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Locating the Policy Space for Inclusive Green Growth within the SADC Extractive Sector

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1. Introduction

The economic lens, through which development has been viewed for over 250 years, has often promoted growth at the expense of the environment. However, today, harm to the environment in the pursuit of economic growth has begun to threaten both growth itself and indicators of social progress (World Bank, 2012). The argument for greener growth in this context thus places a greater focus on maximising the 'socio-economic' development synergies alongside minimising pollution, environmental degradation and socio-environmental harms. This focus is of particular importance for sectors of acute economic importance and high growth that serve as catalysts for social, economic or environmental problems. The extractive industries (EIs) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) form such a sector (ibid.).

Like many countries in Africa, SADC member states are rich in natural resources (such as petroleum, aluminium, natural gas, copper, uranium, coal, bauxite, diamonds etc.) and rely on their extraction and exportation for economic growth. Seven of the 15 SADC member states[1] are considered to be highly mineral-dependent (World Bank, 2011a). Specifically, the sector constitutes 70 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in Angola, 29 per cent in Botswana, 21 per cent in Guinea, 20 per cent in Mauritania, 11 per cent in Namibia and 9 per cent in South Africa. Combined with a labour-intensive and livelihood-supporting agricultural sector, demonstrates that regional growth is highly resource-intensive. Even for more diversified economies, such as South Africa, the Extractive Sector remains crucial to economic success. In addition, the relative mono-cultural nature of many economies in the region—i.e. a limited product base, which also accounts for more than 75 per cent of their exports (ibid.)—makes the economic governance of natural and mineral resources a highly complex undertaking.

Despite high economic growth within the SADC region, rapid economic expansion has in fact not delivered on many of its implied social benefits (Jackson, 2011). In fact, intense resource extraction has been harmful both socially and environmentally to varying degrees. Furthermore, limited progress has been made in expanding the scope of social returns and economic opportunities for many of the poor people in rural areas, often located near points of extraction. EI-dependent growth, thus, presents a number of contradictory realities to SADC, governments which need to be reconciled.

In exploring these themes as part of a Green Guide project funded by the Climate Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) in collaboration with the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)[2] finds that a shift to greener and inclusive growth is not likely to manifest as an immediate break with EI-dependent growth. Rather, the effective management of such an important regional sector will be pivotal to such a transformation in the region. Building upon, initial background research for the Green Guide project, this first project-related *Policy Research Brief* presents the case for an EI-focused, inclusive green growth strategy in the region, and identifies some practical policy entry points which can deliver positive economic, societal, and environmental outcomes. In particular, this document seeks to identify ways to shift from a myopic and misplaced faith in trickle-down economics—one that relies on growth itself as the best way for tackling poverty and other social problems—to a more inclusive, co-benefit-based, and holistic approach to growth and development.

2. Drivers of a New Environment–Economy–Society Compact

Increased global demand for resources of all kinds for construction, manufacturing, among other sectors and the need to meet ever increasing consumer and energy demands, has already ratcheted up the scale and scope of resource exploitation. As a consequence, the resource-rich SADC region has rapidly increased the pace of resource exploitation and new exploration initiatives.

The discovery of large reserves of natural gas in Mozambique and the large investments in the exploration of bitumen (tar sands) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Madagascar (Wykes, 2011) are just some examples of the increasing economic relevance of mineral resources and the diversity of such commodities (see Table, next page). The development model pursued in these instances should be carefully evaluated as to whether the risks outweigh the benefits in light of the interconnected nature of the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainable development.

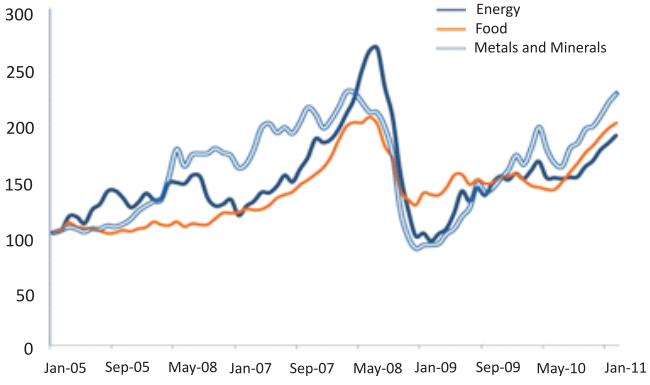
Tar sands operations are some of the dirtiest, most carbon-intense resource extraction processes. While the Canadian extraction of bitumen from the Athabasca Tar Sands has been a tremendously lucrative endeavour, it has also endangered the health of ecosystems and the livelihoods of groups around the points of extraction and further afield via air pollution and the contamination of freshwater rivers and streams (Wykes, 2011). Lessons from exploration and extraction processes in the developed world identify two important narratives for SADC: the critical role of governance and the role of legal frameworks in ensuring minimal damage from extractive operations.

An understanding of the different types of risks associated with different resources, and carefully weighing economic benefits against environmental as well as social costs, is also pivotal in guiding current and future governance and extractive activities including safely handling some resources such as uranium for instance. The consideration of the different outcomes of copper, uranium, bitumen, or natural gas extraction for example is needed, as the costs of their extraction (economic, social, environmental), and other resources, are not the same, nor are the economic benefits, or the viability of environmental protection and resilience throughout operations and disasters.

This is a critical moment for SADC member states. Present and projected future intensification of extraction and exploration activities will require increased levels of attention to the unequal participation, benefits-sharing, and environmental injustices associated with extraction activities. Given the ease with which large windfall profits taxes and high present-day growth (See Figure) can dominate and influence decision-making processes, it is of utmost importance for traditional EI-dependent economies, alongside states that are discovering new resources, to act (conduct multiple third party environmental and social impact assessments) and plan accordingly to avoid not only the resource curse, but also irreversible environmental and social degradation due to resource exploration and exploitation in the pursuit of strictly economic objectives (World Bank, 2012).

Moreover, promises of increased industrial, infrastructure, and technological development, as well as increased

Figure
Commodity Prices



Source: World Bank (2011b)
(Real Commodity Prices, Index Jan. 2005=100, USA CPI Deflated text).

Table
New Discoveries and Projected Expansions of EI Operations from 2011

Natural Resource	Country
Coal	Mozambique
Copper	Zambia (Konkola North Project)
Natural Gas	Tanzania, Mozambique
Gold	Tanzania
Oil and Bitumen	Madagascar, DRC

Source: World Bank (2011a).

levels of private and public investments and new job opportunities that are often presented to local communities as part of prospective EI projects are not always met, nor do their effects reach the poorest members of society. In six mineral-dependent countries, over 60 per cent of the population is living in poverty, and in two, this figure exceeds 70 per cent (UNDP, 2010). Negative environmental externalities (the degradation of resource quality around such communities due to chemical runoff, pollution etc.) and the over-use of resources are also commonplace.

This contrast between the 'trickle-down' economic vision of EI-led prosperity and the reality of the socio-environmental costs of extraction activities is stark. Reconciling and narrowing these gaps is now a fundamental part of the new vital narrative of inclusive and sustainable development.

3. Structural Realities and Inequalities of EI-driven Growth in the SADC Region

According to the IPC-IG (2012), "*inclusive growth implies participation and benefit-sharing. Participation without benefit-sharing makes growth unjust and sharing benefits without participation makes it a welfare outcome.*"

The work of the IPC-IG on inclusive green growth incorporates this definition with that of green growth as resource-equitable, and environmentally conscious growth. Moreover, Sha Zukang, the Under Secretary General who played a key leadership role in the Rio +20 discussions, outlined a similar conceptualisation and the need for an integrated approach to growth and environmental protection, while acknowledging poor people as "active participants, and the main beneficiaries" of such processes (UNDP, 2010).

Thus, shaping a more balanced and effective relationship between EIs and national governments relies on addressing a number of clear barriers and structural defects, which must first be tackled for an enabling environment of inclusive green growth to flourish. These include a number of structural factors including:

- the balance of power and inequalities between the EI sector and governments;
- limited social and economic returns to local communities which host extractive operations;
- a number of environmental and socio-environmental challenges.

Power Asymmetries in the EI–Government Relationship
Heightened levels of government tax revenues are by far the most considerable positive impact of EI operations within any given country. Tax revenues enable the provision of public services and help contribute more broadly to the process of development through targeted as well as universal investments—for example, in health and/or education. The economic importance of EIs in the region, as well as the dependency of states on significant EI contributions to GDP and captured government tax revenue, often translates into a shift in the balance of power between EIs and governments that favours the extractive sector in terms of negotiating royalty fees or tax rates. Thus, governments must address the competing pressures of increased EI tax rates to maximize government revenues for the provision of services, and potential redistribution programmes along with and the threshold, which EI firms have for higher taxes.

In addition to significant leakages of EI generated tax revenue, particularly away from these growing economies, EIs also benefit from extensive tax concessions and tax avoidance schemes by drawing on complex accounting techniques, tax havens and multinational corporate tax structures. These ultimately result in lower resource-generated revenue for SADC governments (Fraser and Lungu, 2008) and, over time, declining royalty fees and tax rates.

The management of the extractive sector in a way that is more openly directed towards long-term development goals is further undermined by state reliance on EIs and the private sector to carry out the majority of resource exploration activities (UNECA, 2012) and to evaluate potential economic returns. National geological surveys are usually underfunded and inadequate for the task of effective resource management. This capability deficit and lack of such key institutional and technical skills places many governments in a weak bargaining position and further tilts the EI-government balance of power in favour of EIs.

Additionally, efforts to redistribute benefits on a macro scale have produced fickle results. South Africa's advance on and subsequent neglect of its Black Economic Empowerment policy initiated in 2003 (Government of South Africa, 2004), and a revised Mining Charter in 2010, which called for 15 per cent ownership of assets by historically disadvantaged South Africans, has been linked to concerns about maintaining an attractive investment environment.

Local Communities as Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries
EIs invest relatively limited amounts in local economies, while simultaneously negatively impact present and future environmental sustainability, land use and access. Accordingly, their relationships with communities are often tense, sometimes producing serious hostilities. Although local benefits may be derived from drawing on local sources of labour, the sharing of benefits with and participation of local communities at points of extraction is far from adequate. The employment opportunities provided to locals are usually short-term construction jobs, while expatriates occupy the more permanent, higher-paid and more highly skilled technical positions (Fraser and Lungu, 2008). Fraser and Lungu (2008) assert that common complaints about the mining sector in Zambia are also about poverty-level wages for employed locals, unstable employment, working conditions and the neglect of both workplace safety and environmental protection. Often these host communities lag behind the rest of the country on key social indicators.

High levels of malnutrition, low educational attainment and rampant resource gaps all point to failures of the public investment infrastructure to cater for the wider population and for those in rural and remote communities. Limited and inconsistent investments in health to-date weaken systemic capacity to deliver preventative care and associated measures which would help to reduce the incidences of malnutrition and the proliferation and maltreatment of diseases (both easily and less treatable) that plague the region.

Environmental Externalities
Some social and health impacts of environmental degradation have begun to undermine the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Mass consumption of water, energy and other resources by EIs, can disproportionately affect the lives of poor people in rural areas, women, children and other vulnerable groups and the achievement of MDGs 1, 3 and 7. The reliance of smallholder agricultural productivity on soil fertility, land and access to water, for example, means that the impact of EI operations on the availability of land, land quality and water quality could have serious implications for food production, income streams and even food security. EI activities can also affect the scale and intensity of such problems. UNECA attributes the degradation and removal of vegetation, soil erosion, air pollution and the contamination of fresh water sources as well as numerous socio-cultural issues including poor health to EI activities (UNECA, 2002).

Due the structural nature of the sector and its localised impacts on the environment, EI operations have also tended to exacerbate existing geographic and resource inequalities. The more downstream of these take the form of deep disparities regarding access to basic resources such as water and electricity. As a result, they add to the ever-increasing burden on government to achieve balanced and equitable growth throughout society, including that the minimum requirements and tools are available for self-sustainability and development. Other environmental inequalities that can be linked to the EI sector create a further and significant burden to government in cleaning up, particularly the costs of long-term environmental damages such as land degradation.

These disconnects between the proposed and expected benefits of EI projects and the reality of their implementation signals a clear need to move away from the strictly economic conception of development, particularly in SADC. More broadly, policymaking must find ways to increase participation, share resource-generated benefits more equally in addition to mitigate and remedy environmental degradation. Where such policy efforts have fallen short is in their lack of comprehensive and intersecting approaches.

4. Potential Pathways: a Holistic Approach to Policymaking and Growth

It is vital, in light of the above, to promote decision-making and policies that better address the multiple economic,

social and environmental risks associated with EI activities and overcome the piecemeal approach to policymaking that often serves economic policy outcomes to the detriment of social or environmental concerns. Breaking down the private, academic and government departmental silos to draw on a variety of existing sector-specific nodes of expertise and encourage coordinated action between all agencies of government responsible for environmental, social and economic policy formulation, planning, development and public administration would provide real insight into evaluating EI operations before and after their commencement.

In some instances, this may lead to decisions to modify, delay or cancel the implementation of EI projects or to re-direct resources to alternative sources of revenue generation, perhaps through climate change mitigation or carbon sequestration schemes. Still, the current level of investments into the latter, within the SADC region, is not yet sufficient enough to make a full and radical break away from the EI-generated growth path very likely in the short and, for some, the medium term. EIs generate some of the highest rates of return on investment globally and are projected to continue to grow in the coming decades. Therefore, **repairing** the EI-dependent path and **linking that path more directly to other development goals** appear to be more likely entry points at this point in time.

The right mix of political will, a different framing of economic issues within a holistic approach, an alternative conservation and revenue capture plan and targeted programmes of support with conservation-generated funds, for example, can be a powerful force for such transformation efforts. Such seems to have been the case in Ecuador, where a successful effort has been undertaken to break away from the normal pattern of 'grow first, clean up later'.

The decision made by the Government of Ecuador to forego projected earnings of US$7.2 billion in oil revenue from the extraction of oil located beneath the Yasuni National Park now represents a clear shift towards a combination of natural and mineral resource policymaking.[3]
By preventing deforestation and the further burning of fossil fuels, an estimated 407 million metric tons of CO_2 emissions may be avoided. Moreover, the funds generated—in support the conservation effort—(projected to be the economic value of the avoided CO_2 emissions and half of the value of the sub-soil oil reserves) will be directed towards social programmes and renewable energy projects (Yasuni ITT Fund and the UNDP Multi-Trust Fund Office, 2011).

Such preservation efforts are managed by the Yasuni ITT fund, which in 2011 received over US$116 million in support. This case is particularly relevant for SADC member states equipped with a similar quantity and quality of natural environmental and mineral resources that can be leveraged for alternative financing through climate change mitigation schemes. The DRC, which is host to the second largest tropical rainforest in the world and is faced with numerous social and economic challenges, is a possible SADC candidate for replication of the Yasuni ITT model.

Home-grown policy efforts from the SADC region, which are more limited in scope, also provide a growing foundation for more inclusive and environmentally responsible growth trajectories. For instance, Namibia has already undertaken national consultations on greening the economy, and in Zimbabwe a new Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Regulation calls for a 10 per cent share of operations for local communities. While these efforts seek to address income equality challenges, as well as promote increased participation and benefits sharing, they do not specifically address broader issues of resource inequality or the environmental challenges facing sections of the population. Thus, these policies possess elements of addressing the social aspect of inclusive green growth, but do not explicitly address the environmental.
Other policies explicitly address the environmental and the economic with a more indirect focus on the social. Therein lies room for adaptation through holistic approaches to policymaking as a way to shift the conceptual approach to decision-making processes that better incorporate elements of inclusive green growth.

A more detailed review suggests that reforms in the region tend to fall into three relevant categories: (i) connecting environmental and social policy outcomes; (ii) connecting economic and environmental outcomes; and (iii) connecting social and economic outcomes.

The following examples highlight successes, challenges and opportunities for making the 'repair and gradual transformative developmental path' a foundation for more fundamental change in the medium and long term:

- Multi-tiered pressures to preserve the environment have emerged from the need for more inclusive growth but also from global pressures of climate change mitigation movements seeking to protect ecosystems that can serve critical protective functions—for example, forests as carbon sinks. The expansion of the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) and REDD+[4] programme in the region and the significant potential for countries such as the DRC are examples of how **the environmental and the social pillars** of sustainable development could be weaved together more effectively, particularly for local economic growth.

  Such projects will shape the livelihoods and rights of forest-dependent communities. In the DRC, the first project registered under the Kyoto Protocol is considered a trailblazer, as revenue generated from carbon credits for reforestation in the Ibi Bateke Plateau is being reinvested in part into basic health and education services for local communities.[5] However, such initiatives also place new pressures on the rural land-poor and subsistence farmers to balance survival and income generation from forest conservation initiatives.

  Though noble in its pursuit of environmental protection, REDD+ has thus been met with resistance from local communities and specific vulnerable groups in a united global effort (Reed, 2011).

  However, the path towards the as yet unrealized opportunity to effectively pursue social, environmental and economic outcomes can be achieved through a

more holistic approach to programme design and implementation to ensure the maximization of benefits across all such areas.

- Botswana's experience with the establishment of the Pula Fund, a national stabilisation fund, provides insight for states whose initial steps towards a more inclusive green growth may be to reconcile **the economic and the environmental pillars of sustainable development** more specifically.

  By way of the fund, Botswana has been able to effectively manage and re-distribute resource-generated wealth towards targeted policy goals (conservation efforts, wildlife protection, social programmes, economic diversification i.e. the expansion of eco-tourism). Such success stories highlight the potential also to turn 'brown into green' by using brown economic funds (from EIs) to finance greener initiatives and to potentially help finance transitions into a greener economy.

  Though not the optimal approach, it is a pathway that may lend itself more easily to immediate and tangible reforms in countries without the means to enforce compliance with environmental principles to the detriment of economic growth in the short term.

  The Botswana case addresses the resource governance and wealth distribution components of inclusive green EI-dependent growth, but does not explicitly address the environmental or social outcomes other than through a financial management lens. Nevertheless, the model serves as a good platform for more robust economic governance of mineral wealth.

- On the other hand, poverty reduction schemes, which have largely focused on **the social and the economic aspects** of development, have been implemented in numerous parts of the world, sometimes to the detriment of the environment. Poverty reduction efforts tend to be highly resource-consumptive, particularly of land and water.

  Mainstreaming environmental considerations into poverty reduction initiatives can contribute to sustained poverty reduction as well as more equitable green growth.[6] The government of Mozambique has attempted in recent years to do so via its Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP).

  The PARP specifies the objective of inclusive growth within its poverty reduction strategy to increase productivity in agriculture and fisheries in addition to employment promotion, social development, among others, as well as recognizing the link between poverty and the environment.

  In outlining the need for the sustainable management of natural resources and government programmes to achieve such objectives, it also emphasizes the management of environmentally induced risks to poverty reduction efforts such as droughts, natural disasters and climate change. Renewable energies and new energy sources are also highlighted as part of the greater poverty reduction strategy (IMF, 2011). The PARP serves as a good model of 'environmental mainstreaming', for other SADC states, and reinforces the need to better account for environmental risk as an increasingly important factor in development planning.

Resource-rich countries of the SADC region share a lot in common (including similar resources), which potentially exposes them to 'beggar thy neighbour' approaches by a highly organised and powerful EI sector. It is in this sense that efforts to go green are probably best implemented dually—at the regional and national level—to avoid one state wishing to impose stricter environmental limitations being played off against a neighbouring country that has not done so. Such a regional approach will also help to avoid a 'race to the bottom' between states vying to attract lucrative EI investments.[7]

A consistent regional approach to governance and EI growth can help to consistently maximise economic and social benefits and minimise environmental damages, which can in some cases affect shared and trans-boundary water sources.

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is one such potential entry point for the promotion and implementation of a regional approach of this kind. Additionally, the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), which highlights the need to transform EI revenues into other forms of enduring capital that can outlive the lifespan of EI activities, also presents an important springboard for such actions (UNECA, 2012).

The SADC Protocol on Mining (SADC, 2006) and the recent SADC Model Bilateral Investment Treaty Template and Commentary (Mann, 2012), also present viable opportunities for reform. Such regional organs, strategic visions, mechanisms, and other SADC institutions, also have the potential to act as crucibles for bold transformative efforts to leverage the significant regional potential for solar, wind, geothermal and tidal power.

5. Final Thoughts

If inequality, economic growth and environmental protection are to be taken on in a meaningful way, it follows that the industries producing the largest amounts of wealth (whose strategies and operations influence employment, indirect/direct investments, and wealth distribution), who contribute to the increasing speed and scale of environmental degradation as well as social inequalities, should be a priority focal point for reform minded policymakers. It is in this light that EIs in the SADC region emerge as an important entry point for change on the inclusive green growth front through the lens of holistic policy and decision-making.

This review suggests that more modest goals of development **path repairing** and **path linking** may be more feasible first steps for catalytic change than those of more dramatic development path transformations. There is already evidence in the SADC region of modest reform efforts that are helping to create an important foundation from which to further a greener and more equitable form of growth.

By locating inclusive green growth opportunities in SADC, this discussion can serve as an important starting point for robust policy discussions on the combined economic, environmental and social futures of the SADC region. The importance of an amalgamation of efforts and a balanced consideration of all three of these policy dimensions cannot be overemphasized. All future growth must ensure that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which development and growth will rely. Moreover, the challenges presented by a rapidly changing and more volatile climate, including variable weather patterns, represent both a pull and push factor for such change that is becoming increasingly urgent and unavoidable. ■

1. SADC Members States: Angola, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Seychelles and Madagascar (membership currently suspended).

2. The International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth is a partnership of the Government of Brazil and the United Nations Development Programme. The Team Leader of the Rural and Sustainable Development Programme serves as the Principal Investigator for the Green Guide project and has served in this capacity for the last 20 months.

3. This approach is now promoted as a good practice – most recently at the Global South–South Expo on Energy and Climate. See more in the brochure for the event available from <http://www.southsouthexpo.org/uploads/2012_documents/BD-UNDP-brochure-20121112-low.pdf>.

4. The efforts of REDD and REDD+ (which goes beyond REDD and incorporates the conservation, management and increase of forest carbon stocks) help to apply a monetary value to the carbon stored in forests. This is done through incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and deforestation and to invest in low-carbon paths of growth. Financial flows through REDD+ for the reduction of greenhouse emissions are forecasted to be approximately US$30 billion/year. Such funds not only reward the reduction of carbon emissions but can also serve to support new, social and environmental initiatives.

5. See more at <http://climatechange.worldbank.org/blogs/what-has-carbon-got-do-kids-going-school>.

6. Poverty reduction initiatives and industrial development can create jobs but can also generate pollution, regional droughts or floods, in addition to deforestation, a decrease in access to and quality of arable land, and a decrease in fish stocks. If environmental risks are not incorporated into poverty reduction initiatives, their implementation can harm the environment and, ultimately, poverty alleviation objectives. Yet via a holistic approach, poverty reduction strategies can be designed to minimise environmental damages and, in some cases, even produce positive environmental outcomes. See Bucknall, Kraus and Pillai (2000).

7. A 'race to the bottom' refers to the regulatory competition for EI business between states via the promotion and provision of favourable operating conditions, contracts, tax holidays and other investment incentives.

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