



Payments for Environmental Services as source of development funding for small-scale farmers in northern Namibia: preliminary results

Simon Angombe (2), Lena Bloemertz (1), Simon Käch (1), Josefina Asino (3), and Nikolaus J. Kuhn (1)

(2) University of Namibia, Geography, History and Environmental Studies, Windhoek, Namibia, (1) University of Basel, Physical Geography, Environmental Sciences, Basel, Switzerland (nikolaus.kuhn@unibas.ch), (3) University of Greifswald, Landscape Ecology and Nature Conservation, Greifswald, Germany

Studies in Africa suggest that improving Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) on cropland soils increases yields, but also offers the opportunity of earning carbon credits. Further potential for earning carbon credits and generating Payments for Environmental Services (PES) lies in an integrated approach to landscape carbon management, including shrubland and pasture used for grazing and timber supply. These studies indicate that funds raised from PES could be used to foster the development of small-scale farming in northern Namibia. However, the limited information on soil quality and the rationale for particular soil management and land use practices applied by small-scale farmers in Namibia prohibits a conclusive assessment of the potential of Payment for PES as a source of income or funding opportunity for development initiatives in Northern Central Regions of Namibia. Therefore, the aim of this study is the identification of potential intervention mechanisms to improve the livelihood of small scale-farmers and reducing land degradation with the support of PES in the communal regions of northern Namibia. The work in Namibia aimed at identifying existing soil management and land use practices as well as soil quality, including carbon stocks, on land used by small-scale farmers in the densely populated northern central region. The main objective of the first part of the field work was to develop an overview of farming practices and soil quality as well as sampling and interviewing approaches. Four settlements were selected for the field work based on their distance to the urbanized road corridor between Oshakati and the Angolan border. Initial results confirm the potential to increase productivity on land used by small-scale farmers as well as the opportunity to develop landscape carbon stocks. However, limits to earning PES might be the lack of a market, and thus incentive for the farmers, to shift from subsistence to commercial farming.