



EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA FOREST OBSERVATORY



Support to low-cost forest monitoring- The Observatory of Forests of Eastern and Southern Africa (OFESA)

Douglas Ombogoh. CIFOR-ICRAF
The future of land monitoring – technologies,
trends, transparency workshop. June 5, 2023



OFESA Objective

Support the improvement and implementation of OFESA prototype, create a reliable system of monitoring to assist countries in reporting on their climate obligations.

Key result areas for OFESA

Result 1. Development of a sustainable governance framework for the long-term service of the OFESA.

- Geoportal Development
- Governance Framework

Result 2. Human capacities in terms of management and use of environmental information are strengthened, and information is available.

- Enhancing capacity on forest monitoring national and local level
- Support to low-cost forest monitoring
- State of Forest Report



OFESA Geoportal

OFESA East and Southern Africa Forest Observatory

Regional Forest Reserves Dashboard OFESA

Authoritative

RCMRD Online
Regional Centre for Mapping of
Resource for Development

Summary

This dashboard shows the forest cover percentage, forest cover change trend from 1990 to 2020 and forest ownership. The data is applicable for the following countries Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda.
<https://ofesa-geoportal.rcmrd.org>

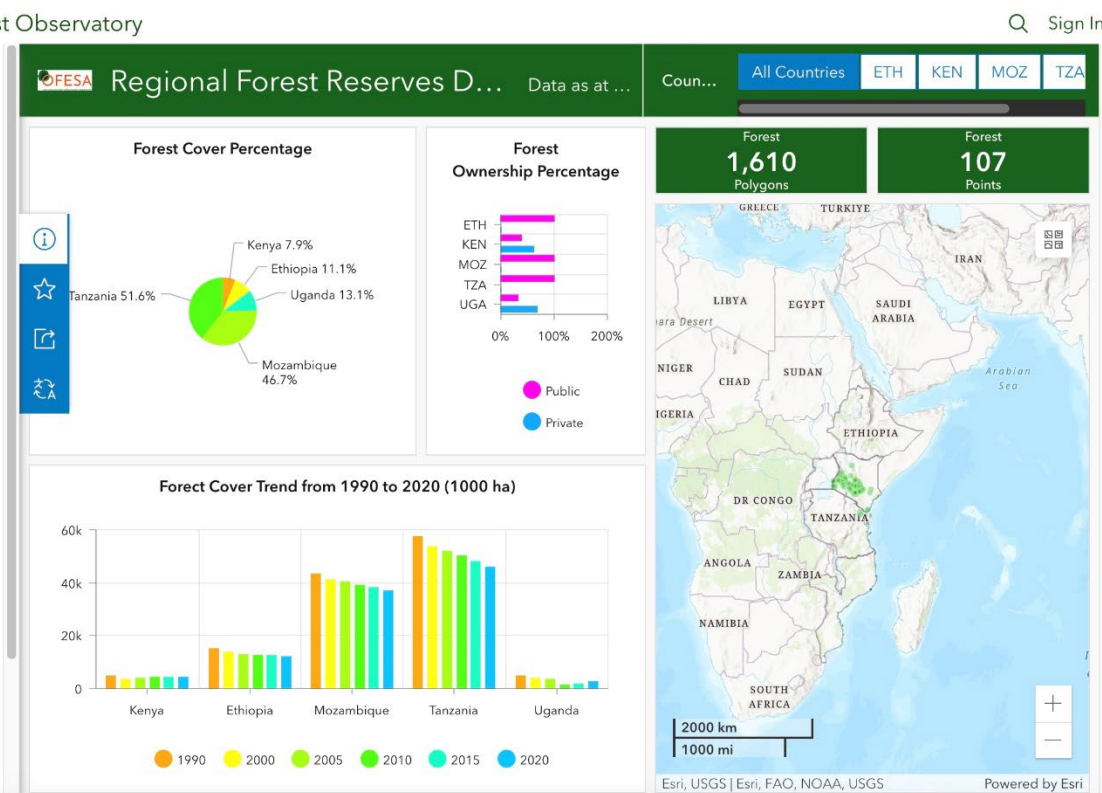
[View Full Details](#)

Details

Dashboard
Dashboard

September 26, 2022
Date Updated

June 25, 2022
Published Date



- Geoportal up and running (<https://ofesa-geoportal.rcmrd.org/>).



Background

- Local communities, forest rangers and officials contribute to management of forests and often work together to manage and protect forests.
- Forest monitoring is one of the key activities undertaken as part of conservation and management activities.
- At local level, often done through forest patrols by forest agency staff or rangers to enforce forest rules and collect data on forest indicators
- Local monitoring initiatives complement national level monitoring systems; enabling local communities to participate in management activities.
- For sustainability, these local level initiatives need to be implemented at low cost.

(Kristen, et al., 2018; Singh et al. 2021)



Support to low-cost forest monitoring-Our Approach

- Working with national partners
 - Kenya: Forest Alert system (KFS) 3 forest stations in Arabuko sokoke and 8 in Mau forest
 - Tanzania: (MJUMITA, TFS) in Rufiji and Bagamoyo
 - Uganda (NFA): Kalinzu, Mpanga and Mabira forests
- Interventions involved supporting upscaling/piloting

Steps

- Understanding the context in the sites: form of monitoring in existence; opportunities/gaps
- Determining entry points: capacity, technology, communication gaps
- Implementation -data collection
- Learning and feedback through feedback meetings



Case studies



Kenya

- Kenya Forest Service (KFS) piloted the Forest Alert Forest monitoring system in Kwale county, upscaled to Kilifi and Kericho, Baringo counties
- Pilot was deemed successful. However, areas for strengthening:
- *Feedback to local community and forest officials on data trends; provision of equipment*

Tanzania

- Collaboration with NGO (MJUMITA) working with communities on community forests
- Identified interventions that could strengthen the existing monitoring:
- *Enhancing the data collection process by digitizing the information in the patrol book; linking field data to the governance dashboard at MJUMITA*



Uganda



- Worked with NFA to pilot forest monitoring using survey 123
- 100 field staff (patrolmen, supervisors, range managers) trained in Kalinzu, Mpanga, Mabira, Budongo systems
- Feedback sessions with field teams in Kalinzu and Mpanga to gather initial lessons from implementation.



Emerging lessons from our experience



- Establishing a reporting and feedback mechanism at the local level. forest officials, community leaders/representatives to use information
- Providing a level of access to reports/results of the data and these should be discussed using existing forums such as meetings.
- Continuous learning and improvement is important to enhance the process. This can also be an opportunity for all those involved to provide feedback and generate lessons for further improvement
- Embed the monitoring in existing institutional context and policy frameworks
- Integrate forest monitoring in the Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) activities



Conclusion

- There is great interest to use technology application by communities and rangers. They see technology application in monitoring as a way to enhance accountability, governance in resource management.
- Technologies exist, from customized tools for site specific or project specific developed tools to open sources applications that can be customized, e.g survey 123, Kobo collect, ODK.
- What Incentives? Different types of incentives need to be considered
- Sustainability of monitoring initiatives has been a key issue





Thank you

The work presented here is financed by the European Union, led by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), and conducted in partnership with the *Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development* through the Observatory of the forests of East and Southern Africa project (OFESA, <https://ofesa.rcmrd.org>). The standard caveats apply. The content and opinions are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the position of the European Union, the Center for International Forestry Research or Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development

