildlife conservancies that are threatened by the encroachment of urban development.
- The slopes of the Abardare ranges have a high agricultural potential and include protected areas (forest and wildlife) with frequent human-wildlife conflict.
- The LAPSSSET corridor is an area stretching from Lamu to the South East coast, to the North West part of the country, that the government has earmarked for oil and transport development. Lamu is also near the Tana River delta, a wetland earmarked for irrigation projects in Vision 2030. VS could select two landscapes in this corridor; one at the Tana river delta, and the other in Lodwar—the potential epicenter of oil extraction, which also happens to have enormous underground water resources.

The participants also emphasized the potential for collaboration with the recently launched SLEEK (System for Land Based Emission Estimation in Kenya) project. Vital Signs should use the data to help in the formulation of policies to inform resource allocation. They should also work on capacity building for government officers and development partners to understand, analyze and apply data to inform policy as well as to exercise quality control on existing national data. Vital Signs should also work closely with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, as it is the custodian of all data. At the moment, there is no central repository for integrated data collected by the different institutions, however some of the data collected by the different institutions is aggregated through the United Nations Environment Programme Live Portal.

Conclusion

Kenya has different sets of data being collected by different institutions, and it was largely agreed that Vital Signs should first synthesize this data. The stakeholders represented therefore expressed a willingness to share the available information. The synthesized data should be used to inform policies on resource allocation. In addition, Vital Signs should build capacity among policy and other decision makers on how to best utilize the generated information.

There is a greater challenge in persuading decision makers to value data collection. Lastly, participants suggested that Vital Signs should work towards transmitting the information to the grassroots level.

Annex I: Workshop Participant List

NAME	INSTITUTION	TITLE	CONTACT
Abednego, Marube	National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA)	Head ICT	amarube@nema.go.ke
Andelman, Sandy	Vital Signs, Conservation International (CI)	Chief Scientist and Senior Vice President Executive Director-Vital Signs	sandelman@conservation.org
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Annex II: Map of Stakeholders' Suggested Landscape Areas (indicated in black)

