

Research and discussion seminar
16-17/07/2009 - Hotel VIP -
Maputo

MICOA's presentation

Introduction / Context

- MICOA has been deeply involved in the elaboration of the study on "natural resources, environment and sustainable growth in Mozambique", which main results were released during a seminar organized jointly by MICOA and AFD in February 2009

- one of the seminar's main conclusions was that environmental economics – that is, how to measure, assess and take into account the contribution of natural resources and environment as a whole to one country's economy - is still little known in Mozambique, and that there is a real need for capacity building of national specialists and economists in this area
- furthermore, in showing that environmental degradation costs us around 370 million \$ each year, which represents more than 6% of our GDP, the study confirms that we need to undertake, quickly and with efficiency, relevant actions in favour of sustainable development

- In fact, better and sustainable management of our natural resources is one of MICOA's top priorities. In coordination with other line ministries, we are acting to promote sustainable management in various areas, from land to forests, coastal areas, water and fisheries, to the assessment of the impact of mega-projects.
- our national environmental legal framework has been completed by the adoption of various instruments and regulations, such as the National Strategy for Mozambique's Sustainable Development (Estratégia Ambiental para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável de Moçambique), the Policy and Law on land management (Política e a Lei do Ordenamento Territorial) and its respective regulation, and the conservation policy which is now ready to be submitted to the Council of Ministries

- in addition, strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is an instrument that we would like to promote and use with more frequency in the forthcoming years. Such an instrument helps to define what the main stakes and difficulties in a specific area or sector are, and consequently provides useful information for decision making.

- first SEA in the country will concern Mozambique's coastal areas, where various interests are emerging, facing each other and sometimes entering in conflicts. Tourism development, biodiversity protection, mineral resources exploration and exploitation, might call for crucial political decisions, in a context of high population density in these territories that count among the most vulnerable to natural disaster and climate changes impacts. By associating all stakeholders to its elaboration process, SEAs will also contribute to build capacity on environmental issues in the country and raise environmental awareness among the population

Steps forward & Challenges for the future

- the issue of providing and using reliable data. For some natural resources, depletion has not been possible to measure, because of a huge lack of reliable data: for the fisheries, for instance, still a lot of data is missing regarding fishes' stocks, and illegal fishing.
- Thus, one of the main recommendations we can get from the study that had been undertaken is that data is still very incomplete, despite being necessary. We need to make progress in this area.

- In addition, a challenge that I see for the future lies to the link and cooperation between research and policy making. Ministries need to better link up with researchers, as research is essential for us to get data and figures that could orientate and guide our decisions, our strategies, plans and programs.

Thanks.