

# **MUROMBEDZI, James Christopher (D.Phil.)**

## **Current Contact Information**

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## **Competencies**

I am a highly motivated individual with a passion for climate change and sustainable development, natural resources governance, and livelihood enhancement especially among marginalized communities in developing countries. I have extensive research and substantive policy analysis and engagement experience at the highest levels, especially in Africa. In addition to working with civil society, national and local government policy development and implementation processes, I have worked closely with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and NEPAD (now AUDA)

My entire professional focus has been on, climate change, the environment and sustainable development. I have also extensive experience with human rights issues, governance, peace, poverty eradication, and the development of strong and independent civil societies. I have specific competencies in development policy and practice; climate change and natural resources governance; sustainable development; conservation and development; land reform and resource tenure policy analysis; livelihoods and access to land and natural resources; social institutions and social movements; and decentralization and participatory conservation and development. I also have extensive experience with programme development, management, implementation and evaluation; resource mobilization and financial management; grant making and portfolio management; organizational development, human resources management and team building; and general administration.

For the past 20 years I have worked in different middle and senior level management positions in regional and international organizations, including the Ford Foundation, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), and currently the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). I have also consulted for many organizations on policy and related issues in sustainable development, climate change and natural resources policy and governance, and have also served on the boards of many national, regional and international organizations.

I have contributed numerous research papers, published articles, think pieces and seminar and conference papers on sustainable development, climate change and natural resources governance. The empirical focus of most of my work on development has been on participatory natural resources governance, local democracy and sustainable rural development.

I have participated in national, regional and global policy development processes including advising several national governments in Africa. Among other achievements in this regard, I advised the Liberian Government on the development of a land and forest governance policy between 2008-2010, and on the development of an energy and environment policy (2010-2011); I participated in the development of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (2005-2020); the Okavango Delaa

Management Plan (2003-2006); the Zambezi Basin Water Management Programme (2003-2007); the development and elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals as a member of the Independent Research Forum on SDGs (IRF) and Independent Experts Group on SDGs (IEG) for LDCs (2012-2014). I have led the annual climate change conference of the UNECA (Climate Change and Development in Africa) since 2015. I also initiated the African Climate Talks (ACTs) in 2015, and have contributed to the African participation in the UNFCCC Conferences of Parties, including advising the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) on global climate governance.

I lead my institution's engagement with the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN), the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET). I advise the UNECA Senior Management on climate change and development and provide technical support for the institution's engagement with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and have led UNECA's participation in the African NDC Partnership.

## **Employment History, Responsibilities and Achievements**

### **Current Position:**

#### **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa - African Climate Policy Center: Officer in Charge (Current since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016)**

I was appointed the Officer in Charge of the African Climate Policy Center in a reorganization of the UNECA programmes which took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. In this position I am responsible for the Programmatic, Administrative, Human Resources and Financial management of the African Climate Policy Center. This entails leading the development and execution of the Center's programme focusing on the implementation of climate actions (adaptation, mitigation, mobilization of finance and implementation of the nationally determined commitments), leading the interaction with its key constituencies in national Governments, Regional Economic Commissions, Regional Climate Centers, as well as the African Union Commission; mobilizing and managing financial and human resources, leading the interaction with donors as well as program implementing partners in the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission. I also participate in the management of the UNECA as the Center's representative in the Senior Management Team. I lead the development of African narratives on climate change and development through the annual Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA) conference. I also lead the engagement of the UNECA with climate policy and governance through interaction with member states, the Committee of Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) as well as the African Group of Negotiators. Through the Director of the Special Initiatives Division of UNECA, I provide backup support for climate change and development nexus in the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD).

### **Previous Positions**

#### **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa - African Climate Policy Center: Senior Political Affairs Officer (Climate Change) October 2014- June 2016)**

In this position, I provided leadership, functional and technical advice on the African Climate Policy Centre's climate policy and governance initiatives. This included assisting and advising on the

development of climate change policies and strategies for African member states; the elaboration of Nationally Determined Commitments in the run up to the Paris Agreement of 2015; and the identification of strategies and tools that can be used to generate and package policy messages and identify ways in which these can be utilized by a wide range of policy actors. I developed conceptual frameworks that serve as a template for understanding how research results can be analyzed and interpreted into policy narratives. I also worked to foster regional integration and harmonization of policies, laws, regulations, codes, standards and practices and contributed to the analytical works and understanding of the programmes of continental initiatives such as NEPAD and regional economic communities. I worked closely with groups such as the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), the Africa Ministerial Committee on Environment (AMCEN), and Regional Economic Communities to identify their policy related aspirations and needs, and craft messages for use in the climate change negotiating process and lend support to the various positions articulated by these groups. I have developed a comprehensive understanding of the policy instruments within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) such as the National Adaptation Programme of Actions as well their evolution within the Convention. I delivered training and capacity-building programmes for planners, policy makers and other stakeholders in climate change. I assisted Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other regional organizations in building consensus and articulating common positions and strategies on climate change and development issues. I also participated in the Senior Management of the ECA and acted as the Coordinator of the Centre and Director of the Special Initiatives Division in the absence of the substantive Director and Coordinator.

**Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA): Coordinator – Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI) (November 2011 – August 2014).**

The Responsive Forest Governance Initiative (RFGI) was a five-year research and training program, focusing on environmental governance in Africa. The aim of RFGI is to make environmental policy more democratic and emancipatory. The RFGI is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and executed by the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. The program has supported four postdoctoral fellows and 34 researchers working in 14 countries. In Africa, RFGI has worked in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, DR Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Comparative cases were conducted in Nepal and Peru. Currently, the programme is focused on the finalization of research papers, including the forthcoming publication of a Special Issue of the Journal Conservation and Society

RFGI aims to enable responsive and accountable decentralization in forestry and at strengthening the representation of forest-based rural populations in decision making. RFGI works to identify ways to enhance responsive and adaptive governance processes that reduce vulnerability, enhance wellbeing, and improve forest management. Responsive and adaptive governance will be crucial to equitable and sustainable strategies for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD), and for promoting climate adaptation. Drawing on existing decentralization research and experience, RFGI explores pathways to successful decentralization. The Initiative aims to strengthen links between successful decentralization and locally responsive, accountable, and pro-poor outcomes. It assesses the conditions under which central authorities devolve substantial forest management and use decisions to local governments, as well as the conditions that enable local government to reduce poverty through

forest management. Local government can serve as the institutional infrastructure for scaling up local participation in public decision making. RFGI aims to enable local governments to play this integrative role in rural development and natural resource management. RFGI has now trained 34 young researchers who are now part of the RFGI Africa-wide network of environmental governance analysts. RFGI is producing over 30 working papers, a democratic forest governance handbook, an action-learning handbook, a documentary film, a synthesis report and a number of journal publications. (The completed RFGI publications are listed below available on request).

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Senior Technical Adviser - Energy and Environment (March 2010 – October 2011)**

In this position I was the head of the UNDP/UNEP Environment and Development Programme. I provided leadership and facilitation for the elaboration of an environmental governance strategy and its mainstreaming into Liberia's 2nd Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) in 2010 in collaboration with international partner organizations such as the World Bank and bilateral funding partners. This involved participation in the refinement of the country's post-conflict natural resources governance, the creation of the climate change secretariat in the President's office, support for capacity building for national staff in most pertinent environmental agencies (such as the Land Commission, the Forest Development Authority, the Climate Change Secretariat and the Ministries of Finance and Economic Planning, Energy and Water and Public Works: and management and administration of the Energy and Environment Unit of UNDP in the national office (5 technical and 3 professional Staff). I facilitated the elaboration of a programme of work towards the elaboration of a Climate Change adaptation programme with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). I assisted the Forest development Authority in developing a strategy for Community Forestry as well as the integration of REDD+ and similar interventions into the national forest strategy. I also led the engagement of the UNDP/UNEP in Liberia with other technical and support agencies in land reform, natural resources governance and poverty alleviation (such as the IUCN; Flora and fauna International; Conservation International and Green Advocates)

**TETRATECH-ARD Inc. (Liberia) Land Rights and Community Forestry Program: Land Tenure and Property Rights Specialist (February 2008 – February 2010).**

The Land Rights and Community Forestry Programme (LRCPF) was a two-year project funded by USAID and implemented by Tetrattech-Ard with the overall goal of advancing the policy and practice of land and forest management in Liberia through the introduction of adaptive management and learning based approaches. The LRCPF focused on improving the legal and policy environment for land tenure and property rights (LTPR) and natural resource management; building capacity of communities and their governmental and non-governmental partners to develop and sustain community forestry programs; and generating environmentally-sustainable and equitable economic benefits for rural residents. The specific objectives of the programme were to develop and strengthen the legal and policy framework to support community management and sustainable use of natural resources, particularly forests; develop and strengthen LTPR systems to assure property rights for all natural resource users/owners; and improve the management of community forests and increase economic opportunities for communities and other user groups. LRCPF also provided leadership for the development of a decentralized model of community land rights, and their demarcation and administration in community forest lands as part of the development of a land and forest governance framework for post-conflict Liberia. I was responsible

for providing leadership for the LTPR and sustainable management of community forests for the programme. Among other achievement, I developed models for community forest management systems which were applied to the pilot project areas and have subsequently been adopted for community forest management throughout Liberia.

**The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): Regional Director for Southern Africa. (June 2003- November 2007).**

As the representative of IUCN in Southern Africa, I led the engagement of the conservation and development community in major national and regional policy process to promote conservation informed sustainable development policies. I led research, advocacy and policy initiatives which mobilized key scientific, research and policy constituencies of the region towards integrated conservation and development programmes. I also led the engagement of the region in the development of global narratives and discourses on conservation and sustainable development in the era of the Millennium Development Goals. My main activities during my four-year tenure included:

- Representing IUCN in all the SADC member countries as well as in the SADC Regional Economic Commission. This included reporting on the IUCN programme activities to members (including government, NGO and individual scientists) through IUCN national Committees in individual countries, representing IUCN in national and regional conservation and development policies and related processes, providing leadership and advocacy for conservation and development, and mobilizing resources to provide support to member states' conservation and development initiatives.
- Reorganizing the IUCN thematic programme to include new programmes focusing on conservation and rural livelihoods; environmental governance and policy; coastal marine ecosystems management; dry lands ecosystems and livelihoods; protected areas; trans-boundary natural resources management, and forest management.
- Decentralizing the southern African regional programme to 5 different offices, resulting in expansion of IUCN's programme reach to Angola, Mauritius, Madagascar, Malawi, and Namibia, which had previously not been integrated into the southern Africa programme, and developed new institutional systems to manage the new decentralized regional programme.
- Managing and developing of a diverse staff complement of 60 distributed between 5 offices in 5 different countries, and a network of more than 80 member organizations distributed between 13 countries in Southern Africa
- Managing the research inputs of the different IUCN commissions in southern Africa and globally and translating these into applied policy programmes through direct engagement with regional governments on issues arising out of the research, as well as through initiating the elaboration and execution of appropriate fundraising strategies to resource the programme based on evidence from the research of the commissions.
- Internal reorganization of the programme management systems especially to ensure adequate evidence based programme development, policy impact through appropriate knowledge management and communication strategies and engagement with key stakeholders including governments, NGOs and individual scientist members of IUCN.
- Participation in the global management of the union as a member of the Senior Management Committee, and in the development of the IUCN Pan African initiatives, including providing

support for IUCN's engagement with key Regional Economic Groupings (SADC), the Africa Union and NEPAD.

- Management of IUCN ROSA's programme portfolio of more than \$6 million per annum distributed between the 5 offices of IUCN in southern Africa

**The Ford Foundation: Programme Officer for Southern Africa (Environment and Development) (June 1997 – May 2003).**

I developed a comprehensive grants portfolio focused on land reform, conservation, rights and livelihoods issues in environment and development in Southern Africa. To this end, I developed a programme concept entitled "Securing land and resource rights for marginalized rural communities in southern African" which was approved by the Ford Foundation's Board of Trustees and Senior Management to guide the implementation of the portfolio.

I recommended, managed and supervised a large portfolio of grants supporting research, policy, legislation and capacity development in land reform, natural resources management and sustainable rural livelihoods to key grantees in government and civil society in Southern Africa, and specifically in Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

I initiated and supported a series of discussions and publications and other capacity building activities on land tenure, land rights and sustainable development in the region, and also initiated and contributed to the development of the Pan African Network on Land and Resource Rights.

I initiated and nurtured the development of a regional network of researchers on community based natural resources management in southern Africa (subsequently referred to as the CASS/PLAAS programme).

I initiated and nurtured a trans-boundary natural resources management programme focusing on legal, policy and capacity development for the Great Limpopo National Park (Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe). I coordinated the participation of the Ford Foundation Programme staff as well as the Foundation's global network of grantees in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002.

**University of Zimbabwe, Center for Applied Social Sciences. Lecturer. (January 1990 – April 1997).**

As a Staff Development Fellow and Lecturer in the Center for Applied Social Sciences, I led research initiatives into the devolution of management authority to Rural District Councils in the communal lands of Zimbabwe, transboundary natural resources management in southern Africa, and theoretical and conceptual engagement with commons management in global discourse. I taught in various graduate course on social and political ecology as well as on research methods. I led the publication of policy and working papers, and participated in various national and regional applied policy programmes and initiatives. Specific achievements included:

- Co-supervised 1 Doctoral and 3 Master's dissertations (Doctoral dissertation completed after I had left the University)
- Represented the department on various committees of the University Council, including the Faculty of Social Studies Higher Degrees Committee, the Faculty Planning Committee, and the Research Board of the University.

- Acted as Director of the Center for Applied Social Sciences on numerous occasions, and was nominated to take over as the substantive director of the department on the retirement of the then Director, but could not take up the appointment as I subsequently left the University to join the Ford Foundation.

### **Publications: Selected articles, book chapters and edited articles**

- (2016) Inequality and natural resources in Africa World social science report. In International Social Science Council "Challenging inequalities; pathways to a just world". University of Sussex (UK). Institute of Development Studies Paris, UNESCO/ISSC, 2016
- (2016) James Murombedzi, John Waugh "Social Benefits in the Liberian Forestry Sector: An Experiment in Post-Conflict Institution Building for Resilience". In Carl Bruch, Carroll Muffett, Sandra S. Nichols (eds.) Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peace building. London, Earthscan
- (2014) "National and transnational land grabs in Africa: Implications for local resource governance" in Child B and Grenville B (eds.) "Natural Resources Governance. Taylor and Francis
- (2014). Accumulation by dispossession, climate change and natural resources governance in Africa. CODESRIA Newsletter, January 2014.
- (2013) "African perspectives needed in global environmental change" in ISSC and UNESCO (2013), World Social Science Report 2013, Changing Global Environments, OECD Publishing and UNESCO Publishing, Paris.
- (2012) Murombedzi, J., and J. Ribot... Occupy Nature: Representation as the Basis of Emancipatory Environmentalism. • Vivre Autrement: La magazine des autres mondes possibles. ENDA 23 June 2012.
- (2012) Where Do We Go from Rio? The Implications of the Third World Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+ 20) for Sustainability and Environmental Governance in Africa. CODESRIA Bulletin Nos. 3 &4, 2012. Dakar.
- (2010). Agrarian Social Change and Post-Colonial Natural resource Management Interventions in Southern Africa's Communal tenure Regimes. in Nelson F. ed. "Community Rights, Conservation and Contested Land: The politics of Natural resource Governance in Africa. Earthscan. London.
- (2005). Hutton, J. Adams, W.M and Murombedzi, J.C. "Back to the Barriers? Changing Narratives in Biodiversity Conservation." Forum for Development Studies, No 2-2005, 342-370.
- (2003). Magome, Hector, and James Murombedzi. Sharing South African National Parks: Community Land and Conservation in a Democratic South Africa. In: W. M. Adams and M. Mulligan (ed.) Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era. London: Earth scan.
- (2003). Devolving the Expropriation of Nature: The 'devolution' of Wildlife Management in southern Africa. In: W. M. Adams and M. Mulligan (ed.) Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era. London: Earth scan.
- (2001). 'Committees, rights, costs and benefits', in D Hulme and M. W. Murphree (eds.) African Wildlife and African Livelihoods: The Promise And Performance Of Community Conservation. James Currey, Oxford, pp244-55

- (1999). Devolution and Stewardship in Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE Programme. *Journal of International Development*. Volume 11, Number 2 pp 287-294

(1997: a) Management of the land and resources of the Masoka community of Dande communal lands, Zimbabwe. *Society & Natural Resources*. Volume 10, No. 4 (pp 405-408)

(1997). Sibanda, A., J. Murombedzi and M. Tawanda. Sexual behaviour among transport workers: a study of National Employment Council for the Transport Operating Industry (NECTOI) drivers and assistants, and commercial sex workers. Tropag Consultancy Services (Pvt.) Ltd, Harare (Unpublished report).

- (1994). Derman, W. and Murombedzi, J. C. 'Democracy, development and human rights in Zimbabwe: a contradictory terrain', *Rural and Urban Studies* 1 (2), 119-144.

- (1991). "Decentralizing common property resources management: a case study of the Nyaminyami District Council of Zimbabwe's wildlife management programme". *Dryland Network Issues Paper* 30. International Institute for Environment and Development, London

As co-Director of the Resoponsive Forest Governance Initiative of CODESRIA, I co-edited with J. Ribot and G. Walters over 50 research papers (published by CODESRIA) on carbon forestry, representation and local democracy. <https://www.codesria.org/spip.php?article2322>

**Numerous unpublished working papers, conference papers, and book reviews (available on request)**



## Associations and Board Memberships

- Board Member: The Conservation and Development Forum (CDF), (1995-1997).
- Councilor: International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP), (1996 – 2002).
- Deputy Chair: IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy (CEESP), (2002-2003)
- Board of Directors: Southern Africa Conservation Education Trust (SACET), (2003 – 2007)
- Board of Directors: Leadership for Conservation in Africa (LCA), (2006 - 2009)
- Board of Directors: Africa Safari Lodge Foundation (2007 - present)
- Board of Directors: Rights and Resources Initiative (2009 – 2014)
- Member: African Leadership Group – National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPS 2.0): Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Development Project.
- Member: Independent Research Forum on SDGs (IRF) and Independent Experts Group on SDGs (IEG) for LDCs (2012-2014).
- Member: Future Earth Interim Committee for Africa -The International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) (2013-2014)
- Editorial Board Member: International Journal of the Commons (Current)
- Member: Natural Resources Governance Framework Working Group (IUCN-CEESP) – (Current)
- Member Steering Committee – FAO Forest and Farm Facility (current)

## Consulting

I have consulted for a large number of national and international organizations including The World Bank; USAID; FAO; IFAD; GTZ (now GIZ); IUCN; and UNDP. My consultancy work has encompassed a broad range of applied national and international policy issues including natural resources governance; environment and development; sustainable development, livelihoods and natural resources and local government; climate change and global environmental change; agriculture and rural development. Specific details of consultancy assignments carried out can be made available on request.

## Education

- Doctor of Philosophy (Applied Social Science). University of Zimbabwe,
- Bachelor of Science (Hons) Sociology & Social Anthropology, University of Zimbabwe
- Diploma International Environmental Law, UNITAR
- Certificate in Land Tenure Analysis (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
- Certificate in Management and Analysis of Statistical Data (Reading University)

## Honours and Awards

- 1997: Ciriacy -Wantrup and Bishop Fellowship in Natural Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley (I did not take this up, opting instead for the Ford Foundation position).
- Staff Development Fellowship, University of Zimbabwe, 1988-1990
- Best Student Award, BSc. Sociology Honors first and third years, University of Zimbabwe
- Beit Trust Scholarship, 1981 - (awarded to the 10 best GCE "A" level students in Zimbabwe),

## **References**

Available on request

## **Personal Details**

DOB: 1st November, 1961 (Chegutu, Zimbabwe)

Nationality: Zimbabwean

Citizenship: Zimbabwean