

Urban growth, domestic fuel choices and sustainable forestry in Kano, Nigeria

The project brings together two critical areas of enquiry in international environment-development research – the quest for sustainable urbanization (with a re-newed interest in the environmental impacts that cities have beyond their boundaries) and the transition to renewable and more sustainable energy in developing countries.

In the context of Nigeria, and the Kano region in particular, the project has strongly developed out of local needs.

Although woodland management systems in and around Kano continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience during times of complex social and ecological change, evidence suggests that resource relationships between city and hinterland have intensified. In the last four decades in particular, as urban centres throughout West Africa have physically expanded in size at unprecedented rates, woodland resources in peri-urban interfaces have been subjected to a host of new pressures associated with competition for land, markets and off-farm employment.

A better understanding of the changing nature of tree management and the sustainable use of woodland resources remains an issue of utmost importance to both livelihoods and the environment.

The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

- to map and undertake an inventory of tree-cover change in Kano's woodfuel hinterlands over the last 25 years, through the production of GIS maps comparing time-sequence aerial photographs
- to examine changes in the patterns and processes of social forestry policies and practices over time, given increasing impacts of urbanization
- to re-assess the local woodfuel economy and the potential of biomass energy as a sustainable domestic fuel source
- to explore possible future development scenarios (positive and negative) for sustainable urban energy production and consumption, and to consider an enabling policy context involving different agencies: government, NGOs and civil society

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This project is in partnership with Bayero University, Kano, and The University of Bath.

[Dr Reginald Cline-Cole \(/staff/profiles/dasa/cline-cole-reg.aspx\)](#) (University of Birmingham) and Dr Roy Maconachie (University of Bath) will present the paper, ' Fuelwood discourses and practices in Kano, Nigeria: Lessons *in* social-ecological resilience and *for* energy policy?' at the forthcoming Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference.