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Strengthening the knowledge-base for better decision-making

To strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services, a project has been developed in collaboration between Tanzanian and Norwegian partners, aimed at building capacity to develop stronger knowledge-bases for better informed decision-making and to enhance communication between scientists, managers and decision-makers in Tanzania.

In an effort to contribute to capacity building relating to the needs identified under the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) process, Tanzanian and Norwegian partners have developed a project aimed at building capacity to develop stronger knowledge-bases for better informed decision-making and to enhance communication between scientists, managers and decision-makers in Tanzania.

The overall goal of the project is to increase the capacity of Tanzanian institutions to develop sound knowledge-bases to support Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) processes using a large infrastructure development in an ecologically sensitive area as case study.

Main project partners are the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania, as supporting partner.

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Contributing partners include: University of Dodoma, Sokoine University of Agriculture, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Road Agency, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, The Norwegian Public Roads Administration and the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The project is being funded by Norway through the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management.



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To improve the understanding of potential effects of infrastructure developments, the project will conduct baseline studies covering *inter alia* socio-economic, health and ecological factors along a planned road development in an ecological sensitive area important for human livelihoods and wildlife, and consequently monitor effects post construction. This will improve capacity in Tanzanian institutions to evaluate and monitor effects of management actions and to make use of this capacity in future infrastructure development processes.

The project will further facilitate and build capacity to improve communication between scientists, managers and decision-makers in ESIA processes. A workshop was held in August/September 2011 in Tanzania where representatives from relevant sectors and all levels of the science-policy interface was present, agreeing to develop a communication strategy to improve the use of science in decision-making.

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