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**ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MALAWI'S FORESTRY REGULATORY
REGIME TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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DECLARATION

This thesis is presented as part of the Master of Arts degree of **Public Policy and Management** at Murdoch University.

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Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of Malawi's forestry regulatory regime towards achieving sustainable forest management (SFM). The main purpose was to examine the policy contexts and institutional conditions within Malawi that aim to generate effective SFM. The study involved a comprehensive literature review of policies, legislations, journals and government reports.

The study has revealed that Malawi has several forest regulatory frameworks that enshrine SFM concept. However, implementation of these frameworks has been a big issue due to poor coordination; and inadequate financial and human resources. Effectiveness of the forest regime to achieve SFM is associated with increased forest cover. In Malawi, the outcome indicators of the forest regime like increased forest cover and incomes have been declining instead of increasing. Therefore, Malawi's forest regime has not been effective to achieve SFM. It is therefore, recommended to strengthen the capacity of forest administration institutions at central, regional and local levels.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Malawi has a number of natural resources which include land, water, fish, wildlife, forests and minerals (Kasulo & Luhanga, 2005). “These resources form the backbone of the economy and provide the basis for the social and economic development of the country” (Kasulo & Luhanga, 2005, p.1). As a country, “Malawi has a total area of 11.85 million hectares, of which 9.41 million hectares is land and 2.44 million hectares is inland water” (Yaron, Mangani, Mlawa, Kambewa, Makungwa, Mtethiwa, Munthali, Mgoola, & Kazembe, 2011, p.5). As Yaron et al (2011) report, in 1973 forest resources covered an estimated 4.46 million hectares (47.4% of total land area). In 2000 and 2005, forest resources covered estimated area of 3.60 million hectares and 3.40 million ha (36.2% of total land area) respectively. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2010), forest resources in Malawi were estimated to cover 3.24 million ha, about 34% of the total land area.

Forestry resources greatly support the livelihoods in Malawi. For instance, according to Yaron et al (2011), wood fuel alone contributes to the economy by about 4.3% of GDP, however what is officially recorded is 1.8% (Yaron et al., 2011, p.4). This inconsistency and lack of reliable estimates of forestry resources highlights weaknesses in the national income accounting and valuation systems (Yaron et al., 2011). According to Malawi Environmental Outlook Report (MEOR) (2010), forestry resources create employment for about 129,775 people through traded wood (MEOR, 2010). In 2008, forest resources in form of biomass also accounted for 88.5% of total energy consumption in Malawi (Yaron et al., 2011, p.8). Forests also provide habitat for flora and fauna, protect watershed as well as regulating climate change (MEOR, 2010, p.169). Forests are also responsible for soil and water conservation which eventually contribute to agricultural productivity in Malawi (MEOR, 2011, p.169).

In consideration of the importance of forest resources to the economy, a number of institutions including legislative and policy frameworks were instituted to ensure that there is sustainable management and utilization of the forest goods and services. Malawi has had a long history of controlling and managing forest resources through state mechanisms with little or no recognition of customary property rights and there was no provision for community participation (Kambani,

2005). According to Mustapha (2004), Malawi emerged from a centralized authoritarian single party rule (1964-1994) where elements of good governance were noted to be deficient.

In 1994, Malawi attained multiparty type of leadership which ushered the country into the review and development of a number of policy and regulatory frameworks to govern different sectors of the economy (Mustapha, 2004). According to MEOR (2010), this wind of change also affected the forestry sector. In 1996, the Department of Forestry produced a Forestry Policy and in 1997, a Forest Act was developed. When it was noted that the forest policy was not adequate enough to enshrine principles of community based forest management, in 2003, a Community Based Forestry Management Policy Supplement was developed (Mauambeta; Chitedze; Mumba, & Gama, 2010).

Furthermore, as Mauambeta et al (2010) report, The Malawi Government also developed a National Forestry Programme (FP) in 2001 to guide implementation of the National Forestry Policy (NFP) and Forestry Act (FA). According to McConell, Sibale and Utila (2007,p.3), the FP noted that agricultural expansion is being made at the expense of forests, a situation that discourages smallholders from planting trees to diversify their sources of income and increase food security. In relation to this, the NFP had set twelve priorities for achieving its overall goal of sustainable management of forest goods and services for improved and equitable livelihoods (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

Therefore, the changes of the government from single party to multiparty influenced a shift in natural resources policy from top-down to participatory management (bottom up) (Sibale and Banda, 2004). These changes of government had both positive and negative impacts on resources as many people interpreted democracy to mean that they no longer had to respect the law, particularly where it applied to natural resources (Sibale and Banda, 2004). Furthermore, as Sibale and Banda (2004) report, at the same time the government relaxed its attitude to law enforcement and associated strict policing and law enforcement with the dictatorship.

In terms of implementation, prior to the adoption of FP in 2001, there was a “policy vacuum” in the forestry sector, as the existing policies lacked a coherent mechanism and decisive

implementation framework for the new policy challenges (Sibale and Banda, 2004, p.17). As Sibale and Banda (2004, p.17) reported, “there were no tools and tactics to pull stakeholders towards the common goal of sustainable and pro-poor forest management.”

According to Maguire (2010), the concept of SFM has instigated review of international and domestic forest policies. In other countries, specific programmes targeting achievement of SFM practices were formulated and implemented (FAO, 2003). In Malawi, a National forest programme (FP) was specifically developed to achieve SFM practices (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Furthermore, the entire focus of the forest regulatory regime was skewed to this goal (Mauambeta et al., 2010). According to Monditoka (2011), accomplishment of SFM depends critically upon the extent and quality of enabling policy, legal and institutional conditions on good forest governance. In this regard, it is important to determine whether this assertion accurately describes Malawi’s forest regulatory regime. It is further important to explore if indeed the results and practices observed in the Malawi’s forest landscape really reflect sustainable forest management goal which is enshrined in the Malawi forest policies and programs.

This study will explore how effective the forest regime has been towards achieving SFM practices. To assess the effectiveness of the forest regulation in achieving SFM practices a goal achievement model (results versus outcomes/goals) has been used. As pointed by Scriven (1991, p.178), “the rationale of using this model is simple; it is based on the question are the results in line with the goals”. This study will use literature and other relevant documents such as Malawi government papers and reports, journals, country forestry policies and legislations to examine the policy.

1.1 Scope

The scope of this study is to assess the policy context and institutional conditions that aim to generate effective SFM in Malawi. The study will examine the current forest policies, legal frameworks and forest governance structures/mechanisms and it will also analyse the extent to which sustainable forest management practices are being implemented as a result of these

frameworks. From the context of application of new public management, the forest policy process and implementation arrangements will also be examined.

1.2 Aims

- To identify changes historically that have attempted to cover forestry policy in Malawi;
- To outline agencies and institutions that are involved in forest regulation and how they actually implement policy;
- To critically evaluate the effectiveness of Malawi forest institutional frameworks in achieving sustainable forest management practices;
- To provide recommendations on how Malawi forest regulatory regime can be improved to achieve SFM practices.

1.3 Objectives

- To generate a critical survey of current literature on forest regulatory regimes/forest governance in line with sustainable forest management;
- To outline the policy context and institutional conditions that generate sustainable forest management in Malawi;
- To identify current sustainable forest management practices being undertaken that can be attributed to the impact of these governance mechanisms;
- To evaluate the degree to which forest institutional frameworks are effective towards achieving SFM.

1.4 Core question

- What are the main agencies and institutions involved in forest regulation in Malawi?
- How are forestry policies implemented in Malawi?
- Who get involved in the formulation of forestry sector key performance indicators and how are they formed?
- To what extent are sustainable forest management practices enshrined in the current forest policies and regulatory frameworks?
- What are the key practices underpinning SFM?
- How to improve the effectiveness of current forest regulatory regime in Malawi?

1.5 Justification

Over the years, developments in forest management have focused on progress towards SFM, an approach that balances environmental, social-cultural and economic objectives of management (FAO, 2003). The SFM approach has been pursued as it is in line with the forest principles adopted at the ‘United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992’ (FAO, 2003, p.4). Since its adoption, the concept of SFM has initiated changes in international and domestic forest policies and legislations. (FAO, 2003). According to Maguire (2010), “the concept of SFM incorporates and recognizes all values associated with forests which include ecological and environmental values, social and cultural values, and trade and development values”. As FAO (2003) reports, the concept of SFM has influenced many initiatives regarding forest management in the world. For instance, “SFM concept has led to the revision of forest policies and legislation and has been mainstreamed by local, national, regional and international forestry organizations” (FAO, 2003, p.6).

Therefore, as Maguire (2010, p.56) puts it, “the overall objective for global forest regulation has been achievement of SFM practices”. According to Malawi Government (2001), in Malawi, Sustainable Management of Forest Goods and services for improved and equitable livelihoods was also adopted as the goal. This goal drew on the findings of the National Forest Programme (FP) process and complemented the National Forest Policy (NFP) and other key statements which reflect what society wants from forest goods and services. A set of principles for Malawi’s FP were also generated to be in tune with international consensus (Malawi Government, 2001). However, the questions that arise and are pertinent in this case are: to what extent is this goal being achieved and how effective are the current institutions in the Malawi’s forest sector in achieving this goal. More importantly, there has been no study that looked at the adequacy of the current forestry institutions to achieve sustainable forest management practices in Malawi.

In addition, according to Maguire (2010), SFM has been adopted as the overall goal for global forest management and this has been reflected in various domestic policies. However, the means of achieving and implementing this concept becomes open ended (Maguire, 2010). In this regard, another pertinent question to pose is: How effective are the current means of implementing SFM

concept in Malawi? Therefore, assessing the effectiveness of Malawi's forest regulatory regime to achieve SFM practices is critical towards answering these questions. Furthermore, as pointed out by Althus, Bridgman and Davis (2013); it is also important for government to know if it is getting the desired outcomes and results.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

The study consists of five chapters which are outlined as follows:

Chapter 1: The first chapter covers introduction and background to the study including the problem statement, scope, aims, objectives, core research questions and justification.

Chapter 2: The second chapter covers literature review outlining forest governance, sustainable forest management, governmental forest regulation, policy process implementation arrangements and current situation of SFM in Malawi.

Chapter 3: The third chapter outlines the research methodology with emphasis on design.

Chapter 4: The fourth chapter covers Discussion and Analysis of findings.

Chapter 5: The final chapter provides a conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this project is to examine the policy context and the institutional conditions within Malawi that aim to generate effective sustainable forestry management. This chapter outlines the key literature that covers the main concepts necessary for this project. The literature review is organized as follows: forest governance (FG) is discussed in section 2.1; sustainable forest management concept in section 2.2; section 2.3 is governmental forest regulation and SFM. Section 2.4 will cover general policy process and implementation (public sector management); current situation of SFM in Malawi will be outlined in section 2.5.

2.1 Forest Governance

The concept of governance has become a common buzzword in the area of forest management both at national and international levels (Kowero, kaoneka, Nhantumbo, Gondo, & Jumbe, 2003 see also Arts & Buizer, 2009; Visseren-Hamakers & Glasbergen, 2006). A lot of studies have argued that forest governance is associated with the quality and conditions of the forestry resources themselves. For example, Kowero et al (2003) have argued that people's access to forestry resources is influenced by and dependent on forest governance. Furthermore, Tucker, 2009 argued that as a successful forest regime is measured based on the increase of forest cover. This argument indicates that if the quality of forestry resources is improving, its governance matters and the opposite can also be true.

It is further noted that “the degree to which governance favours SFM depends mostly on the involvement of the people that governance seeks to influence” (Mayers, Bila, Khaukha, Opoku, & Simwela, 2005, p.2). Therefore, a governance system which is favourable for SFM is the one that involves the people to be governed. Sibale and Banda (2004) also suggested that involvement of non-state actors like NGOs, civil society organisations, the church and the private sector is central for the forest governance to be effective towards SFM. This can also be argued that involvement of people to be governed in the forest policy process is one of the institutional conditions that favour SFM. Based on Althus et al (2013), policy process encapsulates policy making (policy cycle) and the actors involved along the whole chain. In this context, Althus et al (2013, p. 5) have argued that policy is therefore, “an instrument of

governance”. In this regard, assessing the effectiveness of forest governance regime to achieve sustainable forest management may also involve assessing the policy making process, the actors involved and its implementation arrangements.

According to Arts and Hamakers (2012), the term governance has various meanings. Accordingly, “governance is about the many ways in which public and private actors from the state, market and civil society govern public issues at multiple scales, autonomously or in mutual interaction” (Arts & Hamakers, 2012,p.4). This entails that actors from private sector, public sector and civil society collaboratively or individually have an explicit or implicit impact on SFM. As the authors also add, governance acknowledges the actual and potential role of both public and private actors in providing public goods and attempts to address the more endemic problems in society. According to Scanlon and Burhenne-Guilmin(2004,p.2) “governance is the means by which society defines goals and priorities and advances cooperation at local, national, regional and international level”. This also include the rules of decision making, who gets access to the information and participates in the decision making process (Scanlon and Burhenne-Guilmin). Governance can be expressed in different arrangements such as legal and policy frameworks, strategies and action plans as well as organizational arrangements for monitoring the implementation of policies and plans (Scanlon & Burhenne-Guilmin, 2004).

Therefore, good governance may entail promotion of reform of the public sector and corporate management in accordance with a number of good governance criteria, such as cost-effectiveness, transparency, accountability and participation, among others (Arts & Hamakers, 2012). For instance, new public management which applies business principles or economic theories and private sector management techniques to public administration is such a vivid example of good governance programme (Arts & Hamakers, 2012, see also Fatemi & Behmanesh 2012). Kishor and Rosenbaum (2012) have further argued that good governance enshrines collaboration of public agencies (bureaucracy) and private markets with commitment on enforcement of public laws.

In the forest sector, such principles have also been applied. Plummer (2012) has further pointed out that such models of governance have involved hybridization of state, market and community

principles of management of resources. Visseren–Hamakers and Glasberg, (2007, p.409) have also pointed out that forest governance has taken four institutional forms which include “business initiatives, civil society initiatives, private intersectoral partnerships (strategic alliances between civil society and business) and public private partnerships (strategic alliances between governments and business and or civil society)”. Therefore, numerous partnerships between governments, business and civil society have been developed and used to manage forest resources. A lot of literature associated with forest governance has shown that co-management, public private partnerships and private-social partnerships are the common buzzwords that have been used to reflect partnerships for managing forest resources (Plummer, 2012; Arts & Buizer, 2009). According to Radzyner et al (2014), participation of different actors such as those from public, private and society in policy making and implementation is also known as multilevel governance. In this regard, good governance can be associated with multilevel governance.

While numerous partnerships involving the public, private and society have widely been promoted in the management of forest resources, an important question to pose is how we determine whether these models of governance are delivering the desired results. In connection to this question, it has also been argued that successful forest governance encompasses expansion of forest cover along with conservation of forest biodiversity (Tucker, 2009). Maguire 2010 also pointed out that expansion of forest cover is also a key indicator of the success of forest governance. As Tucker (2009) cites Ostrom (1990), any successful forest governance regime has traits like secure property rights, their institutions formulated to fit the local conditions, existence of monitoring system and rules that are enforced consistently. In this context, tracing the existence of such parameters and examining the trend of forest cover in Malawi can be a good proxy indicator to determine the effectiveness of the Malawi’s forest regime.

FG has been communicated within the context of catchwords such as decentralization and devolution of authority in forest management, participatory forest management (PFM), co-management, forest certification, payment for ecosystem services, collaborative forest management and community based forest management of forest resources (CBFRM) (Mushonga, 2012; Arts & Hamaker,2012). Arts and Hamakers (2012, p.6) have categorized these new modes of forest governance mainly into three forms which are decentralization,

participation and marketization whereby forest certification and payment for ecosystem services are embedded within marketization. Like Sibale and Banda (2004), Mushonga (2012), Arts and Hamaker(2012) have also pointed out that, the term “forest governance” has various meanings which may range from steering in general to new modes of governance that go beyond the confines of the state, which can be multi-level in nature.

The importance of forests to people and to the environment has spurred debates on global forest governance (Mushonga, 2012). Issues of illegal logging of forest resources, corruption and debates on decentralization and SFM have made forest governance to come to the fore (Sibale & Banda, 2004; Maguire 2010). The outcomes of these debates have contributed to the birth of international/global treaties such the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Mushonga, 2012). Furthermore, “the recognition of forest at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable development (UNCED) in 1992 has seen an international forest governance system characterized by both states and non-state actors whose effort is to navigate on how all types of forest should be managed” (Mushonga, 2012, p.1).

Furthermore, FG has come to the attention of many players when it was noted that forest resources are poorly managed (Arts & Hamakers, 2012). Arts and Hamakers (2012) have blamed colonial and post-colonial masters as well as capitalist and socialist states to have been responsible for the poor forest governance. These masters have contributed to over-exploitation of the resource which has often been in conflict with local livelihoods and with the state’s own conservation objectives. Arts and Hamakers (2012) have further pointed out that at some instances; these managers have issued concessions to private companies or public enterprises without any effective monitoring mechanisms in place. In principle, Arts and Hamakers have argued that forest resources have been without managers and if any, the managers have been hibernating hence leaving the forests open to often illegal local use (Arts & Hamakers, 2012).

However, some authors have argued that forest resources were properly managed during the colonial period unlike the post colonial era because in reality, forest decentralization principles were actually applied during this period. For example, Kamoto, Dorward and Shepherd (2009)

have argued that during the colonial era, village chiefs were entrusted to manage forest resources in their designated village forest areas. In this context, Kamoto et al (2009) have pointed out that use of local people like chiefs in managing resources is one of the key principles of decentralization policy. In view of this, it is important that while getting understanding of the policy context and institutional conditions that generate SFM in Malawi, the historical changes that cover forest policy in Malawi are outlined.

While Africa has shown seriousness and commitment by ratifying to several treaties related to forest governance and SFM, Mushonga (2012) has argued that Africa has, however faced a number of challenges in implementing these commitments. As Mushonga (2012) puts it, these challenges amounting first, from the numerous actors' involved and plural institutions that are inadequately developed or poorly enforced due to lack of financial resources and human capital. In the words of Mushonga (2012), the second challenge has been the nature of resource extraction; such as the extent of illegal logging which has been noted as an indicator of the (poor) state of forest governance in Africa. Mushonga (2012) has also said that the third challenge has been legislation which is considered as bad law for not being fair and for failing to recognize cultural norms and values has and this has eventually contributed to non-compliance.

In the context of Malawi, Sibale and Banda (2004) have also argued that poor monitoring and enforcement mechanisms of the forestry related legislations have contributed to cases of illegal logging and encroachment of communities to forest areas. Furthermore, according to Malawi Environmental Outlook Report (MEOR) (2010) which also echoes Sibale and Banda, misinterpretation of democracy has also affected conceptualization of forest governance. According to MEOR (2010), the advent of democracy in Malawi was linked with freedom of access to forestry protected areas and wantonly cutting down of trees. As pointed out by MEOR (2010), this was also linked with encroachment of communities into these forest areas for settlements and agricultural practices.

2.2 Sustainable forest Management (SFM)

According to Krott (2001, p.33), “SFM is the stewardship and use of forests and forest land in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.” The concept of SFM has also influenced both domestic and international forest policies. For example, several countries and international organizations have committed themselves to this principle (Maguire, 2010). Furthermore, SFM has developed many different meanings but fundamentally involves perpetuating ecological, economic, and/or social forest assets (Foster et al., 2010). As Foster et al (2010) cite Helms, (1998), the types of assets or capital that could be perpetuated include provision of ecological goods and service production such as carbon storage and biodiversity and sustained production of commercial commodities such as timber. To reconcile current with future demands, Foster et al (2010) cited FAO (1993, p. 3) who described sustainable forest management as “securing an improved livelihood for present generations, while maintaining the potential of the forest heritage for future generations.”

Therefore, according to Krott (2001), the notion of SFM strives at the reconciliation of economic, ecological, social, cultural and spiritual interests in forests. Since the notion touches various disciplines, this has also entailed involvement of the diversity of stakeholders (Krott, 2001). However, Maguire (2010) reports that the concept of SFM incorporates and recognizes all values associated with forests. The common values identified in forest areas include: ecological and environmental values, social and cultural values, and trade and development values (Maguire, 2010).

The concept of SFM is internationally accepted as recognizing and promoting the equal consideration of all rights and interests in matters of forest (Maguire, 2010, p. 56). Therefore, according to Krott (2001, p. 33), “groups with completely different interests in forests are able to agree with this definition; since it promises that relevant ecological, economic and social functions are to be fulfilled”. As Krott (2001, p.33) reports, with this definition, everyone anticipates his or her self-interests to be recognized and considered.

According to Maguire (2010, p.56), SFM has been adopted as the overall goal for global forest management and this has shaped several domestic forest policies. However, in the words of Maguire (2010), recognition of these numerous values associated with forests in the policy and legal frameworks do present a challenge. In this regard, it is important to understand how the concept of SFM has been considered in domestic forestry policies and strategies and whether the current practices in the forest sector reflect SFM concept.

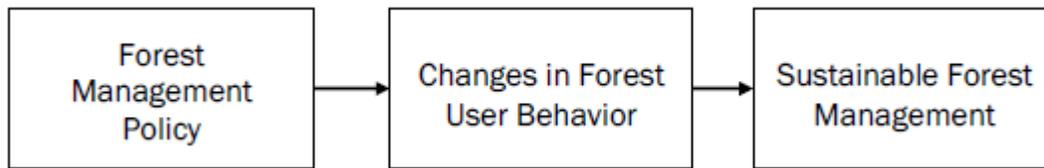
2.3 Governmental Forest Regulation, a Means to Achieve SFM

Manditoka (2011) has argued that achieving SFM goal mostly depends on the extent and quality of enabling policy, legal and institutional conditions. Together, these conditions influence how a society organizes itself to develop and manage forest wealth, to produce forest goods and services, and to consume them (Manditoka, 2011). Therefore, understanding of the effectiveness of forest regulatory regime is important for enhancing designing and formulation of public policies and programs (McGinley, 2008)

According to McGinley (2008, p.8), “understanding of the effectiveness of forest regulation may entail evaluating how and why policy intends to achieve the policy goals.” In the words of McGinley (2008, p.8), this approach may include identification and analysis of likely causal factors and alternative explanations for the policy outcomes. As McGinley (2008) puts it, a basic assessment of governmental forest policies and related literature on policy approaches for influencing forest use does reveal that governmental forest regulation aims to influence the target group towards pursuing SFM goal. In this regard, McGinley (2008) suggests that the target group can be the forest owners and users.

Figure 1 below is a conceptual framework demonstrating that forest management policies (governmental regulation) are expected to influence forest user behavior that may eventually result into the enhancement of SFM.

Figure 1: Relationship between forest management policies and SFM



Source: McGinley (2008, p.8)

As McGinley (2008) has illustrated in the figure 1 above, there is an anticipated linkage between forest policy, target group behavior, and the sustainability of forest management. Therefore, according to McGinley (2008) evaluation of the effectiveness of the forest management policy requires the identification of specific variables and their causal connections to SFM. Using this framework, the effectiveness of Malawi's forestry regulatory regime towards achieving SFM will be assessed.

2.4 Policy process and implementation

There are several definitions that apply to public policy. According to Althus et al (2013), who cite Fenna (2004, p.3) public policy is what governments decide to do, why and with what consequences. Basically, a decision which government can make towards solving a particular problem that comes out to be of public concern is a policy. In this regard, the dynamics involved in order to determine who gets what, when and how is referred to as a policy process (McGinley, 2008). Althus et al (2013) have depicted the policy process model in eight stages which are issue identification, policy analysis, policy instrument, consultation, coordination, decision, implementation and evaluation. In this regard, policy process underpins the steps undertaken towards having the public concern sorted out successfully and this is also referred as policy cycle. However, it is argued that not all the steps are followed in pattern of this order and that the process itself can also represent an endless cycle (McGinley, 2008; Althus et al., 2013).

McGinley (2008) has depicted the policy cycle based on Kraft (2004) model who reflected it in six stages. As McGinley has cited Kraft (2004), policy process model in this context has a problem definition and agenda setting as the first stage of the cycle. In relation to this, McGinley (2008) has related this first stage to forest degradation and deforestation and how these issues rise to the political agenda. The second stage is policy formulation which the author has related

to design and draft of policy goals for promoting SFM. Policy legitimation is another stage which according to McGinley (2008) this can be related to formal enactment of SFM policies through legislation. The fourth stage is policy implementation and this is connected with provision and assignment of forest administration resources and personnel. Furthermore, this stage includes designing programs for putting SFM policy into effect (McGinley, 2008, p.10). Policy successes and failures stage which is like evaluation stage in framework of Althus et al (2013) is the fifth stage. As McGinley has exemplified the stages with forest sector, policy evaluation stage involves assessing the implementation of SFM policy to determine if the policy has born the desired effects as planned. Finally, policy change which is the sixth stage can entail termination or modification of SFM goals. This stage is dependent on the information and results from evaluation stage (McGinley, 2008).

“Once a decision has been made, the policy cycle moves to implementation” (Althus et al 2013, p.169). Althus et al (2013) have further argued that beautiful policies, blueprints of strategies and actions can be meaningless if they are not implemented. Makinde (2005) has also argued that a beautiful blueprint of a programme does not translate into a success if it has a defective implementation arrangement. This shows that implementation is one critical stage of the policy process as well as success of the whole policy.

According to Makinde (2005, p.63), “policy implementation refers to the activities that are carried out in the light of established Policies”. This process can also involve converting financial, material, technical and human inputs into outputs (goods and services) which ultimately may lead to the achievement of policy objectives and goals (Makinde, 2005). Policy implementation can be undertaken through top down which involves use of hierarchical structures of the government in delivery of the services or can involve bottom up approach whereby network of actors and people from the grassroots (policy target group) are adequately involved (Haigh, 2012). It may also involve a combination of these two models (Haigh, 2012; Althus et al., 2013). In recognition of the importance of implementation, Althus et al (2013) have emphasized that implementation should be given a lot of attention at every stage of the policy cycle so as to avoid implementation failures. Furthermore, examination of the policy implementation can be undertaken through the use of key variables such as policy and its goals,

implementing agencies and their mechanisms of enforcing policy and legislation compliance, policy target group like the forest users, and implementation environment or context (McGinley, 2008).

Therefore, unpacking policy implementation from the perspective of these variables is useful for understanding, why, how and in what context can both governmental and non-governmental policies produce successful results or not (McGinley, 2008). A lot of scholars of policy implementation have argued that problems in implementation may arise from many angles. For instance, implementation problems may arise from poor delivery methods of the policy, overambitious timeframes, resources being not available when required, inappropriate skills or capability for the program, no involvement of the policy target group, poor planning, inadequate equipment, lack of funds and inadequate human resources(Althus et al., 2013; Makinde, 2005; Develin, 2010).

In this regard, assessing the effectiveness of the Malawi's forest regime may also involve examining the capability of the agencies (especially forestry department) in implementing the forestry policies. This may also entail examining the other policy implementation variables as outlined by McGinley (2008).

2.5 Current Situation of SFM in Malawi

The importance of forests and trees to Malawian livelihoods is so enormous (MEOR, 2010). People depend on forestry resources for provision of construction materials, health, financial capital, firewood and for religious ceremonies (MEOR, 2010). Therefore, managing forest resources in a sustainable way so as to perpetuate all these benefits is the best approach to pursue. In order to determine the success of forest governance regime in generating SFM, McGrath (2007), see also Maguire (2010) and Tucker (2009) there should be an improvement in the state of forest conditions which can be reflected in the increasing forest cover. Maguire (2010) has further added criteria like existence of clear measurable goals and objectives with targets as well as evidence of implementation of SFM. This section will therefore, assess whether some practices reflecting SFM have been implemented and challenges they have been facing.

Prior to this, an outline of the current policy that covers forestry industry will be provided. This will be in the context of identifying the changes historically that have attempted to cover forestry policy, agencies involved in forest policy implementation, their structure and how they actually implement the policy.

2.5.1 Evolution of forest policy and historical changes in Malawi

Globally, there has been an evolution of forestry policies and this has occurred in order to consider the changing needs of the societies, as well as to reflect regional and global concerns (Kowero et al., 2003). In Malawi, forestry policies have evolved from simple unwritten intentions and statements that served a very small number of society's requirements to today's comprehensive and broad ranging expressions of multiple-stakeholder expectations (Kowero et al., 2003).

There have been several elements that have influenced the evolution of forestry policies in Malawi. While Kowero et al (2003) have mentioned changing needs of the societies as one of the drivers of the evolution; other key elements include: sustainable forest management concept (FAO, 2003, Maguire, 2010), governance issues and climate change (Maguire, 2010), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which was for dealing with the global problem of alien Species that threaten biological diversity (Kowero et al., 2003).

Pre-colonial period

Present forestry policies have evolved from unrecorded regulations during the pre-colonial era thus before 1891(Jumbe et al., 2000). During this period, traditional leaders regulated the extraction of forestry resources and certain forest species with medicinal value were highly preserved (Jumbe et al., 2000). Furthermore, traditional leaders could also enforce preservation of trees that were deemed to be in sacred places (Jumbe et al., 2000).

Colonial period (1891-1963)

During the colonial era, forest policies were in the form of ordinances (Kamoto et al., 2009). The first forest ordinance was passed in 1911 which used to allow conversion of forest lands into forest reserves (Komoto et al., 2009). During this period, the Forest Department constituted the

state forest reserves which were free from rights of users and any native interests (Maumbeta et al., 2010). As Kamoto et al (2009) report, scientific arguments were used to shape the forestry policies. For instance forest reserves were created with the objective of controlling soil erosion and forest degradation (Komoto et al., 2009). Furthermore, the 1926 ordinance provided for the launch of communal forest scheme and this involved creation of Village Forest Areas (VFAs) which Tribal Authority (TA) had set aside (Maumbeta et al., 2010; Kamoto et al., 2009). According to Komoto et al (2009, p.3) “the objective of the scheme was a provision to each village of an area of forest woodland from which villagers could obtain poles and firewood.” By 1940, a total of 69,000 hectares of VFAs were set aside, under the control of local headmen and for the purpose of local use. Forest Guards were placed at each TA to regulate extraction of *Khaya anthotheca* (Mbawa) and *Pterocarpus angolensis* (Mlombwa) trees (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Therefore, it is argued that the shift in policy towards community forest marked the beginning of effective decentralization of forest resources management to local communities (Kamoto et al., 2009; Kowero et al., 2003). As Kamoto et al (2009) report, during this period, village headmen had powers to make decisions on forest resources under their jurisdiction (Komoto et al., 2009).

It has also been argued that during this period, there was clear benefit sharing arrangement between government and local communities/local councils. For instance, “the proportion of revenue share was 75% going to the local council and 25% to the central government” (Mauambeta et al., 2010, p.4). More importantly, there was colonial fund that was being used for paying salaries and expenses for local TA councils (Mauambeta et al., 2010). This arrangement was a very good source of revenue to the councils for local development and was a motivation towards stewardship of the forest resources. However, results of the afforestation and reforestation programmes during this period were unsatisfactory because of unsuitability of the planting sites for the (exotic) species (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

Post colonial Era (Independence Period-1964-1993)

During independence period, Forestry Department took over responsibility of protection, control and management of customary lands from local councils (Mauambeta et al., 2010). According to Feder (1997), policies during this period were top down in nature. Furthermore, the focus of the

Department shifted towards establishing industrial plantations for national timber self-sufficiency (Mauambeta et al., 2010; Feder 1997). Later, some policy changes were made during this period and these included the shifting of the Forest Guards from Tribal Authority (TA) areas into the forest reserves. The Colonial fund which used to support local councils had also stopped and because of this, TAs could no longer protect and manage their VFAs (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Furthermore, “the Department was under pressure of generating more revenue for the state under the Appropriation-in aid financing arrangement” (Mauambeta et al., 2010,p.2). In an effort to raise more revenue, the Customary Land Division within Forestry Department was established (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Its responsibility was to oversee extraction of royalties for timber and firewood harvesting from customary land (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Following this, a large scale of extraction of timber and firewood happened in VFAs and individual’s fields (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Surprisingly, the revenue share was also reversed with 75% going to the central government and 25% to local councils and even the 25% was not being paid (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

Eventually, forestry staff began to lose their popularity and they were seen as being responsible for forest degradation (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Kamoto et al (2009) also observed that during this period, the government shifted its focus on agriculture and as a result there was expansion of agriculture into commercial estate sector. The shift contributed to the diversion of extension services from forestry sector to agriculture (Komoto et al., 2009). In relation to this, Mauambeta et al., (2010, p.4) report that, “forestry extension became the responsibility of Agricultural Extension workers, who had little knowledge about forestry, and hence, had little interest in advising local people on management of VFAs”. This phenomenon therefore, contributed to the poor management of forest resources hence affecting the forest cover (Komoto et al., 2009). As the author adds, about 80 percent of the village forest areas which were created during colonial period were cleared for agriculture. By 1963 about 5,108 VFAs covering 105,496 hectares were established and by 1994 only 1,182 VFAs were remaining (Komoto et al., 2009). This alarming deforestation rate triggered restrictive laws which were extended to customary land and this put local communities at a situation of wood energy crisis (Komoto et al., 2009).

On the other hand, during the same period particularly in the 1980s, “National Tree Planting Programme was initiated” (Mauambeta et al., 2010, p.2). The programme focused on promoting the fast growing exotic species (Mauambeta et al., 2010, p.2). As the authors report, free seedlings and tree planting bonuses were being provided and these were used as incentives to encourage tree planting in rural areas.

1994-2010: Multi-party democracy

During this period, multiparty democracy euphoria was associated with freedom to destroy timber plantations and levels of charcoal production on both private and customary land increased (Mauambeta et al., 2010). For instance, Ndirande Timber Plantation in Blantyre disappeared within two years after attaining the multiparty system of government (in 1994) (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Furthermore, during the same period, the public service underwent some reforms which included massive layoffs of general workers particularly in the forest plantations (Mauambeta et al., 2010). As a result, there were several incidences of fire affecting the plantation (Mauambeta et al., 2010). In addition, tree planting subsidies and bonuses were phased out, and seedling production was handed over to local communities (Mauambeta et al., 2010). However, the department continues to provide seed and other inputs on a limited scale (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

Realising that local communities have been sidelined from management of forest resources, efforts to return ownership of trees and forests to local communities were initiated (Mauambeta et al., 2010). For example, the VFA system through setting up of Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs) was revived (Mauambeta et al., 2010). As the authors report, by 2002 about 4,878 VNRMCs were formed of which 2,732 (56%) were reported to be active (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Furthermore, the National Forest Policy (1996) and Forest Act (1997) have also provisions that empower local people to have full ownership of trees grown and managed by them on customary land (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Local people can also extract wood and non-wood products without a license for subsistence use. The current forestry Act (1997) has also specific provisions which recognize community participation, co-management and private sector participation as critical ingredients for sustainable forest management. District Councils, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are also encouraged to provide

forestry extension services as well as take part in the establishment and management plantations (Forest Act, 1997).

However, regulation of timber and firewood has remained the responsibility of the Department of Forest. This is achieved through the system of royalties and in this arrangement, the department claims 20% of the revenue (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Mauambeta et al (2010) have also reported that licensing and law enforcement to control harvesting and transport of forest produce remains the role of the department (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

Therefore, forestry policies during pre-colonial era recognized the need for the participation of local communities. During the independence period, policies prohibited community participation in forestry issues. Nevertheless, during the current multiparty era, forestry policies recognize the need for community participation on forest affairs and this can be argued as a replication of colonial period forestry policy. Private sector and civil society organizations are also encouraged to participate in forest management activities.

2.5.2 Implementation of Forestry policy and related Agencies

Based on the historical path of forest policy in Malawi, it is observed that implementation of these policies has been evolving from top down, bottom up then to compound approaches. According to Haigh (2012,p.118), “top down model of policy implementation entails a hierarchical control by elected policy elites and the more instrumental role of administrators to implement the policy as intended. On the other hand, bottom up approach originates from the view that policy implementation requires examination of the network of actors involved in the delivery of the policy initiative”. Compound approach is basically various hybridised models which apply the elements of top down and bottom up (Haigh, 2012, p.118). In Malawi, implementation of the policy and Act was based on top down approach during the one party system and bottom up during the multiparty era. In relation to this, Jere (2008) has argued that changes of government administration from colonial period to the present have influenced the way policies should be implemented in Malawi. Furthermore, change of leadership regimes has either called for restructuring of the forestry department or shifting it to another Ministry. In this

regard activities and institutional set up of the department have usually been dynamic to suit the interests and leadership style of the regime of that time (Jere, 2008).

Since its establishment in 1942, the forest department has kept on changing from one ministry to another. According to Feder (1997), Malawi's formalized forestry program was activated in the 1950s to redress deforestation. Later, the department was merged with the Ministry of Natural Resources and during that time, the colonial government took a more active role in forestry matters (Feder, 1997). In relation to this, five more divisions were created within the forestry department to promote better management, control and responsiveness to regional forestry needs (Feder, 1997). The divisions created were Forestry Development Division, the Viphya Plantation Division, the Forestry Support Services Division, Forestry Extension Services Division and the Forest Sector Technical Coordination Unit (Feder, 1997, p.26).

Just after Independence in 1964, Malawi's first commitment on forest matters was shown through the creation of the 1964 Forest Act which called for large scale afforestation and conservation of forest resources (Feder 1997, p.31). In 1984, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Department of Forestry, Bunda College of Agriculture, Malawi's Tobacco Research Authority, and Department of Land Husbandry formed an agro forestry steering committee that reviewed the 1964 Forest Act and recommended some changes (Feder, 1997). The revised Act included some provisions that forbid cutting trees on river banks, forest reserves and game reserves. Furthermore, the committee encouraged local afforestation, village woodlot programs and urban plantation programs. It also encouraged the use of fuel wood and poles from customary land for charge or by license from forest reserves (Feder, 1997).

However, implementation of these initiatives has been affected by continued shifting of the department from one ministry to another. Jere (2008) has argued that coordination of most forestry activities has been disrupted by this movement. In the 1970s, the department was under the Ministry of Agriculture, then Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. It was then moved to the Ministry of Energy and Mines and later Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (Jere, 2008). In 2012, the department was shifted to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change management. Currently, it is under the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and

Environment. At some instances, Forestry Department has been in the same Ministry with the Environmental Affairs, Wildlife and Fisheries Departments, thereby allowing for some level of coordination and linkages (Jere, 2008). When the department of Forestry was placed in the Ministry of Energy and Mines, while the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) was under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the Wildlife Department was under the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Jere (2008) observed that the separation of natural resource related departments reduced the avenues for coordination and linkages. Some services which could be provided by a sister department freely, when placed to another ministry, the same services could be paid for. For instance, Jere (2008) pointed out that Forestry Department has to hire armed wildlife guards for the protection of forests which previously wasn't the case when they were in the same ministry.

According to Jere (2008), implementation of the current forest policy is pursued through four functional units of the department which include the following:

- Development Services unit which deals with forestry plantations and protected reserves;
- Extension Services which deals with promotion of forest conservation, management and training;
- Planning which is responsible for policy issues, monitoring and evaluation as well as research; and
- Administration which tackles general administration, personnel issues and financial management.

The Department also runs a Forestry Research Institute (FRIM) based in Zomba and a training institution called Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife based in Dedza district. The College is run jointly with the Department of Wildlife (Jere, 2008). The Department is headed by the Director of Forestry who is supported by three Deputy Directors for Administration, Research and Plantations (Jere, 2008). In this arrangement, planning, training and extension services are under the Deputy Director for Administration. Coordination of research activities including the FRIM is under the Deputy Director for Research (Jere, 2008). According to Malawi Government-Forestry decentralization Report (2006), the department executes the forestry policy

through a Multisectoral and partnership approach with proper guidelines and standards for the partners. An outline of the forestry policy implementation with involvement of several players is attached as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 is the decentralized structure.

Over the years, the department has undergone devolution. This has been a result of the critique of top down approach of which several studies revealed to have failed. Furthermore, a lot of studies have revealed that achievement of SFM goal can be a nightmare if local communities are sidelined in the conservation and management of forests (see Mauambeta et al., 2010). Therefore, the department has its central office in Lilongwe and administers the forestry policy through its three regional offices (north, centre and south of Malawi) (Jere, 2008). By 2004, the department was further decentralized to local district councils. Currently, there are 28 district forestry offices which undertake various functions and responsibilities for the districts and communities. The District Forestry Offices work under the coordination of the District Council and are guided by District Development Plans. Detailed responsibilities of the department under decentralized arrangement have been highlighted and attached as Appendix 3. At grassroots level, VNRMCs structures are used. However, implementation of forestry policy at district council level has been ineffective due to limited staff capacity and financial resources (Jere, 2008). It is further argued that it is decentralization on paper not practical since financial resources are not adequately provided to the district forestry offices to support them implement forestry activities under their jurisdiction.

Another dimension through which forestry policies have been developed, reviewed or implemented in Malawi is through the use of sector working groups. According to Malawi Government (2007), in order to facilitate implementation of government development policies including those related to forestry sector, in 2007, government set up sector working groups (SWGs). In this context, forestry department falls under Natural resources Sector Working Group which is chaired by Norwegian Development Agency of Malawi (Malawi Government, 2007). “The SWGs are used as a forum for negotiations, review of policy implementation, policy dialogue and agreement of plans and undertakings amongst government, development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and private sector”(Malawi Government , 2007, p.4). They also strengthen mutual accountability between government and various development

players. The presence of this forum which meets quarterly enables different actors in the forest sector to share their experiences, lessons and challenges they face in the course of forestry policy implementation. They also discuss key performance indicators for their programmes (Malawi Government, 2007). The use of this forum can be related to managerial accountability under new public management. As Newell and Bellour (2002,p.9) report, “managerial accountability is concerned with tracking inputs, outputs, outcomes and results of the program with involvement of neutral, impartial experts drawn from non state actors”. In principal, this ensures that financial resources are spent efficiently on the agreed actions and that the program has achieved its expected results (Newell and Bellour, 2002). Use of SWGs can also be related to bottom up approach of policy implementation since a network of actors is involved in this forum.

Key Forestry Sector Stakeholders

The department of forest has been collaborating with several agencies which are government, private, faith and civil society based (Jere, 2008). The collaboration has mainly been based on implementation of joint programmes or being under the same ministry (Jere, 2008).For several years, Forestry has been working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture mainly on areas of agroforestry and afforestation. This collaboration has helped forestry to network with other international Organizations like World Agro forestry Centre and through this link; they have managed to draw their strength from the complementarity of the resources, capabilities and knowledge (Jere, 2008).

Furthermore, according to Jere (2008), the Department has also been working with Department of Wildlife and National Parks particularly when they were in the same Ministry. Jere (2008) observed that currently, the collaboration is weak because the two Departments are in different Ministries with different. For instance, by virtue of being in different ministries, the Forestry Department has to hire armed wildlife guards for the protection of forests which previously wasn't the case. However, it is observed that the scope of working together is still there based on ecotourism in the forest reserves (Jere, 2008).

One other key agency which forestry has been collaborating with is the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD). Basing on functionality, EAD is considered as a coordination body for

environmental issues including forestry matters but not as an implementer (Jere, 2008). Therefore EAD has been instrumental mainly on linking Forestry Department to donor funded projects and programmes. Jere (2008) also observed that this has been working well when the two Departments are under the same Ministry. It is worrisome that whenever any political regime comes into power, there is a shifting of departments from one ministry to another which mostly disrupts the coordination momentum. As Jere (2008) observed, the incessant separation of EAD and Forestry to different Ministries has negatively affected implementation of joint projects and programmes.

The Department has also been working with National Herbarium and Botanical Gardens mainly on areas of research and monitoring (Jere, 2008, p.55). It was also observed that their collaboration arrangements have some problems because the two agencies belong to different lines of authority. Jere 2008 pointed out that since the National Herbarium is now a Parastatal organization, coordination of joint activities has been problematic.

The Department has also been working with public universities especially the University of Malawi, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Mzuzu University. As Jere (2008) reports, the collaboration has been mainly on training and capacity building (Jere, 2008). It is encouraging to note that this relationship has been growing over the years (Jere, 2008).

It is also encouraging to note that over the years, the department has increased its collaboration with private companies like Chitakale Tea Estate on free hold forests approach (private) (MEOR, 2010), Wood Industry Company (WICO) on co-management arrangements and Raiply (Malawi Government, 2008). The collaboration between Raiply and Forestry Department is based on 20,000 hectares concession arrangement (Malawi Government, 2008). In relation to co-management between the department and WICO, it is observed that WICO has the responsibility of undertaking the replanting and silvicultural work to ensure that there is a sustainable long-term supply of wood. In this arrangement, the company recovers its costs by obtaining saw logs (Malawi Government, 2008). The department has therefore the responsibility of monitoring these arrangements (Malawi Government, 2008).

Furthermore, the department has also increased its collaboration with civil society organizations (CSO) as partners. These CSOs have mainly been involved in policy formulation and implementation (Malawi Government -SWG, 2007; MGDS II, 2011). However, their many functions have been around policy advocacy activities (Mauambeta et al., 2010). Prominent CSOs which the department has been working with include Coordination for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE); Wildlife and Environmental society of Malawi (WESM); Concern Universal; CARE International Malawi; and Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (Jere, 2008).

2.4.3 SFM Initiatives in Malawi

Several studies have revealed that during independence era, the state used to manage forest resources with little or no involvement of other stakeholders, particularly the local communities (Phiri, 2008; Mauambeta et al., 2010 see also Komoto et al., 2009). As a result, these communities and other stakeholders had no rights, access and economic incentives to manage and use forests (Phiri, 2008). Therefore, it has been recognised that sustainable forest management cannot be achieved without involving the communities and other key stakeholders (who might also be the forest users) (Phiri 2008). In pursuit of sustainable forest management goal in Malawi, a number of initiatives have been undertaken. One such initiative has been co-management which is also called community management (Jumbe & Angelson, 2009).

According to Jumbe and Angelson (2009), co-management is a joint management of forest resources between the local communities (local forest users) and government. On the other hand, this may also involve collaboration between government department and private company like that of Forestry Department and WICO. However, the most depicted co-management in Malawi's forestry literature is the one that involves partnership between communities and government towards managing forest resources. This approach originates from the argument that community management is an efficient institution because of its strong ability to prevent excessive exploitation of community owned resources (Ostrom, 1990). Basically, Co-management arrangement has had two originations which include locally originated or introduced as integral part of decentralization. However, the co-management initiative in Malawi has been under second category (Jumbe & Angelson, 2009).

Currently, under ‘Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods programme’, 12 Districts are implementing co-management in State forests (MEOR, 2010). However, according to Jumbe and Angelson (2009), the roll-out has been slow because participatory management of resources as a new innovation has not demonstrated success in areas of implementation. Jumbe and Angelson (2009) have argued that there is low incentive for more communities to participate in this arrangement because currently government takes 70 percent of the cash income from joint sales of forest reserves products and only 30 percent is left for the community.

On the other hand, Jumbe and Angelson (2009) have pointed out about the role of social capital and social pressure in improving participation and compliance. For instance, Chimaliro differs from Liwonde because Chimaliro is socially and culturally homogeneous as its communities are of the same tribe thus Tumbuka and the arrangement is integrated into traditional institutions. This entails that building on local or indigenous institutions can be one of the ingredients for successful governance of forest resources. Hence, communities adjacent to Chimaliro Forest Reserve had expressed some satisfaction with co-management arrangement and wished that the whole of Malawi would be under co-management so as to protect the forests (Jumbe and Angelson 2009).

To promote co-management, Jumbe and Angelson (2009) have argued that incentivising the communities from financial perspective is a better approach as well. However, Zulu (2013,p.1936) has argued that “non cash forest ecosystem service of rainfall regulation and rights based, issues of equitable access to forest resources including intergenerational equity have the top most motivating factors for co-management despite financial incentives being important”. One important factor to consider in partnerships between communities and government or company is mutual respect (World Bank, 2009). According to World Bank (2009), partnerships can be fruitful if the sides can deal with each other respectfully and that no side is considered inferior to another. Furthermore, it is important that when agreements are reached, both sides should respect the agreement and have similar expectations of the outcomes (World Bank, 2009). In this regard, it can be argued that success of co-management is also dependent on the clarity of the terms which both parties agree upon.

Furthermore, implementation of SFM practices in Malawi has been undertaken through the establishment and management of existing Industrial Plantations (MEOR, 2010). Ballet et al (2009, p.56) have argued that “management of natural resources by government has some advantages over local communities. It is argued that central government can relatively be free from social pressures that can be exerted by individuals locally in order to maximise their advantages from exploiting the resources because of their social distance from the users of the resources”. Furthermore, it is argued that government can also have more access to financial resources and information which can be helpful for improving the management of the forest resources (Ballet et al., 2009). Historically, Malawi government started establishing pine plantation for timber in the 1950s and Eucalyptus plantations for the purpose of bridging the gap between supply and demand for wood energy and poles (MEOR, 2010). Currently, Government of Malawi manages 90,000 hectares of plantations forests with Viphya Plantation being the largest (53,000 hectares). “Other plantations with coverage of 275,000 hectares are managed by Tea and Tobacco Estates and smallholder farmers” (MEOR, 2010, p.174). However, lack of human and financial resources as well as high demand for forest resources are affecting management of the plantations. In particular, Viphya plantations have been experiencing high incidences of fire (MEOR, 2010, p.174) which have rendered about 10,000 hectares being bare (MEOR, 2010).

Another practice related to sustainable forest management has been the promotion of participation of local communities in tree planting and forest management (MEOR, 2010). According to Kamoto et al (2009,p.1) “approaches to natural resources management emphasize the importance of involving local people and institutions in order to build capacity, limits cost and achieve environmental sustainability”. In this practice, Government, NGOs and the private sector support local communities and individuals in tree planting initiatives (MEOR, 2010). As MEOR (2010, p.174) reports, “these organisations do provide technical expertise, inputs and other incentives for tree planting”. However, only 60% of the planted trees do survive because of inadequate capacity to monitor the resource after planting (MEOR, 2010).

Furthermore, Kamoto et al (2009) have also pointed out that creation of Village Forest Areas (VFAs) in various communities is one type of SFM. This practice was provided for in the 1942 Forest Act (Cap 63.01) during the colonial era and was enforced in the 1997 Forest Act. Government support formation of village forest areas (VFAs) as a sustainable forest management approach (MEOR, 2010). In this arrangement, Village Headmen (VHs) demarcate part of customary land for forest conservation and management (MEOR, 2010). “The village forest area is that area of the village that is to be actively managed by the community for its forest resources” (Malawi Government, 2003, p. 50). In this arrangement, “forest ownership and management responsibility get transferred to the community” (Malawi Government, 2003, p.50). The 1997 Forest Act makes provision for any village headman in consultation with the forestry department to designate an area for VFA to be managed and guided by a management plan and agreement signed at district council (MEOR, 2010, p.167). According to MEOR (2010), currently, there are 2,565 VFAs spread across the country. However, management of VFAs has been facing some challenges mainly related to land ownership. As MEOR (2010) points out, there have been cases of land designated for VFAs being reclaimed for cultivation by the previous owners.

Other SFM practices have been establishment of community-based forest management (CBFM) to areas where they are nonexistent and strengthening the CBFMs in the context of areas where they were already established (MEOR, 2010). According to Ballet et al (2010), community management of natural resources implies that resources are mainly managed by communities. Ballet et al (2010) have pointed out that management of natural resources by the communities themselves have one particular advantage thus communities have ability to access detailed information rapidly about the state of the resources which allows them to respond and adjust more quickly and their adjacent position to the forest resources may enable them to monitor any progress of the resources. Furthermore, “the cost of implementing and monitoring management rules is lower as a result of the social capital available to local communities arises from their ability to access”(Ballet et al 2010,p.56).

In supporting CBFM, government supports development of effective institutions at village and district level to manage forest resources. In this regard, village natural resources management committee (VNRMCs) have been established to spearhead forest conservation and management

on customary land and forest reserves (MEOR, 2010). According to Mazur and Stakhanov (2008, p. 412) “the aim of CBFM is to assure sustainable production of multiple goods and services for socio economic development, provision of livelihood, food security and environmental stability”. More importantly, the 1997 Malawi’s Forest Act included a provision for management of these forests by Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs). Guidelines on management of these forests were also formulated. However, Mazur and Stakhanov (2008,p.412) have argued that CBFM produces limited results without guaranteeing sustainability because of limited participation and ownership levels of the communities.

According to Jumbe and Angelson (2009), forests are not only grown on the soil but also on institutions. The authors have argued that SFM can be achieved when there are strong and able institutions in place. Therefore, creation and strengthening of institutions can be one way of implementing SFM. In Malawi, implementation of this practice has encapsulated staff training, acquiring necessary equipment for running of the offices and management of the forests, reviewing the Forest Act and Policy, formulating and reviewing forest rules and regulations, national guidelines and standards for sustainable forest management (MEOR, 2010). Furthermore, Government has been providing training at certificate and diploma level at Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife. However, implementation of these initiatives is affected by lack of adequate financial and teaching resources for the college (MEOR, 2010).

In summary, a number of SFM practices have been taking place in Malawi. But their progress has been slow due to a number of challenges such as, weak monitoring systems, inadequate financial and human resources; weak intersectoral institutions and weak enforcement mechanism. MEOR has also reported that conflicting policies happen to be one of the factors contributing to the slowness in progress of SFM. For instance, it is reported that due to farm subsidy program, there has been agricultural expansion resulting in destruction of the forest resources and in some cases encroachment of the forest protected areas (MEOR, 2010; Kambani, 2005). The thesis therefore draws on SFM practices, policy context and institutional conditions to further assess how best Malawi’s forest regime effectiveness can be improved.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research methodology with emphasis on design of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.1.1 Design

A Research Design is the overall plan for collecting data in order to answer the research question or questions and how the data will be analysed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009, p.695).

3.2.1 Methods

3.2.1a Data Collection Strategies

Desk research of secondary data was used in this study. According to Jana (2009) one key advantage of this approach is that collection of relevant documents ensures the availability of relevant information and data that was gathered using comprehensive research methods which would be difficult for the researcher to handle them logistically.

In order to explore the effectiveness of Malawi's forestry regulatory regime towards achieving SFM, the researcher used one main method, namely literature/document review. Therefore, the study involved a comprehensive literature review where policies, legislations, journals and Malawi government reports related to forest governance and SFM were critically analyzed. This therefore, entailed critical evaluation of a range of documents that tackle forest regulation systems and their pursuit of SFM practices. The rationale for using this instrument in data collection method was related to costs and time implications.

3.3.1b Data Analysis

Ezzy (2006:43) also reports that "data analysis is the process of analyzing the evidence that is produced from the research". In relation to this, policy and institutional conditions for SFM were examined from the context of existence of clear goals and objectives, capacity of forestry policy implementing agency and policy implementation approach. Furthermore, in order to understand the content of the forest policy or legislative frameworks, the researcher examined the Forestry

Policy, Forestry Act, National Forestry Programme and Community Based Forest Management policies. This was to explore how SFM was conceptualized through these policies. This involved identifying a number of phrases and words relating to SFM. Then an examination of the context in which these terms were used was undertaken (with major focus on the terminologies used to promote SFM).

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section the study findings are presented and discussed. Where possible and applicable, the findings have been supported by extracts from the literature. The first part of this chapter shows the findings under each theme and sub-theme including quotations from the literature followed by the discussion of the findings which include the implications of the findings to enhancement of the Malawi's forest regime.

4.1 Main institutions involved in forest regulation in Malawi

When attempting to assess the effectiveness of the Malawi's forest regulatory regime towards achieving SFM, it is necessary to get a grasp of the key institutions involved in the forest sector at national, district and local levels in Malawi. According to Mauambeta et al (2010), the government institution responsible for forest management is the Forestry Department (FD). The key functions of FD include forest reserve management, forest policy development and planning, plantation management, training, research and extension. In terms of its legitimacy, the office of the Director of Forestry is created under Part II section 4 of the 1997 Forestry Act (Sibale and Banda, 2004).

Furthermore, the Department has its Headquarters in Lilongwe; Forest Research Institute of Malawi based in Zomba; Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife located in Dedza; Forestry Plantations, located at Chikangawa; three Regional Forest Offices (North, Centre and South); and 28 District Forestry Offices, performing dual functions of reserve and plantation management as well as forest extension services under the mandate of district councils. The main local village level institution responsible for forest management is the Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRMC) (Mauambeta et al., 2010). The FD is also legally mandated to promote participatory forestry, facilitate community participation through formation and capacity building of VNRMCs and promoting empowerment of communities (Sibale and Banda, 2004). In this regard, the FD as the custodian of the Forestry Policy does represent central Government in the conduct of forestry activities (Sibale and Banda, 2004). It is therefore, the lead player in promotion of good forest governance and any developments therein have

significant influences on the achievement of the forest sector objectives/goals (Sibale and Banda, 2004).

The management of the sector is also guided by various pieces of policy and regulatory frameworks which include the National Forest Policy, 1996; National Forest Programme, 2001; a Community Based Forest Management Supplement policy, 2003; the Forestry Act, 1997; Standards and Guidelines for Participatory forest in Malawi, 2005(SGPM) and MGDS II. In addition to these instruments, Forestry (Community Participation) Rules, 2001 and Forestry (Amendment) Rules 2003 were also enacted (Maumbeta et al., 2010). According to Kambewa and Utila (2008), forest activities are controlled through the issuance of licences and conveyance certificates and the Forestry Act allows for co-management agreements between the Department of Forestry and local communities.

4.2 Effectiveness of the regulatory regime in context of SFM

According to McGrath (2007) environmental regimes can be judged as effective if they improve the state of the environment itself. According to Maguire (2010), a criteria for assessing effectiveness of the forest regime involves assessing the existence of clear objectives, measurable goals with clear targets; evidence of good forest governance arrangements; evidence of implementation of the SFM and evidence in the improvement of forest conditions (a tangible improvement in the quality and quantity of forest ecosystems). Tucker (2009) also made a similar observation of McGrath (2007) and argued that successful forest governance encompasses conservation or expansion of forest cover.

Therefore, the following sub sections discuss the effectiveness of Malawi's forest regime through the criteria of the existence of clear objectives/ goals and expansion of forest cover.

4.2.1 Existence of clear and measured objectives/outcomes and goals

According to MGDS II, the goal of the forest sector is to enhance sustainable management of forest resources and their contribution to the national economy. Key objectives/outcomes of the sector include increased forest cover and increased incomes from forestry products and services (MGDS II, 2011, p.28). The existence of the goal and the objectives/outcomes is a good

development for the sector as it gives direction and focus in terms of curbing forest degradation, ensuring that there is an increased forest cover and promotion of social and economic forest values. Furthermore, the incorporation of the goal and objectives/outcomes in the country's national development policy thus the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy may illustrate the existence of political commitment from high level.

However, as McGrath and Maguire have pointed out, for these goals and objectives to be meaningful, they should be target oriented and have clear indicators. Subjecting the Malawi forest sector goal and outcomes to these criteria, it is observed that the forest goal has no clear indicators and no targets. As McGrath (2007) and Maguire (2010) highlighted, indicators and targets help in tracking the progress of what is happening and the direction that initiative is taking. Therefore, if these are not clearly presented in policy documents, direction is lost. Although there is a target and performance indicator for tracking improvement in the forest cover as one of the outcomes of the forestry policy, it is observed that there is no target for the other forestry policy outcome which is about increased forest income(see MGDS II, 2011).

In relation to forest cover, it is observed that as of 2010, the status of forest cover was 35.2% and the target in 2016 is 50% (MGDS II, 2011, p. 311). With regard to outcome number two thus of having increased income, as of 2010, the contribution of forest products and services to GDP was reported as 1.3% and the MGDS II has no target for 2016. It has also been observed that there has been inconsistency in the way forest cover indicator and targets are reflected in the Malawi Millennium Development Goals Report (MDG). For example, Millennium Development Goals Report for 2010 presented 50 percent as forest cover target for 2015 and MDGs Report for 2007 reflected 41.4 percent as forest cover target in the same year of 2015. This may indicate that there is no clear direction in the way these indicators and targets are designed and this can be attributed to leadership failure which Mauambeta et al (2010) also highlighted. In this regard, tracking progress on the increased income indicator can be problematic as there is no direction to pursue.

4.2.2 Improvement in the forest conditions (Results being realised)

4.2.2.1 Tree Replenishment versus deforestation

Table 1: Tree replenishment

Synopsis of Tree Replenishment	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08
Trees planted (million)	52.9	51.7	52.8
Area planted with trees (ha)	24,890	20,699	21,102
Estimated survival rate (%)	60	60	60
Area covered by surviving trees(ha)	14,934	12,419	12,661
Industrial plantation area rehabilitated(ha)	0	1,831	1,400
Estimated total deforestation rate(ha per annum)	32,000	50,000	50,000
Estimated net deforestation rate (ha per annum)	17,066	35, 750	35,939

Source: Yaron et al (2011)

In order to achieve improved forest conditions criterion, Malawi has undertaken several efforts. As table 1 above illustrates, the country has been facilitating tree planting exercise every year which starts from December and finishes in April. During this period, several players mainly the communities have been involved in tree planting exercise. As shown in the table above, it is estimated that more than 52 million seedlings which cover about 25 thousand hectares are planted every year. However, it has been estimated that the survival rate of planted trees is about 60% every year. Furthermore, the table also shows that deforestation rate per year surpasses the tree replenishment rate per year. For example Yaron et al (2011) have pointed out that while the area covered by surviving trees per year can be about 14 to 15 hectares, the deforestation rate tends to exceed this. As shown in the table, in 2002/03, the deforestation rate was about 32 thousand hectares per year and with passage of years, this has been increasing up to 50 thousand hectares per year while trees replenishment rate has been declining.

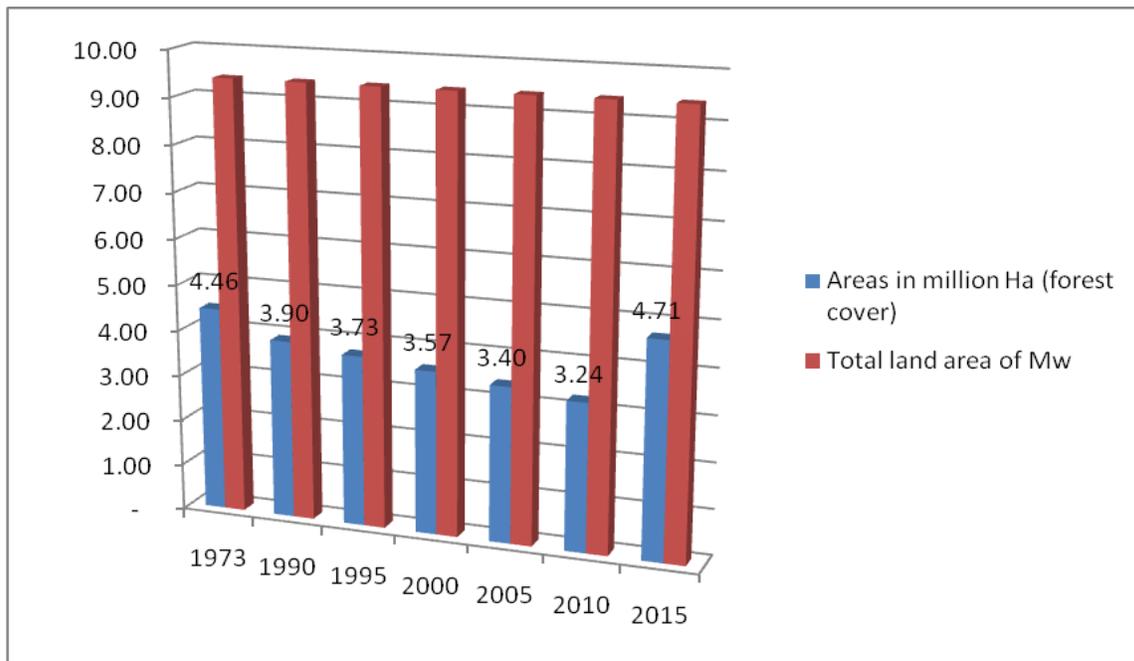
It is further observed that deforestation rate has been almost more than three times the area covered by surviving trees. It is also noted that even if all the replenished trees can survive, deforestation rate seems to outweigh the tree replenishment rate per year. In this regard, it is important to be serious when designing key performance indicators. The concept of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited) when designing indicators should be seriously adhered to. As shown in the table above, the area targeted with trees has always been

far behind the yearly deforestation rate and this may denote being unrealistic in setting the targets.

According to MEOR (2010) and Mauambeta et al (2010), lack of monitoring mechanisms on the planted trees has contributed to having many planted trees not surviving and at sometimes affected by bushfires. In relation to this, Malawi Government Report (2011) suggested that Malawi requires two interventions to check forest depletion and degradation. These interventions include forest protection and conservation and forest reforestation and afforestation. In both interventions, monitoring is a crucial activity. It is also observed that systematic approach is required to ensure there is an improvement of this situation. For instance, there is a need of considering more trees being planted, explore avenues of reducing the deforestation rate and establishment of proper monitoring mechanism of the planted trees. Furthermore, it is also more important to actually intensify targeting of the causal links of deforestation hence calling for multifaceted efforts to tackle this issue.

4.2.3. Trend of Forest cover in Malawi

Figure 2: Dynamics of forest cover in Malawi



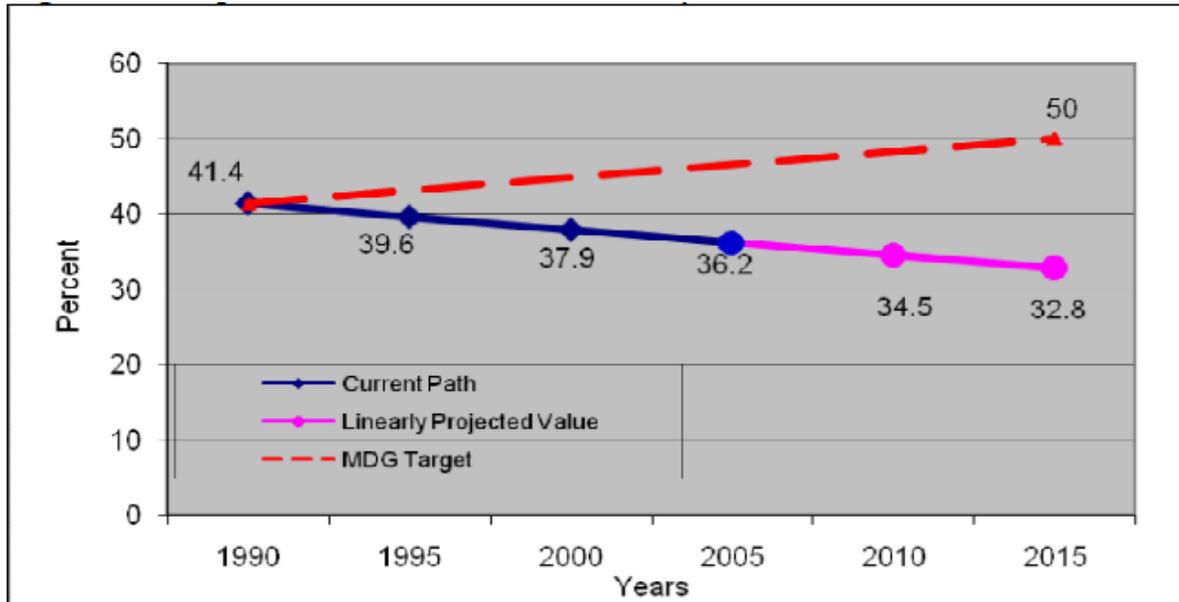
Source: own Calculation based on data from Yaron et al 2011

Figure 2 shows that the amount of land area covered by forest has been decreasing from about 4.5 million hectares in 1973 to 3.2 million hectares in 2010. The figure also shows that in Malawi, the Millennium Development Goals target by 2015 is 4.7 million hectares which is about 50% of the total land area. According to MDGs Report (2010), between 1990 and 2005, Malawi has lost about 494, 000 hectares of forest. Furthermore, MDG Report (2009) reported that the proportion of forest land area has been declining from 41% in 1990 to about 36% in 2006.

According to Malawi Government (2011) Report, Malawi as a country has had various policies and legislations in place to tackle deforestation which was estimated at 2.8% per annum. Despite their existence, the trend of forest cover instead of increasing has continued to decline. Therefore, subjecting this to the criteria of getting results, the Malawi's forest regulatory regime seems not to be on track hence ineffective. It is further estimated that the forest resources are currently declining at the rate of 2.6% per year leading to annual deforestation of 50,000 to 75,000 hectares of natural forests (Malawi Government 2011-Economic Report). It is further reported that "biomass satisfies about 83.4% of household energy demand hence contributing to high deforestation problem" (Malawi Government 2011-Economic Report, 2011, p.27). Household firewood and charcoal consumption was estimated at 7.5 million tons per year exceeding sustainable supply by 3.7 million tons (Malawi Government 2011-Economic Report, 2011). Therefore, looking at the current deforestation trend versus replenishment rate, the question to pose is, will Malawi forest regulatory regime achieve the 50% millennium development goals(MDGS) target by next year? In relation to this question, the following sub section will show some insights by highlighting a trajectory of current deforestation rate in relation to the MDG target of forest cover in 2015.

4.2.4. Trajectory of current deforestation rate versus MDG forest cover target in Malawi

Figure 3: Deforestation rate versus MDG Target in Malawi.



Source: MDGs Report 2010; cited from FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment, 1990, 2000 and 2005

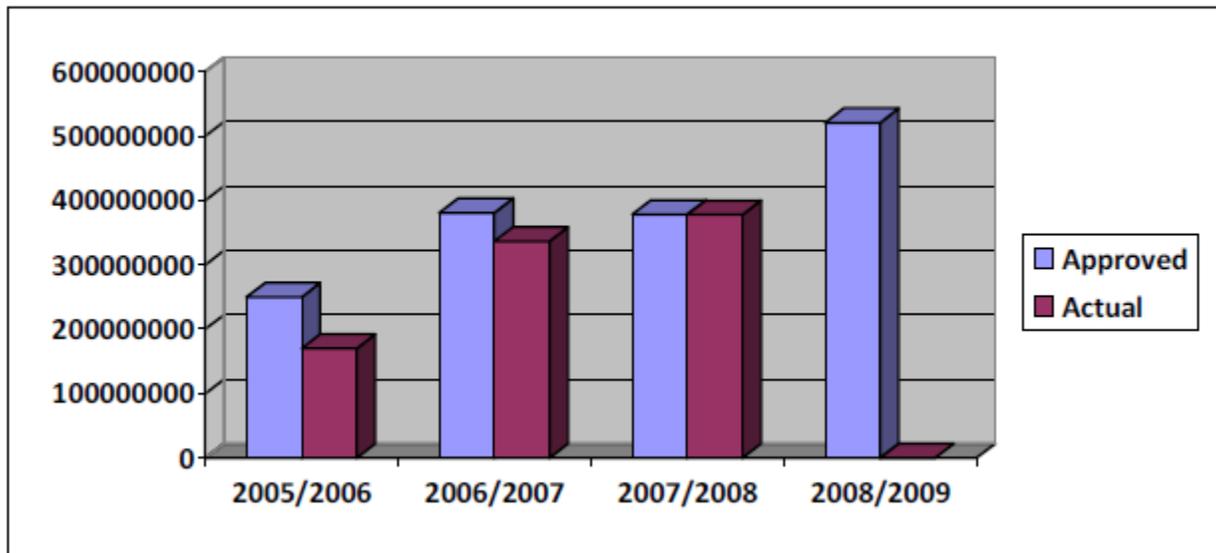
Figure 3 confirms that forest cover has continued to decline. The figure also shows that the proportion of land area covered by forest may continue to drop to about 33 percent. This shows that the current forestry interventions are not translating into reversing the rate of deforestation. Although the MDG forest cover target is 50 percent by 2015, it is observed that there is a divergence between the MDG target trajectory and the current path of forest cover. Relating this to the criteria of Tucker (2009) and McGrath (2007), if forest governance regime is effective, there should be an expansion of the forest cover. This entails that if Malawi forest regime was effective or on track, the current path of forest cover was supposed to be shifting towards the MDG trajectory. According to Malawi Government-Economic Report (2011), the current forest cover is about 27% and this implies that the regime may not afford to achieve the 50% target by 2015. However, it is important to know why the forest situation is like this.

According to MEOR (2010), policy implementation failure has been earmarked as the real issue rather than the policy itself. Mauambeta et al (2010) and Yaron et al (2011) also made a similar observation. Yaron et al (2011) reported that, there have been a lot of limitations in government capacity in policy implementation and legislation enforcement. For instance, the department of

forestry has been failing to curb the threats in tandem with provisions of the legal and regulatory instruments due to inadequate public resources (Yaron et al., 2011). It is further reported that the department has usually been severely underfunded; a situation that limits its ability to enforce rules and ensuring that there is proper management and sustainable utilization of forestry resources (Yaron et al., 2011). For instance, “the department received US\$ 0.44 million in 2008/09 against a proposed budget of US\$1.79 million that would be required to carry out its activities effectively” (Yaron et al., 2011, p.17). Furthermore, monitoring system for the sector is very weak due to inadequate human and physical resource capacity (equipment) (MEOR, 2010). In view of this situation, it can also be argued that the Malawi’s forest regime has weak or no enabling policy, legal and institutional conditions for generating SFM.

4.2.5. Inadequate budgetary allocation to Forestry Department

Figure 4: Budgetary allocation to FD



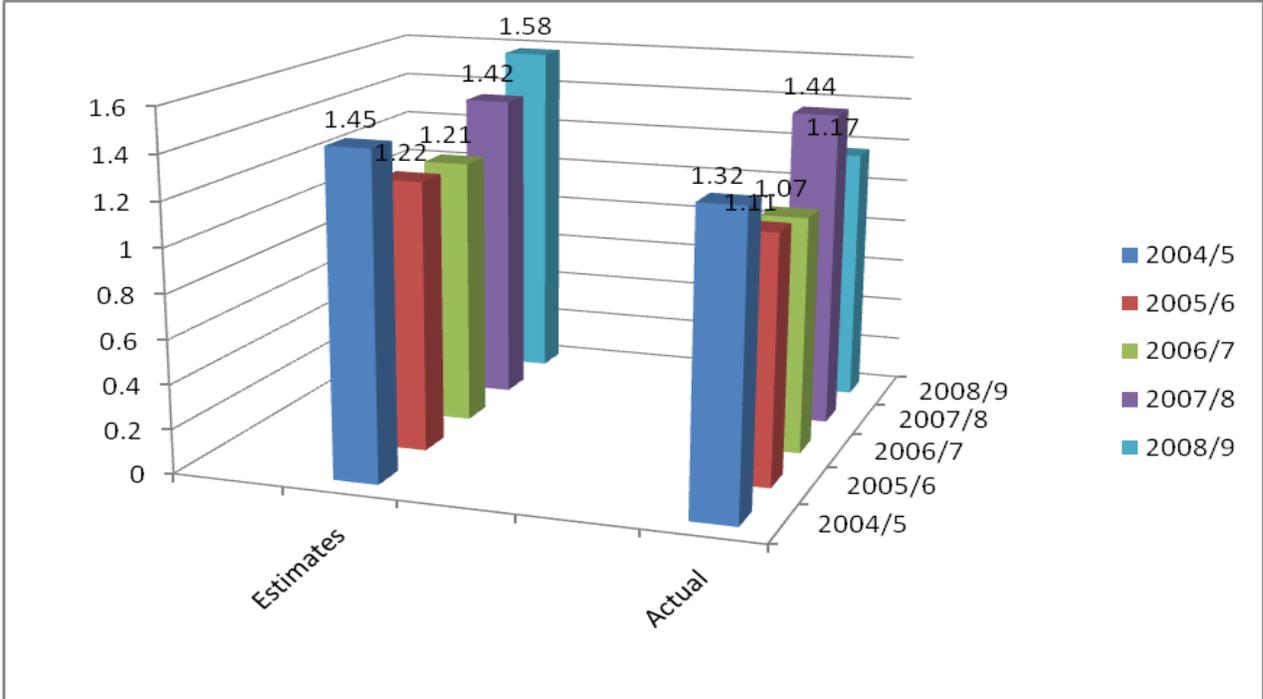
Source: Mauambeta et al 2010, P.19

Figure 4 above shows how serious the issue of financial resources has been affecting forestry policy implementation in Malawi. According to Mauambeta et al (2010), personal emoluments constituted a greater proportion of funds allocated to the Department and this is at the ratio of 9:1. This therefore, shows that of the 100 percent allocation to the department, 90 percent is for

salaries of its staff working at headquarters, regional offices, district offices, research and training, forest reserves, plantations and customary forest areas (Mauambeta et al., 2010). From the remaining 10 percent, a big share goes to extension services, conservation and development (Mauambeta et al., 2010). As the authors add, law enforcement is given the lowest share. As a result of this problem, implementation of many forestry programmes has been severely affected. Law enforcement activity which is critical has not been implemented adequately. In this regard, forest resources have continued to degrade due to policy implementation failure which is mainly caused by inadequate financial resources.

4.2.6. FOREST REVENUE (USD MILLION)

Figure 5: Forest Revenue



Source: calculated based on data from Yaron et al., 2011

As shown in the figure above, forest resources also generate revenue for the country. The figure above shows that forest resources revenue generation has been varying from year to year due to a number of factors. It is observed that from 2004/05 to 2006/07, government has been failing to

reach the target of revenue generation from forest resources. However, as shown in the figure, in 2007/08, the target of revenue generation was exceeded. It is observed that 2007/08 was also the same year when the country made a tremendous improvement in its macroeconomic performance. For example, according to African Economic Outlook Report (2008), Malawi realised an increase in revenue collection due to incentivised based collection schemes and widening of the tax base. Furthermore, during this year, inflation rate was estimated at 8.5% which was noted to be a significant achievement against 17.1 percent in the previous year (African Economic Outlook Report, 2008). Whether this is a mere coincidence or there is a relationship with the increased forest revenue in this year, this can be an indication that there is a potential of generating more revenue from forest resources.

According to Yaron et al (2011), the forest resources revenue generated has been coming from royalties on forestry produce, sales of logs and firewood, sales of forestry produce on customary estate and administration fees. However, Yaron et al (2011) have reported that the royalties collected have usually been very low to cover the costs because the rates applied are based on the gazetted guidelines which do not reflect the market prices. Furthermore, the collection of royalties and fees has been poor because of lack of resources for legislation enforcement (Yaron et al., 2011). People extract more than what they were supposed to pay for because of failure in enforcing and policing (Yaron et al., 2011).

4.3 Forest Policy content analysis from SFM perspective

This section will analyze the content of SFM concept in the Malawi's key forestry regulatory frameworks. This is an attempt to respond to the question regarding the extent to which SFM has been enshrined in Malawi's forestry policies and how adequately have they covered the concept.

Table 2: Incorporation of SFM in Malawi's key forestry policies

Name of policy	Policy Goal	Key Policy objectives	Reference to SFM		Terminology used
			Direct	indirect	
Forestry Policy(1996)	To sustain the contribution of the national forestry resources to the quality of life in the country by conserving the resources for the benefit of the nation	To provide an enabling framework for promoting the participation of local communities and the private sector in forest conservation and management, eliminating restrictions on sustainable of essential forest products by local communities, and promoting planned harvesting and regeneration of the forest resources by Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRMC's)	x	x	Sustainable management and utilization of planted and natural forest and tree resources; sustainable production of wood and non wood products; co-management; community forest management including community participation and village forest areas; agro forestry technology; VNRMCs
Forestry Act(1997)	–	to identify and manage areas permanent forest cover as protection or production forest in order to maintain environmental stability; to prevent resource degradation and to increase social and economic benefits	–	x	Sustainable utilization of timber, fuel-wood and other forest produce; sustainable harvest; village forest areas, VNRMCs; co-management of forest reserves;
MGDS II-Natural Resources and environmental management sub-theme(2011)	Enhance sustainable management of forest resources and their contribution to national economy.	To increase forest cover and incomes from forestry products and services	x	x	Enhance sustainable management of forest resources and their contribution to national economy, Co-management; woodland regeneration; forest plantations rehabilitation.
Community based forest management supplement policy(CBFM Supplement)(2003)	Empower rural communities to conserve and develop Malawi's forest resources for the economic and environmental benefit of the present and future generations	–		x	Participatory forest management; CBFM; village forest areas
Standards and Guidelines for Participatory forest in Malawi(2005)		To provide practical direction and quality aspect of implementing CBFM in Malawi	x	x	Sustainable management of forest resources; community management of customary forests; management of state forest reserves; co-management of state forest reserves; individual/household planting and trees on farms; afforestation(private, estate, community); community involvement in the management of state plantations; harvesting, processing and marketing forest produce
National Forest Programme(FP)(2001)	Sustainable Management of Forest Goods and services for improved and equitable livelihoods	–	x	x	Develop standards for sustainable forest management as benchmark for practice at all levels; co-management; community based forest management; village forest areas;

As shown in table 2 above, SFM concept has been reflected in the Malawi's forestry regulatory frameworks. The table above has also shown that the SFM concept has been directly mentioned

in some policies while others has been reflected indirectly. Based on the table above, 4 out of the 6 policy and regulatory frameworks thus NFP, SGPM, MGDS II and FP have referred to SFM directly. Furthermore, SFM has also been conceptualized from the perspective of CBFM, village forest areas, agro-forestry, management of state forest reserves; co-management of state forest reserves; individual/household planting of trees on farms; afforestation(private, estate, community); community involvement in the management of state plantations; harvesting, processing and marketing forest produce. These practices have been mentioned as SFM practical actions in SGPM. Furthermore, the reflection of SFM in the MGDS II thus the Malawi national development policy is good development and this indicates the commitment from the high level of policy making. Although the other 2 policies documents have not directly referred to SFM, it is observed that the concepts highlighted in the table are in principal reflecting SFM. In this regard, the idea of SFM is touched on through participatory forest management, CBFM, VFA and provision of benefits for the present and future generation.

It is therefore clear that the key forest regulatory frameworks have incorporated the concept of SFM and is being pursued as the goal of the whole forest regulatory regime (forest sector) as shown in the MGDS II. It is learned that SFM has been conceptualized differently. However, in pursuit of this concept, it is necessary to consider all the practices as a package not just one practice. In this regard to achieve SFM may entail serious implementation of the whole package of practices. Although it has been observed that the forestry policies and legislations are inclusive of SFM concept, it has been observed that implementation of these policies is problematic. Mauambeta et al (2010) further observed that the root cause of this implementation failure originates from the adoption of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) which were being enforced by World Bank. It was observed that various governments included Malawi had budget deficits. In an effort to reduce this, SAPs recommendation was to reduce the workforce of the public sector. As Mauambeta et al (2010) report, the government adopted the SAPs which eventually contributed to the reduction of the government work force hence reducing funding in the public sector. Therefore, the implementation of SAPs in Malawi also contributed to the reduction of workforce and funding in forestry sector (Mauambeta et al., 2010). This has eventually made several programmes like forest protection, forest plantation management, and extension services to suffer more severely (Mauambeta et al., 2010).

4.4 Key Practices underpinning SFM in Malawi

As already highlighted, through the perusal of the literature, it has been revealed that SFM is pursued through different practices which are as follows:

- Community based forest management;
- Institutionalization of VNRMCS;
- creation of village forest areas;
- agro-forestry;
- management of state forest reserves;
- co-management of state forest reserves;
- individual/household planting of trees on farms;
- afforestation(private, estate, community);
- community involvement in the management of state plantations; and
- harvesting, processing and marketing forest produce.
- Institutional strengthening.

Therefore, this study has revealed that SFM concept has been enshrined in the country's key forestry regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, the SFM practices that are being implemented are adequately reflected in these key forestry regulatory frameworks. Although these policies have a good degree of SFM incorporation, it is observed that the results on the ground are very unsatisfactory. Almost each of the practices has been reported to be facing several implementation challenges. More importantly, the existence of these policies with wide coverage of SFM concept has not translated into improved forest outcomes on the ground due to policy implementation failures.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

In summary, this study has revealed that the forest regulation mechanisms including the institutions have not been able to achieve the main outcomes and the goal as outlined in the national development policy and forest sector specific guiding instruments. For example, the outcome of attaining increased forest cover which was also included as the MDG indicator is very much behind. Instead of increasing forest cover, the opposite has been true. Likewise the outcome of increased contribution of the sector to the economy as reflected through revenue generation has not been on track. The revenue generated has been very low for several years. According to MGDS II, the goal of the forest sector is to enhance sustainable management of forest resources and their contribution to the national economy. However, the performance of the two outcome indicators thus forest cover and revenue generation has ruled out the possibility of realizing the main forest goal. Instead of realizing increased forest cover and revenue generation, the trends as shown above have showed that the regime is underperforming.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has assessed the effectiveness of Malawi's Forestry Regulatory regime towards achieving SFM. The main purpose of the study was to examine the policy context and institutional conditions that generate SFM in Malawi. This was critically assessed in terms of institutions, legal and policy provisions which are in practice in Malawi. The study has therefore revealed that Malawi has several forest regulatory frameworks but key ones include NFP, MGDS II, FA, FP, SGPM, and CBFM supplement policy. In each of these policy documents, concept of SFM has been highlighted directly or indirectly. What has been critical is that several SFM practices as enshrined in these policies and legislations are basically being implemented on the ground but at a decimal level. For example, the uptake of co-management has proved to be very low. More importantly, the outcomes of the forest regulatory regime like increased forest cover and incomes have not been on good note. It has been observed that the trend of each of the outcome indicators has been declining instead of increasing or stabilizing. According to Althus et al (2013); Mcgrath (2007); and Maguire (2010), effectiveness of the regime or policy is measured based on the goals and outcomes versus results on the ground. In this regard, the

Malawi's forest regulatory regime has not been effective to achieve SFM. Although on the other angle, this can be viewed as work in progress, the progress itself is not even promising as evidenced by the continued decrease of forest cover which clearly points to the failure of achieving 50% forest cover by 2015, thus the millennium development goal target for Malawi. The study has also established that there is weak enabling policy and institutional conditions for effective SFM as witnessed by the lack of adequate operational resources (human, financial and equipment) for the department. As a result, it has been observed that the regime has not been able to deal with issues of bush fires, increased use of firewood and charcoal, encroachment, illegal logging and corrupt practices which have enormously contributed to forest degradation.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the above conclusions, the researcher makes the following recommendations that would enhance the effectiveness of the regime to achieve SFM:

- Inculcate and promote the culture of planning for the sources of firewood as the way it is done with food at household and community levels.
- Continue building the capacity of the institutions responsible for forest administration at all levels thus at central, district and local levels.
- Promote agro-forestry technology so as to ensure that agricultural production is combined with tree production.
- Planting of trees and their management should be considered as criteria of benefiting from subsidised farm inputs.
- Intensify forestry research mainly on tree breeding so as to ensure that trees that grow fast are bred and disseminated to the relevant actors.

5.4 Areas of further research

Finally, the researcher recommends a research on assessing the profitability of SFM in Malawi so to understand the dynamics of people's decision making with regard to pursuing SFM and from the perspective of current benefits and costs versus future benefits and costs.

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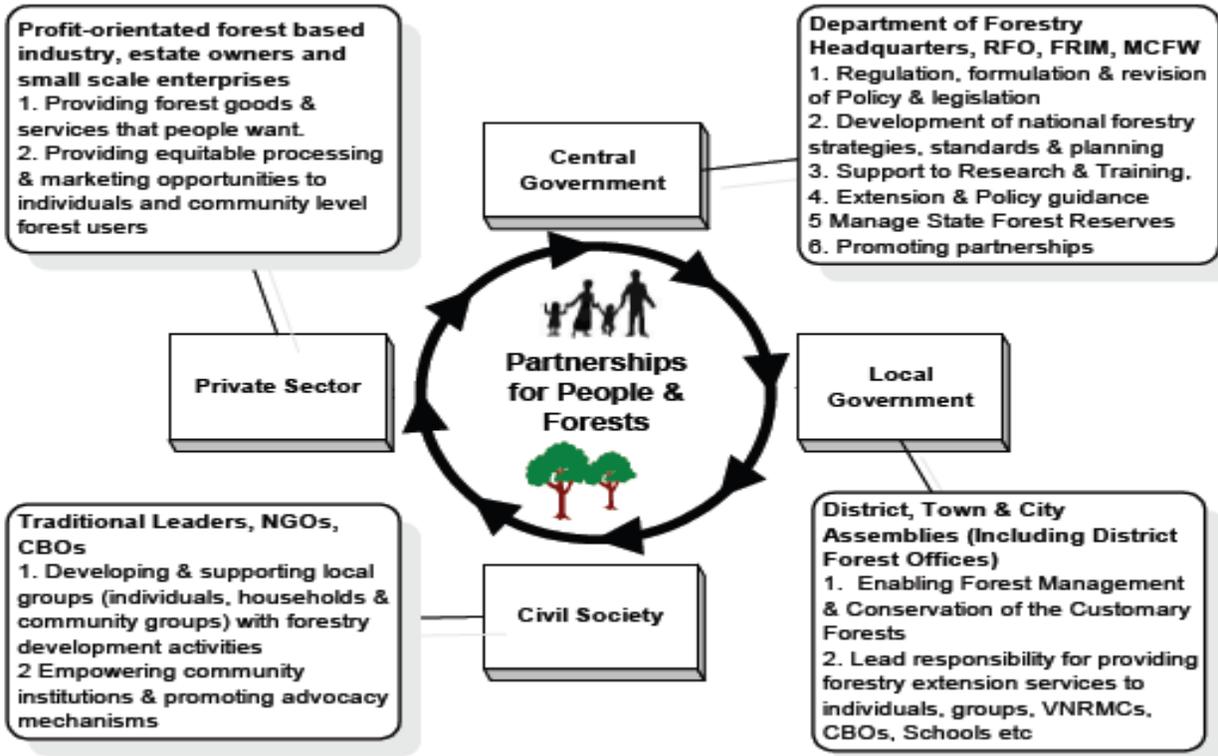
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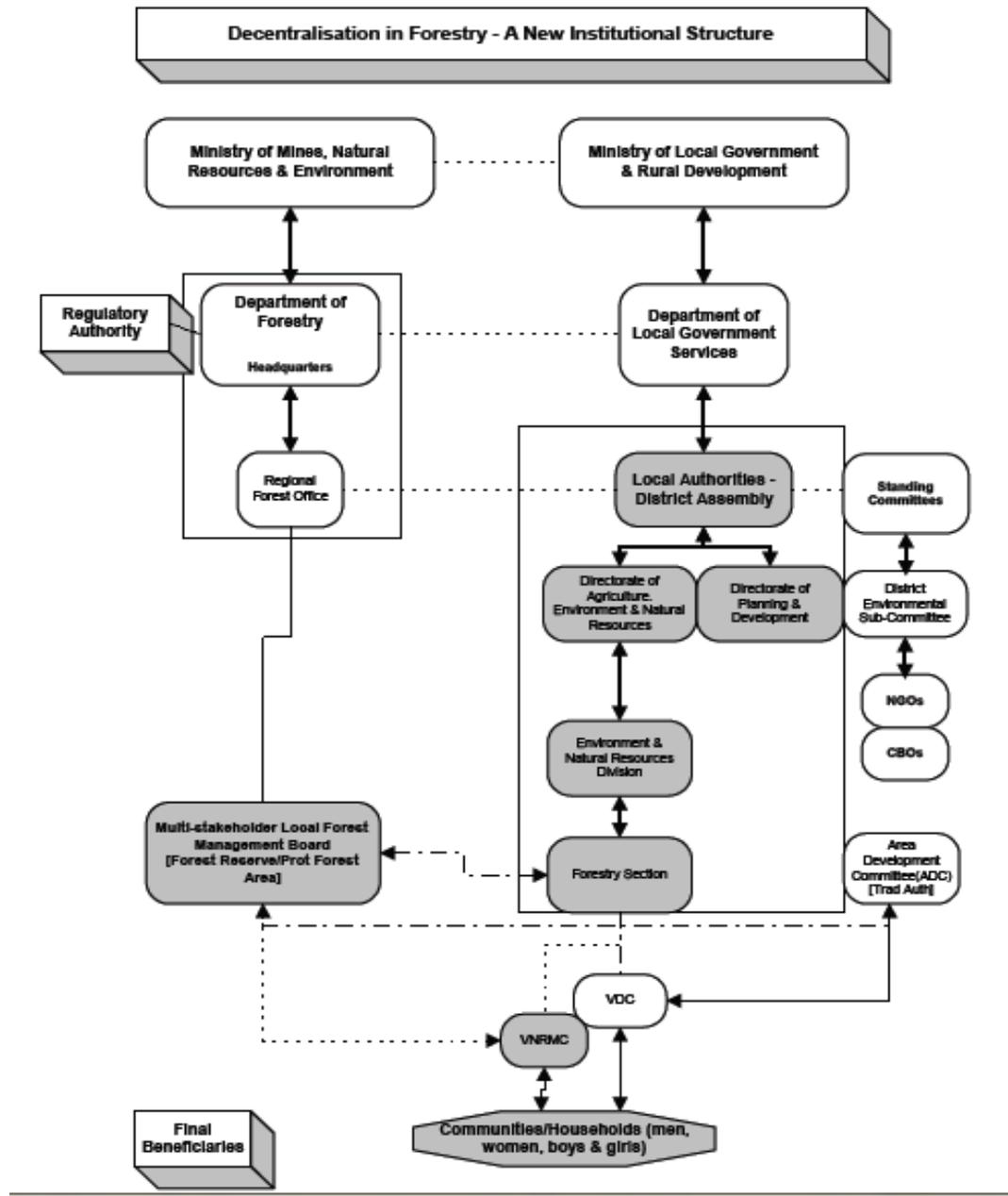
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Multi-sectoral Forest policy implementation Structure in Malawi



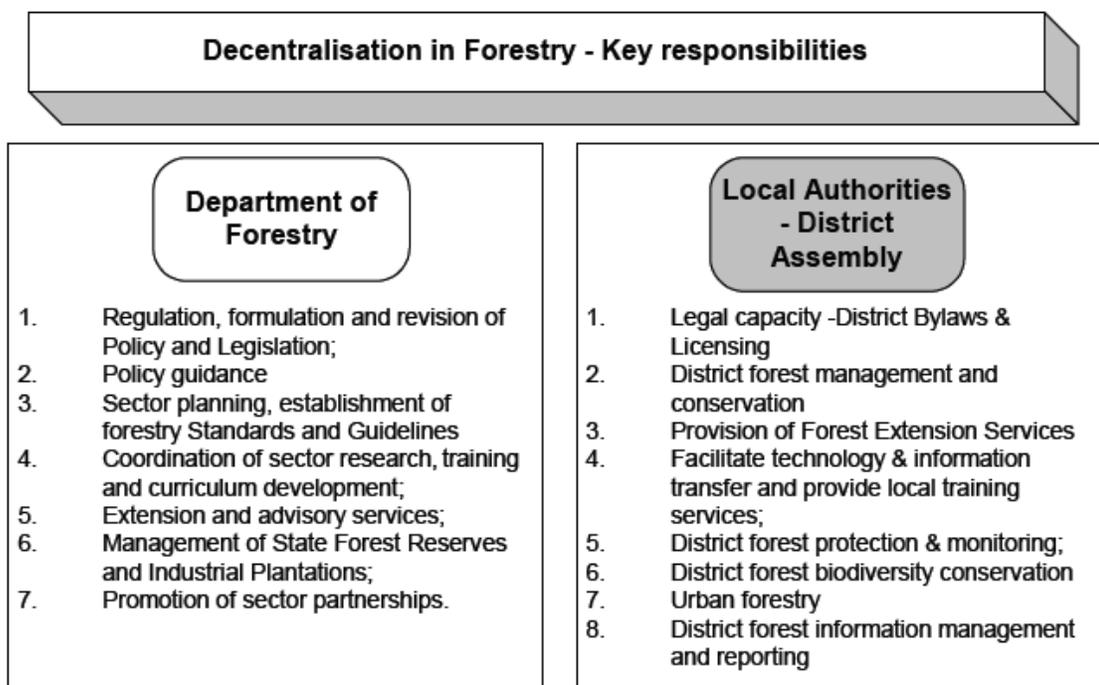
Source: Malawi Government, Decentralization in Forestry (2006:4)

Appendix 2: Decentralized Structure



Source: Malawi Government, Decentralization in Forestry (2006:21)

Appendix 3: Decentralization in Forestry-Key Responsibilities



Source: Malawi Government , Decentralization in Forestry (2006:14)