



# Decentralized Governance of Natural Resources

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# **Decentralized Governance of Natural Resources**

## **Part 1: Manual and Guidelines for Practitioners**

**First edition**

**Prepared by UNDP Drylands Development Centre**



# Table of contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Purpose of the manual</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. What is decentralized governance of natural resources?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV. Principles pertaining to the decentralized governance of natural resources</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>V. Initiating and improving the governance of natural resources</b>	<b>11</b>
A. Democracy: A precondition of decentralization	12
B. Analysis of constraints, risks and opportunities	13
C. Mainstreaming the governance of natural resources into the decentralization process	17
D. Information and awareness raising	30
E. Participatory approach and decentralization	31
F. Capacity-building	33
G. Fiscal decentralization: Financing local development	36

H.	Control, checks and balance	38
I.	Monitoring and evaluation	41
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>45</b>
	<b>Annex 1. Information resources</b>	<b>51</b>
A.	Key reference materials	51
B.	Agencies providing technical and financial support	52
	<b>Annex 2. Sources of information for preparation of document</b>	<b>53</b>
A.	National reviews	53
B.	Electronic forum on decentralized governance of natural resources	54
	<b>Information and case study boxes</b>	
Box 1.	Decentralized governance of natural resources	2
Box 2.	Key parameters relating to democratic functioning, downward accountability and representation	12
Box 3.	Mali: Legal and regulatory context of decentralization of natural resource management	17
Box 4.	Devolution of rights and responsibilities: Matters for consideration	17
Box 5.	China: Overcoming the constraints of a centralized bureaucracy	19
Box 6.	Implementation and enforcement of decentralization laws and regulations	21
Box 7.	Issues relating to institutions	22
Box 8.	Nepal: Developing local self-governance structures	23
Box 9.	Lesotho: The need to support institutional reforms	25

Box 10.	Peru: Integrating natural resource issues into local planning processes	27
Box 11.	Mali: Local development planning guide	27
Box 12.	Mali: Need for capacity-building in data collection and management	30
Box 13.	Criteria for effective participation in the decentralized governance of national resources	31
Box 14.	Main partners in the decentralized governance of national resources	32
Box 15.	Key capacity-building aspects to consider	34
Box 16.	Turkmenistan: Requirements for harmonization of natural resource management	35
Box 17.	Kazakhstan: Need for further fiscal decentralization	37

# Foreword

Many countries around the world are engaged in the process of decentralization to enhance governance and growth at local level. In many of these countries a large proportion of the rural population depends directly on natural resources for their livelihoods. These resources are not only vital to their well-being but can generate the financial resources, through taxes, fees and other payments, to run democratic local institutions.

The decentralization of the governance of natural resources is a means of ensuring improved environmental management while increasing equity and justice for local people, including women and marginalized groups. When properly implemented, it strengthens the democratic process by involving local institutions and communities, ensures effective transfer of power to the local level, increases accountability, improves local revenue collection and allows more effective sharing of knowledge for sustainable natural resource management. Decentralized governance for natural resources can thus lead to genuine participation in the development process, greater food security and increased economic opportunities for the poor. It helps raise awareness about the links between democratic processes, local governance of natural resources and alleviation of poverty and hunger.

The UNDP Drylands Development Centre, through its Integrated Drylands Development programme, has provided support to countries to:

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