

Uganda: Discussion Summary

TEEBAgriFood Africa & Georgia Regional Symposium, 24-25th February 2021

Key Points

- The TEEB for Agriculture and Food (TEEBAgriFood) Africa & Georgia Regional Symposium was held on the 24-25th of February 2021. The overall objectives were to target region-specific engagement with the TEEBAgriFood programme across the four project countries – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Georgia. Notably, the event provided an engaging platform for participants to share and learn from one another, while acting as a springboard for upcoming project development and implementation activities and discussions.
- During the event, initial discussions were held with stakeholders from Uganda working at the intersection of environment, agriculture, and food systems. With respect to Uganda, the objectives were to: introduce the TEEBAgriFood Framework; discuss the modalities of a Uganda project application; propose suggestions for research areas as informed by a desk-based policy mapping review; and to gain initial feedback on the proposed policy focuses and intended project application.
- TEEBAgriFood is a comprehensive framework that enables food system decision-making to better integrate material interactions between environment, economy, society, and health, and encompasses interactions from the farm to household consumption. This could inform Uganda policymaking by targeting the broader issues of sustainability and equity within eco-agri-food systems, as to make nature’s contribution to agriculture, food systems, and human well-being visible.
- The discussion focused on five potential policy focus areas for an application of the framework in Uganda: sustainable livestock sector development; sustainable urban/peri-urban agricultural (UPA) development; wetlands restoration and regeneration; sustainable shea commodities production and development; and, sustainable gum arabica production and development.
- Initial feedback from stakeholders indicated a stronger policy focus preference for wetlands restoration and regeneration, and the sustainable development for urban/peri-urban agriculture; however, wider stakeholder consultation was recommended.
- A further detailed discussion on the project in Uganda will be held in late March/early April with relevant stakeholders, with a view to determine project scope and identifying partner organisations.

Contextual Background: TEEBAgriFood and the Evaluation Framework

1. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Agriculture and Food programme (TEEBAgriFood) was developed to apply whole systems thinking to the economics of “eco-agri-food” production systems and their permeation across holistic social and environmental dimensions, thereby thinking beyond “silo” approaches - from supporting ecosystems, to productive farms, to intermediaries such as aggregators, wholesalers and retailers, to food and beverage manufacturers, to distributors and consumers.
2. The true economics of agriculture can only be understood after recognizing and accounting for all significant “externalities” along these value chains. In our eco-agri-food systems, these externalities include the huge but hidden costs and benefits of agriculture and food systems, which need to be unravelled, understood, and evaluated if the world is ever to be able to work out how to feed and nourish billions of people in a manner that provides everyone with adequate nutrition, in an equitable manner, without seriously damaging ecological security or environmental sustainability.

3. The TEEBAgriFood Evaluation Framework, developed through collaboration with over 150 scholars from 33 countries representing a wide range of disciplines, backgrounds and perspectives, has been designed to guide the evaluation of food systems and their complex linkages to the environment, society and human health.
4. To create real change, this scientific framework of analysis needs to be applied at the ground level and to influence current policies and practice. UNEP is currently supporting the implementation of TEEBAgriFood initiatives around the world (Figure 1), in collaboration with national and local government agencies, and local research institutions.

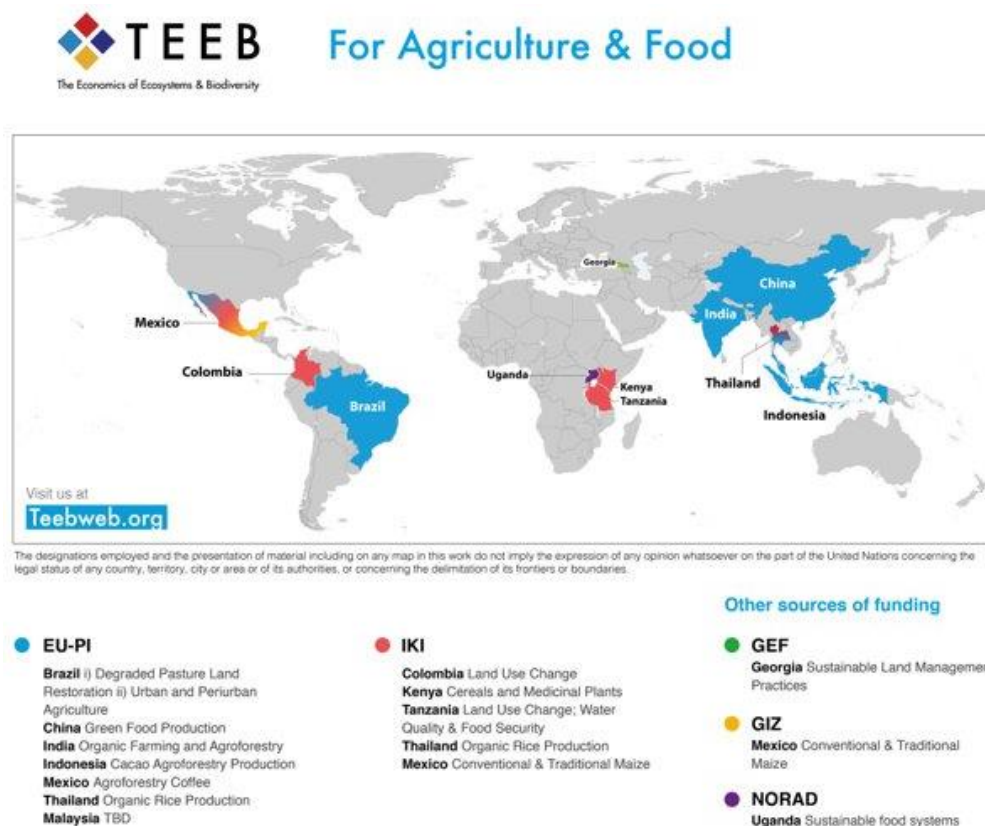


Figure 1: TEEBAgriFood project implementation countries.

5. Separately, a prospective TEEBAgriFood application in Uganda is in the early phases of development, as directly supported by seed funding via the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation's (NORAD) allocation to UNEP. At its centre, TEEBAgriFood projects are principally informed by the engagement of national stakeholders to ensure the policy relevance of the analysis undertaken. A desk-based policy review is currently being prepared for consultation with stakeholders, to complement this process. Furthermore, TEEBAgriFood projects must be reinforced by links and leverages to existing work, as opposed to duplication, and as informed by the relevant national and IGO stakeholder network.
6. On the 24-25th of February 2021, the Africa Regional TEEBAgriFood Symposium took place and hosted presentations and dialogues concerning the implementation of TEEBAgriFood projects across different country contexts. The first interaction between UNEP and relevant Ugandan stakeholders took place, as to introduce the TEEBAgriFood Framework, and the policy and modalities scoping for a Ugandan study.

Presentation Overview: Uganda, and TEEBAgriFood Policy Scoping Options

7. Presentation 1: “Environmental Challenges and the Agricultural Sector in Uganda”

Mr Fred Muwanika - Biodiversity Finance Expert, National Environmental Management Authority of Uganda.

- Uganda’s agricultural sector is a major contributor to the GDP, making up 21.9% in 2018/19 and engaging over 66% of the population, of whom are predominately women and youths.
- However, the agricultural sector has had cascading impacts upon the environment, such as issues of land degradation, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. This is indicated by losses of 1.9 million hectares of forest and wetlands from 1990-2015, of which 80% was converted to croplands.
- Soil degradation was particularly indicated as a major threat to food security and household incomes in Uganda, as inhibited by the uptake of fertiliser use, external nutrient sources, and recommended soil and water management practices.

8. Presentation 2: “Policy Responses to Environmental Challenges in the Agricultural Sector”

Mr Nathan Mununuzi – Senior Environment Officer, Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment

- The country’s economy remains largely dependent upon environmental resources, to which 80% of the population derives its livelihood while contributing to 48% of total national exports.
- Cross-cutting environmental challenges to Uganda’s natural resource base, especially amongst the natural forest and wetland coverage, include: rapid population growth rate at 3.2% per annum; unsustainable production and consumption practices; and the continuous impact of climate change.
- Key policy responses to underscore environmental decision-making in Uganda include: the National Environmental Management Policy (1994); the National Forestry Policy (2001); the Guidelines for Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Agricultural Sector Policies and Plans (2018); and the Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management (2010-2020).

9. The current scoping of a Ugandan TEEBAgriFood application is at the first step of the TEEB approach (Figure 1), to “refine the purpose and objectives of a TEEB Country Study by specifying and agreeing on the key issues and policy options with stakeholders”. To do so, the scoping of the application must link well with biodiversity, social and human capital, businesses, and a tangible policy and information demand as supported by TEEBAgriFood.

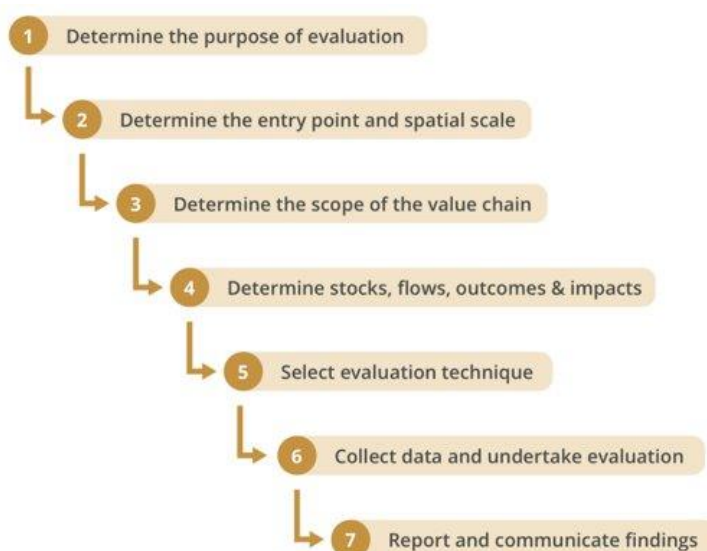


Figure 2 (Left): Steps in applying the TEEBAgriFood Evaluation Framework.

10. The following five options were put forward as a result of a desk-based policy review of national Ugandan priorities for sustainable eco-agri-food systems.
11. **Sustainable Livestock Sector Development:** In line with Uganda’s “Vision 2040” Development Agenda, the extensive development and transformation of the livestock sector is expected to outpace the policies and strategies put forth at present. To support the long-term sector growth, sustainable policies and strategies to enable this transformation and transition must be prioritised, especially amongst beef, dairy cattle, and poultry. Targeted assessments may support decision-making, such as the analysis of livestock production systems and value chains, and the quantification of socio-environmental externalities.
12. **Sustainable Urban/Peri-Urban Agriculture (UPA) Development:** Forecasting towards Uganda’s “Vision 2040”, urban population growth is expected to rise in tandem with poverty, food systems change, and environmental and nutritional challenges to feeding growing cities. To inform the sustainable development of UPA in Uganda’s cities, TEEBAgriFood may contribute through the valuation of ecosystem services, as specific to changing land use and agricultural systems within this landscape.
13. **Wetlands Restoration and Regeneration:** Wetlands are recognised nationally as a key ecosystem to provide ecological and socio-economic functions, however significant decline and degradation is observed across numerous river basins across the country. Land cover change and exploitation is being predominately driven by encroachment for settlement and agriculture, resource extraction, industrial development, and influenced by market accessibility. To inform policy and decision-making concerning the future development and restoration of wetlands in Uganda, numerous assessments may be beneficial e.g. spatial-temporal mapping exercises, wetlands inventory mapping, and valuation assessments upon the ecosystem services accessible upon focused wetland areas.
14. **Sustainable Shea Commodities Production and Development:** The Shea tree (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) is considered an under-utilised crop in Uganda, currently undergoing a renewed demand from high value cosmetics companies with the opportunity for sustainable commercialisation. Despite this, Shea has suffered largely in Uganda as a result of large-scale cutting for charcoal and the degradation of the savannah ecosystem for wildlife habitats and agricultural production. In line with existing Ugandan strategies to develop the national strategy for sustainable Shea production and market access, it’s development may benefit from holistic and ecosystem-based valuation assessments, and stakeholder engagement, training and capacity building.
15. **Sustainable Gum Arabica Production and Development:** In a similar manner to Shea, Gum Arabica (*Acacia senegal* and *Acacia seyal*) production in Uganda is under-utilised and has the potential to ensure food security, promote sustainable agricultural and forestry, and combat deforestation and climate change. Future development of this commodity would benefit from a holistic and ecosystem-based value chain assessment, with acknowledgement of market linkages to provide income in parallel to enhancing biodiversity conservation.

Breakout Room Discussion and Feedback

16. Firstly, the policy option concerning wetland restoration was supported by the participants in aligning strongly with the national priorities concerning the sustainable management of wetlands, in light of increasing degradation and encroachment. It was noted that private projects are currently in

implementation to promote sustainable livelihood options; through restoration activities, freshwater provisioning, and irrigation schemes for agriculture upon wetland landscapes. A targeted focus upon wetlands in Uganda would have a wide-reaching impact, as put forward by the participants, as wetlands are found across the country and cover 11% of the land area.

17. Secondly, the policy option concerning sustainable UPA agriculture and livestock development was supported by the participants, falling in line with the national development and environmental priorities. Mixed farming approaches involving both livestock and agriculture were put forward as a sustainable practice to adopt, amongst the general uptake of sustainable practices by subsistence and commercial farmers. Strong agricultural and planning policies were also highlighted to support the increasing subsistence and commercial croplands around the urban/peri-urban landscape. This potential policy focus would also complement the ongoing UNEP Economy Division project “*Catalysing urban and peri-urban agriculture to improve diets and resilience in Kampala city*” in collaboration with the FAO and UNDP, of which is also currently in its early stages. In response, the participants noted that UPA is relevant for other cities beyond that of Kampala, as urbanisation and population growth is expected to increase nationally.
18. The issues of land degradation and land productivity were also put forward as a key concern for the Ugandan environment, as a consequence of encroachment upon forest resources and wetlands for settlement and agriculture. The increased capacity and uptake of national fertiliser use was raised, in light of Uganda’s development objectives in agricultural intensification and combatting low land productivity.
19. In parallel, the participants highlighted the need for rural areas to be equitably considered alongside the consideration of UPA agri-intensification as a prospective policy focus, recognising that rural areas form the regions with the most critical food insecurity. Targeted action at the household level was underscored, as the poorest households were found to sell off their self-produced foods as to earn an income. Consequentially, this implies that the poorest regions with the substantial agricultural production is becoming more food insecure and hunger stricken.
20. Ongoing and completed projects by GIZ and the National Environmental Management Authority of Uganda also pointed towards the existing body of work which a TEEBAgriFood study could complement, including sustainable wetland restoration and sustainable shea commodities development accordingly.

Next Steps

21. Following the TEEBAgriFood Africa & Georgia Regional Symposium, a dedicated stakeholder consultation workshop will be held in late March/early April (TBD) to feed through from the initial discussions, with the objective to determine a project scope and identifying partner organisations.

Related Links

- The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) [Website](#)
- [Understanding TEEB for Agriculture and Food](#)
- TEEBAgriFood “[Measuring What Matters: a Synthesis Report](#)”
- UN Food Systems Summit 2021 [Website](#)
- UN Environment Programme [Website](#)

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Participants

#	Name	Affiliation
1	William Speller	UN Environment Programme, TEEB
2	Naomi Young	UN Environment Programme, TEEB
3	Fred Muwanika	National Environmental Management Authority, Uganda
4	Nathan Mununuzi	Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda
5	Evelyn Altuhaire	Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda
6	Ronald Kaggwa	National Planning Authority, Uganda
7	Edgar Niyimpa	Bureau of Statistics, Uganda
8	Keith Ahumuza	Bureau of Statistics, Uganda
9	Gerald Nizeyama	UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Uganda
10	Juan Sanchez	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
11	Chereye Saleh	UN Environment Programme