



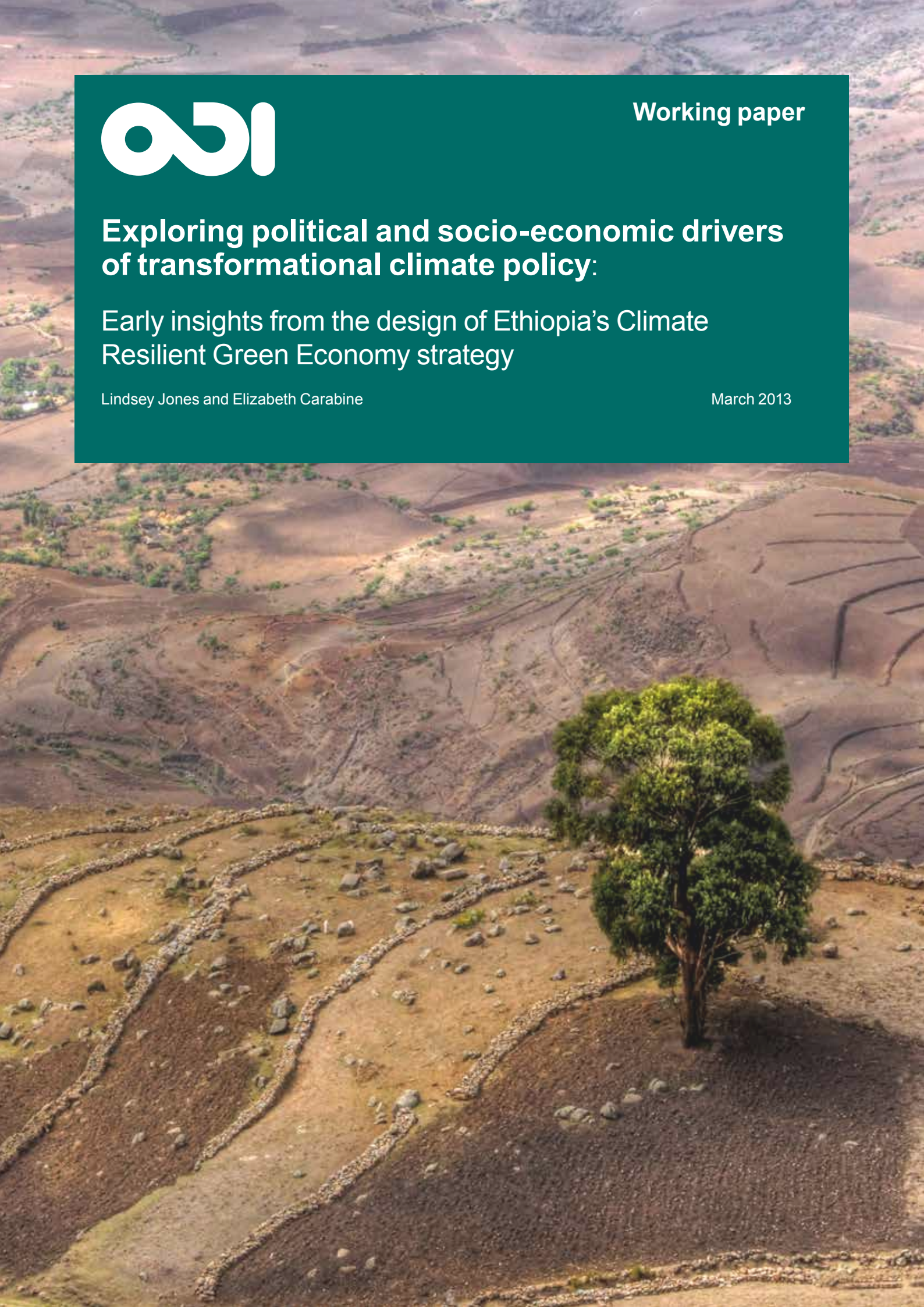
Working paper

Exploring political and socio-economic drivers of transformational climate policy:

Early insights from the design of Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy

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Table of contents

Acknowledgements	i
Executive summary	iii
1 Introduction	1
2 Transformation: an emergent narrative in climate policy and discourse	2
2.1 How transformation fits within wider CCA and resilience narratives	2
2.2 Challenges of transformational approaches to policy formulation	3
3 Assessing political and economic drivers of transformation	4
4 Ethiopia’s Climate Resilient Green Economy	9
4.1 Structures and processes of the CRGE	9
4.2 Actors, influence and leverage	11
5 Drivers, obstacles and implications in delivering transformational climate policy	14
6 Insights into the delivery of transformational climate policy: wider lessons and observations	17
7 Conclusions and further reflections	20
References	21

Executive summary

In recent years, the label ‘transformational change’ has rapidly gained traction within the climate discourse. Much of this arises from the recognition that incremental adjustments may, in many contexts, be insufficient in addressing the dual challenges of mitigating and adapting to climate change in the longer-term. This push has trickled through to the political arena. Policy-makers tasked with designing and implementing climate policies are increasingly referring to transformational change in justifying the scope of national climate strategies.

The development of Ethiopia’s CRGE Vision and Strategy provides a number of useful insights into the political and economic drivers of transformational climate policy. Ethiopia stands as one of few developing countries to have embedded climate-related objectives into the heart of development and growth model. A number of relevant factors point to this achievement, notably: strong leadership from politicians at the highest level of government; ownership, inclusion and interest from influential line ministries; the prospect of being an early pioneer of green growth and attracting international climate finance; and careful framing of the climate discourse around economic growth and development.

However, the design of the CRGE points to notable concerns with regards to the institutional design and processes used in delivering transformational climate-policy. A lack of internal capacity to provide key technical inputs towards the policy’s design, as well as failure to acknowledge important social, cultural and political implications of the CRGE’s actions have serious implications for its success and sustainability in the long-term. In addition, the separation of the Green Growth and Climate Resilient elements of the Strategy points to a failure to capitalise on potential overlaps and synchronicities between the two. More importantly, a failure to meaningfully engage stakeholders at all levels of society, particularly at the local level, raises key issues of equity, representation and recognition. The implications of which will be felt by those already politically and socially marginalised.

Alongside other early assessments of political and economic challenges in the delivery of climate policy in developing country contexts these findings point to delicate considerations and trade-offs in matching the need for delivering transformational change with a need to recognise the implication of the policies on complex social-economic and political realities at both national and local levels. Above all, it suggests that, alongside technical inputs, it is important to give consideration to ‘softer’ issues – vested interests, incentives, and power – and institutional processes within the design and implementation of transformational policy.

Failure to do so risks not only underestimating the complex political and cultural factors that affect successful take-up of policy reform, but misalignment between the needs and interests of different stakeholders and communities - from the local to the national. Above all, the authors argue that, alongside technical inputs, a more nuanced appreciation of the social and political implications of transformational climate policies is needed.



1 Introduction

Calls to promote ‘transformational climate policy’ are gaining prominence within the international climate discourse (Kates *et al.*, 2012). Its proponents argue that the breadth and scale of responses needed to deal with the climate challenge can, in many cases, no longer be addressed simply through incremental adjustments (Bahadur & Tanner, 2012). Rather, transformational approaches - both with regards to mitigation and adaptation - are needed as a means of achieving large step-changes for traditional modes of development and growth. The call for transformation is even more pronounced when considered in the context of slow progress in international climate negotiations, and the relative failure of many nationally-owned climate-relevant policies to be embedded within wider growth and development plans (Dimitrov, 2010; Preston *et al.*, 2011; Van den Berg & Feinstein, 2010).

Given the scale of reform that transformational approaches imply, care needs to be taken to ensure that new policies are flexible and robust in dealing with a range of possible future outlooks. Moreover, longer-term commitments and investments needed to deliver many mitigation and adaptation objectives will inevitably have important economic and social impacts on a wide variety of stakeholders. With this in mind, alongside the technical challenges of designing transformational climate policies, a number of key considerations are largely missing from the discourse: what are the key political and economic opportunities and barriers in driving forward transformational climate policy? What roles do vested interests, incentives and power play in its development? And whose voices and needs are represented in the process?

Despite the emphasis and clear need, few countries have undergone a process of designing transformational climate policies. Fewer still have gone about implementing them. In seeking to explore some of these questions listed above, this paper draws on the Ethiopia’s experience in developing a Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy. As one of the first developing countries to prepare domestic transformational climate policies that are meaningfully embedded within the country’s vision for economic growth and development, the design and delivery of Ethiopia’s CRGE offer a number of unique insights.

In uncovering the opportunities and challenges behind the CRGE’s development, this paper explores the role of participation, incentives and interests in implementing transformational climate policy. In so doing, the paper first provides a brief review of relevant literature on transformation and an elaboration of analytical tools for assessing drivers of policy change. It then outlines the structure of the CRGE process before exploring key political and economic factors in the CRGE’s development. Lastly, a number of wider observations are made with implications for the delivery of transformational climate policy in other country contexts.

2 Transformation: an emergent narrative in climate policy and discourse

Resilience can be defined as the amount of change a system can undergo and still retain the same function and structure while maintaining the capability for self-organisation and adaptation (Folke *et al.*, 2010). Transformation is a conceptually complex but critical aspect of resilience thinking. Defined as a physical or qualitative change in form, structure or meaning within a system, transformation is a process which enables resilience at larger scales (Folke *et al.*, 2010). In theory, building the resilience of a social environmental system may require a deliberate regime shift from an undesirable state characterised by inadequate capacity to adapt to change (adaptive capacity), to an alternative state with a more sustainable trajectory (Walker *et al.*, 2004). What results will likely be a fundamentally different system in terms of social, economic and ecological dynamics. Other definitions take into account the inadvertent, as well as deliberate, nature of transformation (Nelson *et al.*, 2007).

2.1 How transformation fits within wider CCA and resilience narratives

As the concept of resilience gains traction as a framework for addressing challenges in development policy (Boyd *et al.*, 2008; Cannon & Muller-Mahn, 2010; Mitchell & Harris, 2012; Turnbull *et al.*, 2013), so too does the understanding that maintaining the current state of human-environmental systems is, in many cases, neither feasible nor indeed desirable in the face of unprecedented drivers of change. The capacity to transform and shift into new development trajectories will therefore be necessary for systems to adapt to such change (Folke *et al.*, 2010).

As the focus on climate change adaptation (CCA) has grown in the past decade, so has the understanding of the scale and complexity of the task at hand. Early efforts at adaptation were focussed around a need to accommodate change while maintaining the same functions and structures of a system (Pelling, 2011), but due to the predicted magnitude of climate risks (IPCC, 2011; New *et al.*, 2011), this is no longer thought to be an adequate response (O'Brien, 2012). There is growing political consensus that current approaches to CCA and climate change mitigation, in the context of many of the most vulnerable countries and communities, will not be sufficient to avert the impacts of dangerous climate change. This realisation is leading to an emerging 'beyond adaptation' paradigm shift in the way policy-makers perceive the problems and solutions related to climate change (Warner *et al.*, 2012). It also recognises the complex interactions between climate change and other global drivers of change.

Resilience theory, and related definitions of transformation, is rooted in the natural sciences, as essentially objective concepts which can overlook the more normative

issues of power, knowledge, agency and social capital (Nelson *et al.*, 2007; Stringer *et al.*, 2009; Miller *et al.*, 2010; Bene *et al.*, 2012) that are central to pro-poor and climate compatible development. In the context of development, building resilience to environmental or social change is bound to goals of reducing the vulnerability of poor people. In policy terms, transformation is characterised by experimentation, support for change, social norms and values, and awareness of cross-scale dynamics (Cork, 2010). The challenges and uncertainties associated with transformational change (to be discussed later in this section) are problematic for policy makers, even while the potential wins of positive transformational change may be significant.

2.2 Challenges of transformational approaches to policy formulation

Policy formulation often follows rational or incremental approaches (Keeley & Scoones, 2000). Rational approaches involve arriving at optimal solutions to real-world problems whereas incremental approaches to policy-making comprise small changes over time. Increasingly, the concept of transformation is being adopted in policy circles, including application to sectoral policies (e.g. Rickards & Howden, 2012), but recent emphasis has been on transformation in climate policy (e.g. Pelling, 2011).

Although essentially an objective concept rooted in resilience theory, in the policy context transformation is a heuristic, normative and relative term (Rickards & Howden, 2012). Transformational approaches to policy are relative both in terms of distinguishing between deliberate versus background change and relative to incremental approaches. Even within the most objective definitions of transformation, the meaning of terms such as 'undesirable' and 'unviable' are highly subjective and open to multiple interpretations. What constitutes a 'desirable' state depends very much on the perspectives of various stakeholders.

Furthermore, the likelihood of maladaptive outcomes is greater with transformational approaches to CCA. Due to a greater degree of uncertainty, unintended maladaptation is a greater risk in transformational versus incremental adaptation. Social or ecological thresholds may be crossed inadvertently, leading to outcomes that are undesirable or maladaptive (Wilson *et al.*, 2013). The trade-offs between adaptation, transformation and the risk of system collapse are unpredictable and high-stakes (Marshall *et al.*, 2012). Greater adaptive capacity is necessarily required for transformation as the risks and complexity involved are greater. Transformational policy decisions will often have to base decisions on incomplete or heavily uncertain sources information, with higher risks for promoting maladaptation associated with it (Park *et al.*, 2012).

The cross-scalar interactions resulting from transformation are also difficult to predict (Marshall *et al.*, 2012; Park *et al.*, 2012). Windows of opportunity for transformational change may open at different scales at different times. For example, collective action at the local level may bring about larger scale transformation, whereas changes in the institutional framework may enable wider transformation from above. Thus, national and regional climate policies that drive large-scale transformational change will inevitably give rise to complex and unpredictable effects at lower levels.

3 Assessing political and economic drivers of transformation

The term 'political economy' has a rich and diverse history; one that has witnessed a number of different iterations and applications across the economic, political and social sciences. Though no formal definition exists, political economy broadly relates to the study of how political factors influence economic and social outcomes. In its application, a political economy analysis (PEA) typically focuses on the links between wealth and power, politics and economics, and governance and markets (Bump & Reich, 2012). Its popularity as an analytical tool has risen sharply, diversifying across a number of different disciplines and sub-fields. From a policy perspective PEA is used to better understand and manage policy reform and implementation processes. In this regard, three types of PEA are common: country-level politics of development frameworks; sector-level frameworks; and problem-driven frameworks.

Table 1: Types of political economy analysis: their use, methods and application

Type of PEA	Analytical focus	Key methods and framework	Scope of application
Problem-driven (see Fritz et al., 2009; Harris 2013b)	Explore why change and reform has succeeded or failed in gaining traction and what could have been done differently to move forward (operationalisation of PEA)	Qualitative and quantitative, focus on secondary with some primary research Multi-disciplinary methods, types of data, tools and perspectives	Country to local (Macro level; local and sector level; specific policies or projects)
Sector-level (see Norton et al., 2008)	Identify 'what works, why and how' in order to uncover opportunities and barriers to policy change within and across particular sectors	Qualitative; document-based case studies, a literature review, interviews with key informants Comparable across sectoral contexts	National to sub-national (Macro level; Meso level)
Country-level (see DFID, 2009)	Structural and institutional factors that support or impede poverty reduction	Qualitative; primary and secondary research Broad and flexible framework	International to national (Macro level; Meso level)

Adapted and expanded from: Haider & Rao, 2010

Despite strong overlaps, all three approaches offer distinct benefits in their application and methods. The scalar dimensions associated with each allows for a practicable process for applying PEA. This is made apparent by recent expansion and emphasis of PEA across various development sectors (DFID, 2009). Importantly, these are not solely for academic purposes, but are increasingly being conducted and used by technical and operational staff within large development actors and donors (Harris, 2013a). More recently, applications of PEA have begun to emerge within the climate change discourse (Michelowa, 2001; Aldy *et al.*, 2003; Klein & Mohner, 2011; Seballos & Kreft, 2011; Alam *et al.*, 2011).

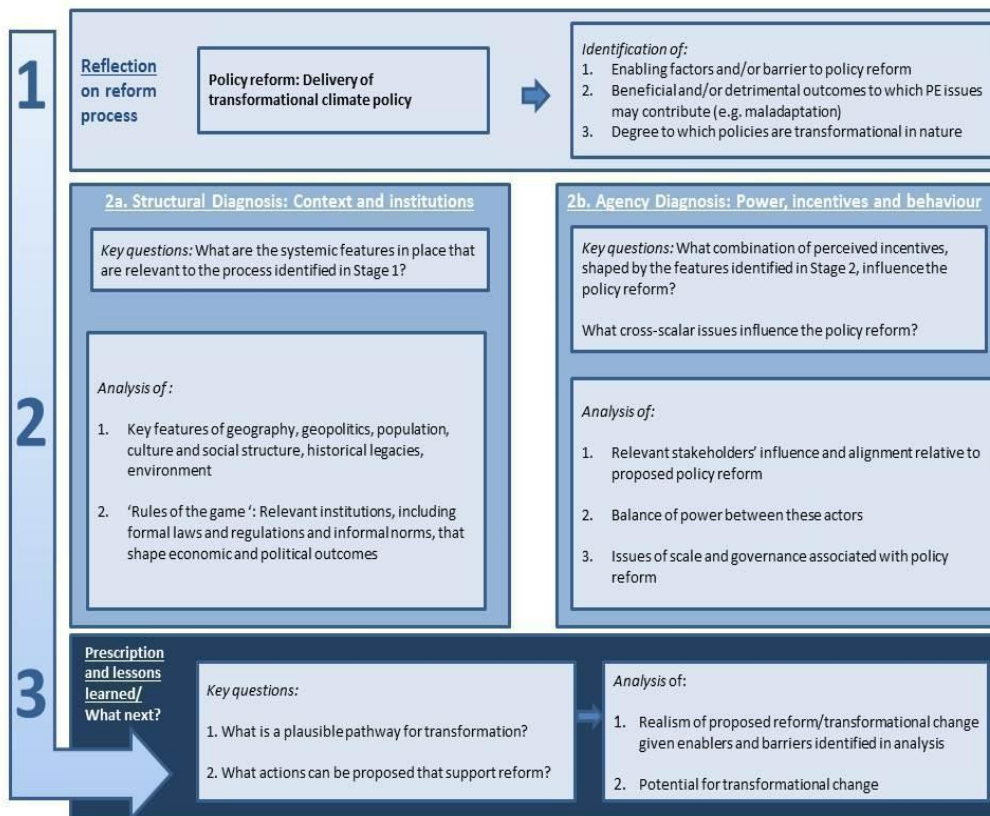
Tanner and Allouche (2011) allude to four key issues in needing to consider the political and economic dimensions of climate change and development and point to the inadequacies of traditional political economy frameworks (see Figure 1) in capturing them. Firstly, the complexity of political economy is underlined by the cross-sectoral nature of the challenge, influencing all aspects of the development spectrum - from planning to finance and governance. Secondly, a lack of framing of climate change in relation to specific concerns at the sub-national level, where very different levels of flexibility and institutional capacity exist in comparison to many national and international actors. Thirdly, the prospect of significant sources of climate finance raises inevitable questions about the transfer, allocation and delivery of available resources. Lastly, political economy is needed in unpacking the often apolitical view of the climate policy process and skewed framing around technical and managerial solutions (Tanner and Allouche, 2011; Levine *et al.*, 2012).

In examining the political and economic drivers of transformation climate policy in practice we explore a specific case study: the development of Ethiopia's CRGE. In so doing, we draw heavily on an adapted version of Harris' (2013a) analytical framework. The framework highlights three stages of assessment used to uncover

the political and socio-economic factors in delivering and/or blocking sector reform through transformational climate policies. These include: an identification and assessment of the procedures and aims of the reform process (1. Reflection); a diagnosis of the structural features and institutions involved in the reform process (2a. Structural Diagnosis), as well as power, incentives and behaviours of key actors and stakeholders (2b. Agency Diagnosis); and a prescription of what can be learned across contexts, and actions proposed for more effective delivery of transformational climate policy (3. Prescription) (see Figure 1). Importantly, the framework and its application constitutes an applied PEA, differing somewhat from traditional analyses, with a greater emphasis on operational relevance and a focus on unpicking factors that led to a singular reform process (see Harris et al 2013b)¹.

¹ Another distinction is the heavy emphasis on the role of historical features within traditional PEA. Though these greatly inform the application and understanding of the framework used in this study, for comprehensive depictions of the historical influence of culture and power for Ethiopia policy-making see Aalen & Tronvoll (2009), Abraham (1994), Hoben (1995), Keeley (2000) and Vaughan & Tronvoll (2003).

Figure 1: Analytic framework in understanding political and socio-economic factors that shape the design and delivery of transformational climate policy



Adapted and expanded from Harris (2013a)

The analytical framework is used to guide and structure the overall analysis and acts as a mainstay in framing the various different sources of information and data. To gain a balanced understanding of the socio-political context of the CRGE's development, a range of methods were conducted including a literature review, document analysis, and a series of half-standardised interviews with key-informants.

The literature review constituted a thorough assessment of scientific literature on the impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation/mitigation options of climate change in Ethiopia. In addition to peer-reviewed literature, grey sources were included in the review - especially pertinent given the wealth of non-governmental organisation (NGO) and non-academic studies conducted in Ethiopia. Document analysis reviewed a series of written outputs by government, NGOs, academics/think-tanks and external consultants that relate to the design and delivery of green growth and climate resilience in Ethiopia. The analysis included formal and informal documents that layout the process of shaping the CRGE, such as the Environment Protection Authority²'s 'Vision' (EPA, 2011) and 'Strategy' (EPA, 2011), as well as the various input and consultative documents that fed into consultative process.

The mainstay of the analysis' findings comes from half-standardised interviews conducted with a number of key informants (n=21). Informants consisted of actors and stakeholders with in-depth knowledge and experience of the CRGE process and Ethiopian context. Care was taken to select informants from a wide range of sectors and perspectives including: central government; line ministries and departments; international NGOs; donors; academics; and international

² Note that the EPA has since been upgraded in status, becoming the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Forestry

consultants. Participants were selected based on an analysis of relevant organisations in the sector, and key players involved in the development of the CRGE. A snowballing technique was employed in order to develop a comprehensive list of key-informants.

Interviews were semi-structured in nature, allowing for interviewers to casually guide the general theme of the interview, with answers from interviewees being descriptive (Gero *et al.*, 2011). Each interview lasted roughly an hour with points of view and key insights collated and transcribed. These were then used to identify, classify and categorise common themes and sub-themes using thematic analysis (see Fossey *et al.*, 2002). Interviews were conducted with full assurance of anonymity. The analytical framework (Figure 1) was used to guide and structure the findings, helping to isolate key political and socio-economic issues within the context of the case study.

It is important to note that given the early stages of the CRGE process, and the limited scope of the study to incorporate many of the underlying historic and socio-political factors that influence Ethiopia's political environment (for further contextual analyses see Abraham 1994; Lovise & Tronvill, 2009; and Vaughan & Tronvill, 2003), the study aims only to provide a preliminary assessment of key opportunities and barriers in the CRGE's design and delivery. It is hoped that this will be followed up and complemented in time with further analyses as the CRGE commences its implementation phase.

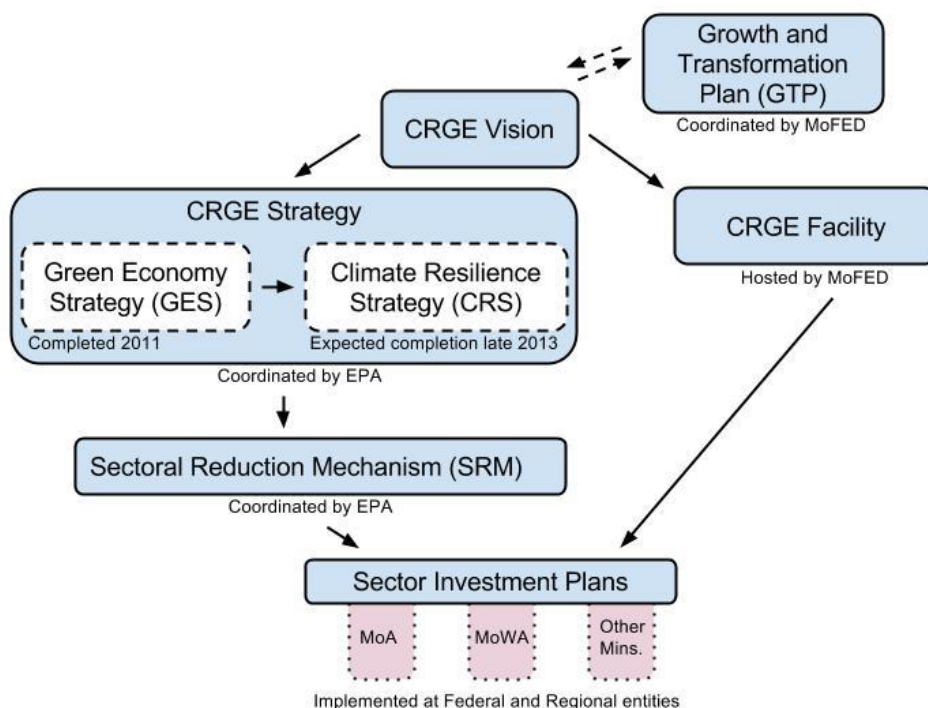
4 Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy

Below we briefly describe the structure of the CRGE process in Ethiopia, pointing to key institutional arrangements, processes, and actors.

4.1 Structures and processes of the CRGE

In 2011, Ethiopia's then Prime-Minister Meles Zenawi laid out a forward-looking and ambitious vision for the country: to transform Ethiopia into a carbon-neutral middle-income country by 2025 (EPA, 2011a). Named the CRGE 'Vision', this was soon accompanied by a more detailed CRGE 'Strategy', which presented a framework for promoting Ethiopia as an early-adopter of low carbon growth and exploiting opportunities to transform the country's development model towards greater economic and environmental sustainability (EPA, 2011b). As part of this, the Strategy has three overarching objectives: fostering economic development and growth; ensuring abatement and avoidance of future emissions; and improving resilience to climate change.

Figure 2: Core institutional structure and makeup of the CRGE process



Source: Authors (as of July 2013)

Both the CRGE Vision and Strategy draw heavily from the country's Growth and Transformation plan (GTP), a five year plan that guides Ethiopia's development trajectory from 2010 to 2015 led by the Ministry of Finance and Economic

Development (MoFED). Indeed, the two are meant to be closely linked; implementation of the CRGE contributing heavily to the delivery of the goals set out under the GTP. In achieving these objectives, the CRGE revolves around three further ambitions: attracting international climate finance - partly reliant on emphasising emissions abatement; supporting innovation based on the latest production platforms - most importantly, 'leapfrogging' to modern energy efficient and renewable sources of energy generation (Kaur, 2013); and creating a competitive advantage in sustainably exploiting the use and productivity of the country's resources (OECD, 2013).

The CRGE Strategy is comprised of two main components. The first is labelled the Green Economy Strategy (GES), officially unveiled by Meles Zenawi in 2011. The GES is formally coordinated by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), with considerable inputs from key Federal actors - notably the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and MoFED. In addition, the document is heavily reliant on technical inputs provided by a number of external consultancies and research institutes with key roles played by the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI), McKinsey & Company and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). At its core, the GES identifies four pillars for action: increasing sustainable agricultural production and food security; protecting forests; increasing electric power generation from renewable energy in order to become self-sufficient and export to neighbouring countries; and fostering modern energy-efficient technology in transport, industry and construction sectors. Under these, 150 initiatives are selected, 60 of which are prioritised in order to meet the economic development goals outlined in the GTP (EPA, 2011c). In considering its application, a total of \$150 billion is thought to be needed over the next twenty years to implement the GES - \$80 billion in capital investment and \$70 billion for operating and programme costs (OECD, 2013).

The second component of the CRGE is the Climate Resilient Strategy (CRS), currently on-going and scheduled for completion in 2013. The CRS is meant to build on previous climate plans - such as the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) and Ethiopia's Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change (EPACC) - and is focused on two main aspects: promoting the integration of disaster risk reduction and management into the CRGE's wider objectives; and helping to foster mainstreaming and integration of resilience and adaptation objectives into sectoral and regional plans. Given Ethiopia's heavy dependence on natural resources the CRS has a focus on agriculture, land-use and forestry. Similar to the GES, the CRS is supported by technical inputs by various external actors. A first phase towards formulating the CRS's consolidation was carried out in 2011, partially supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to take stock of existing adaptation initiatives and identify key risks and vulnerabilities faced in the country. The second phase looks to build administrative capacity for adaptation, identifying the cost of adaptation and prioritising programmes in the agricultural sector, while further measures will be taken in identifying adaptation measures in the infrastructure and health sectors (OECD, 2013).

Once completed, the GES and the CRS will be combined to form the overall CRGE Strategy (EPA, 2011a). Guidance and standards for implementation and mainstreaming is expected to be done through a framework developed under the Sectoral Reduction Mechanism (SRM), coordinated by EPA. This will, in turn, be put into practice through sectoral CRGE Implementation Plans by various federal and regional entities (MoFED, 2012). The CRGE also envisages the establishment of CRGE Units that will seek to mainstream and implement the Strategy in each of the key line ministries. Alongside this, a CRGE Registry is allocated the responsibility of monitoring and tracking progress in the delivery of actions. Regarding institutional and financial arrangements, the government announced the creation of a CRGE funding Facility held by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (GoE, 2012). The Facility is tasked with attracting, allocating and channelling financial resources in support of the CRGE's implementation.

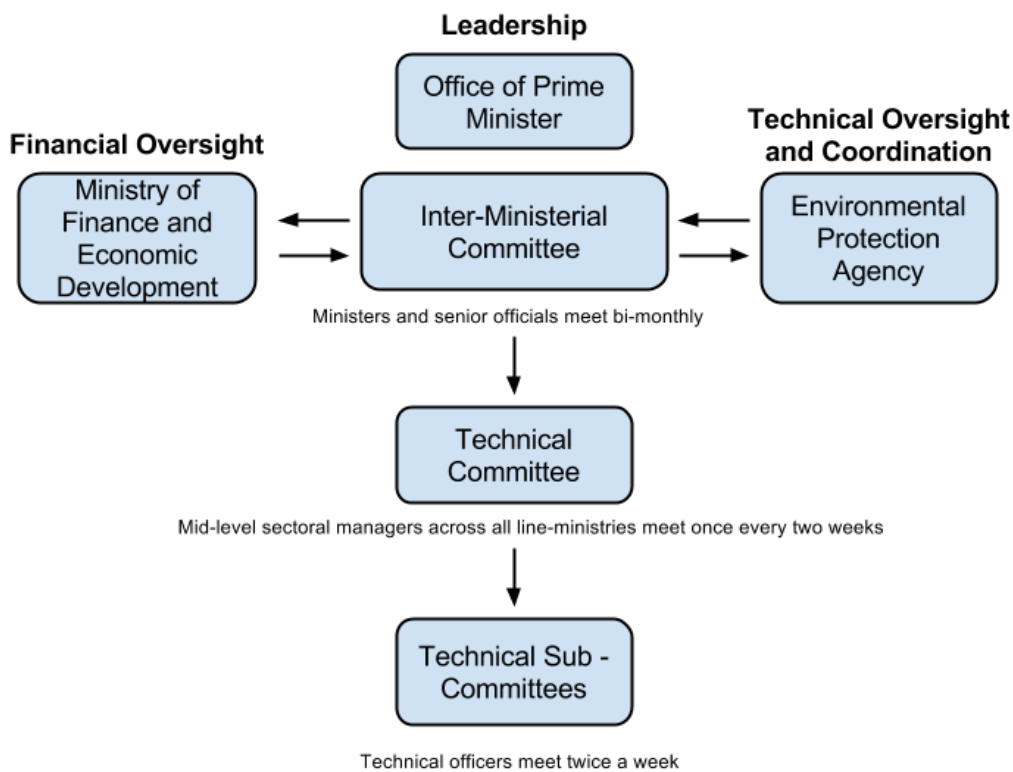
4.2 Actors, influence and leverage

A wide range of actors and groups are involved in the development of the CRGE's Vision and Strategy (see Table 2). From amongst them, the Office of Prime Minister (OPM), MoFED, and EPA constitute the three primary actors involved in the process. OPM assumes overall leadership of the CRGE, with EPA responsible for the coordination and design. Insights from key informant interviews point to tension between the EPA and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) over designation of the lead role in developing the CRGE Strategy, particularly during the early stages of the process. Despite being an Authority, and thus not carrying the same weight as conventional Line ministries, the EPA was able to secure ownership in developing the CRGE. MoA nevertheless remains influential in the design of the CRGE, particularly as agriculture has been fast-tracked as a sector priority and developed its own sectoral CRS. Given MoFED's role in developing Ethiopia's GTP and high degree of leverage and influence within central government, the ministry plays a central role in the on-going development of the CRGE. This relates particularly to the Strategy's implementation and funding mechanisms as MoFED assumes responsibility for the management of the CRGE Funding Facility (MoFED, 2012).

Key actors	Responsibilities	Involvement in vision and strategy consultation process	Influence and leverage
Office of Prime Minister	Overall leadership of the CRGE process	Principle actor involved in the oversight of all activities under the CRGE	High degree of influence. Late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi acting as the primary driving force behind the CRGE's development
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Lead in the design and delivery of the CRGE Vision and Strategy. Coordination and budgeting of CRGE programmes. In charge of the CRGE Facility.	Main actor in designing the Vision, Strategy and SRM	High degree of influence - particularly considering its designation as an Authority (and not a Ministry). Influence may partially diminish as the emphasis shifts towards implementation
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)	Responsible for delivering the GTP. Home of CRGE Facility in charge of attracting, allocating and channelling international climate finance	Core partner alongside EPA	High degree of influence and leverage, particularly as funds begin to be disbursed through the CRGE Facility
Ministry of Agriculture	Implementation of relevant CRGE programmes. Agriculture designated a priority sector. Core emphasis in the CRS, and development of MoA CRGE unit and separate sectoral CRS.	Inputs to inter-ministerial steering committee as well as representative in the technical and sub-technical committees	Moderate degree of influence and leverage. Influence growing as agriculture fast-tracked as a priority sector
Other Line ministries	Development of internal CRGE units. Implementation of relevant CRGE programmes. Preparation of the Sector Investment Plans as well as creating individual CRGE Units	Inputs to inter-ministerial steering committee as well as representative in the technical and sub-technical committees	Some degree of influence and leverage – particularly Ministry of Transport and Communication and Ministry of Water and Energy
Donors (DFID, CDKN, UNDP, JICA, NORAD, GIZ, WB)	Partial funding for inputs into the design of the CRGE Strategy. Potential funders of identified projects	Limited involvement in the design of the Strategy. Greater role in shaping and supporting implementation (each with different sector focus). Partial commitments to support the CRGE Facility from some.	Some degree of influence and leverage
Technical Consultants and Research Institutes	Provision of technical inputs towards all aspects of the CRGE process (GES, CRS, SRM, SIPs)	EDRI and GGGI acting as expert advisors to the Green Economy Strategy (GES) with inputs from McKinsey & Company. The Global Climate Adaptation Partnership (GCAP) and GGGI acting as expert advisers for the Climate Resilience Strategy (CRS). National universities and others provide partial-inputs to both.	Moderate degree of leverage. EDRI has close political ties with OPM and EPA. Much of the groundwork in developing the GES and CRS originates from technical inputs from EDRI, GGGI and McKinsey.
Regional Government	Support implementing Sector Investment Plans	Involvement in GTP through regional consultations. Partial consultation in CRGE through and with CRGE Sub Technical Committees. Inputs into the development of CRGE Facility	Some degree of influence and leverage. Involvement in a number of consultation processes. Lack of meaningful engagement and take-up.
NGOs, Civil Society and Private Sector	Little formal involvement in the development of CRGE Vision and Strategy. Partial engagement in implementation activities, mainly through SRM executing entities	Limited	Limited degree of influence and leverage to date. May increase in the implementation of CRGE through SRM and SIPs

Aside from these four, a number of important actors exert influence over the CRGE. Notably, other Line ministries - particularly the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MoTC), and Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) - have inputs within the consultation process through the Inter-Ministerial Committee. The committee gives high-level policy direction, with ministers and senior officials representing each of the ministries engaged in the CRGE. A Technical Committee, and below that several Sub-Technical Committees, are responsible for the addressing issues of operationalisation of the CRGE, including regional and sectoral consultations (see Figure 3 for institutional structure and management details). Despite this, aside from MoA, few Line ministries can leverage the influence of the three core actors (OPM, EPA and MoFED).

Figure 3: Key actors and committees involved in the design of the CRGE Strategy



Source: Authors, based on OECD (2013)³

³ As of July 2013

5 Drivers, obstacles and implications in delivering transformational climate policy

This section presents key insights generated in the application of the modified PEA framework. Drawing from across the literature review, document analysis, and key-informant interviews it identifies four main themes relating to socio-political and institutional drivers and obstacles to the delivery of the CRGE.

5.1 The importance and implications of strong political ownership and vision

A clear driving force behind the development and delivery of the CRGE is a high-level of political leadership, commitment and ownership from senior members of central government - most notably OPM. The late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's status and influence played an important role in galvanising support for his green growth agenda, both within Ethiopia and internationally. As spokesperson for the African Union, he represented the continent at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen, 2009; lauded for his leadership at the conference, Meles Zenawi was reappointed as leader of the African delegation for COP 16 and 17, in Cancun and Durban respectively (Hoste & Anderson 2011). Meles Zenawi also played a central role in the architecture of international climate finance, designated co-chair of the UN Secretary General's high-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing in February 2010. As such, Ethiopia was well positioned to unveil the CRGE at the Durban COP17 in 2011 where the delivery mechanisms and governing instruments of Green Climate Fund were high on the agenda.

Similar to procedural and institutional arrangements in the development of past environmental plans and policies in Ethiopia (see Hoben, 1995; Harrison, 2002; Easterly, 2006), the design of the CRGE Vision and Strategy have been notably top-down and politicised (OECD, 2013). Central government retains direct control and ownership of the consultative process, with little room for meaningful participation and engagement from external actors in the process. Much of this may be understood in the context of Ethiopia's systems of governance and the wider political orientation of the ruling coalition (see Keeley & Scoones, 2000; and Lind, 2012). While some regional and inter-governmental consultation took place during preparation of the GTP, there is little evidence that the CRGE Vision and Strategy documents have undergone a process of extensive consultation with stakeholders outside of government, aside from supportive donors and technical consultants. Avenues for greater consultation are scheduled within the structure of the SRM and SIPs, though whether this materialises into meaningful engagement remains to be seen.

The approach is most evident in the early stages of the CRGE's development - particularly delivery of the Green Economy Strategy (GES). The GES drew on inputs from a number of international consultants, providing much of the macroeconomic analysis and basis for quantitative outputs. Many of respondents interviewed note two distinct critiques: firstly, a lack of meaningful participatory processes and engagement with wider stakeholders at all levels of governance - from the local to the national. Secondly, a distinct failure to capture important social, cultural and political factors within the economic and quantitative analyses. Reasons for this are numerous, and partially reflect the political and institutional procedures adhered to by the central government in the delivery of key development policies. Criticisms are also placed on the inputs of the external technical consultants in failing to adequately capture important socio-political variables within the economic methods used to form the basis of the GES. In addition, many interview respondents attribute Meles Zenawi's desire for a tight turn-around in the GES' delivery, in time to be publically unveiled at COP17 in Durban - thus leaving little time for detailed technical inputs and engagement on a meaningful consultation process.

5.2 Evolving the agenda past traditional narratives on adaptation and mitigation

A key driver for action and delivery on the CRGE was, and still remains, the prospect of attracting international climate finance. Given Meles Zenawi's centrality to international negotiations on the architecture of climate finance, Ethiopia was well positioned to capitalise on the expectation of significant financial resources in support of developing countries' efforts to respond to climate change. Though most African countries have thus far focused on securing funding in the delivery of adaptation projects and programming, many donors have shown increasing willingness to support mitigation efforts - in particular ones that, alongside emissions reductions, promote growth and economic development (AfDB, 2012; OECD, 2012a). Green Growth and other variants such as climate compatible development, low carbon development, and climate resilient growth have therefore framed much of the international climate discourse in recent years (Mitchell & Maxwell, 2010; OECD, 2011b). With this in mind, a common theme from across the interview responses is the enthusiasm demonstrated by Ethiopia's senior leadership, in particular Meles Zenawi, in not only wanting to showcase Ethiopia's economic and environmental prowess, but tap into emerging sources of funding in support of Green Growth.

Meles Zenawi's determination to showcase Ethiopia as a pioneer and early adopter of Green Growth and Climate Resilience at COP17 in Durban was therefore not only seen as a source of pride for the country, but reflected high levels of optimism in attracting new avenues of climate finance: avenues that had thus far not been pursued by many developing countries, particularly so in an African context. Of noteworthy mention is that alongside Ethiopia, a number of countries such as Rwanda and South Africa have produced Green Growth Strategies, with Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Kenya, and other African countries showing keen interest in developing similar transformative policies (AfDB, 2012).

Indeed, the GES's heavy emphasis on emissions reduction may highlight the centralised nature of decision making and governance as well as lack of bottom up engagement. Interviewees note that at local and regional levels, mitigation does not reflect most communities' key development priorities. Yet, while regional governments have been partially involved in consultations regarding the development of the CRGE's Vision and Strategy, meaningful engagements have by no means trickled down to the local contexts. Even more removed from the participatory process have been vulnerable communities themselves. Part of this may be understood through frame-bridging. Though mitigation and adaptation are undoubtedly integral to the Strategy, much of it is framed in the context of Ethiopia's

ambitious development objectives: primarily its ambition to reach middle income status. Moreover, many of the core objectives of the CRGE are bridged (and in some cases overlap directly) with those of the GTP, itself framed around ambitious economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainability (OECD 2013). Uniting these frames has meant not only that CRGE has been able to engage powerful ministries that would otherwise not have been associated with climate change issues, but may help to partially explain why previous climate plans received much less uptake, such as the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA), and Ethiopia's Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change (EPACC) before it.

5.3 Institutional context and capacity

The institutional arrangements involved in the design of transformational climate policies are critical to their effectiveness and implementation. Despite early suggestions, no stand-alone institution was created for the delivery of the CRGE process. Instead, the Inter-Ministerial and Technical committees outlined in Figure 3 were created under OPM, with operational and financial mandates handed to EPA and MoFED (OECD, 2013). While EPA was handed significant roles in the development of the GES and CRS, interview respondents highlight major challenges were faced in a lack of internal capacity and technical staff needed across the range of activities and thematic areas of the CRGE. This is particularly pertinent given the relatively small size of the Authority, compared to much larger (and better funded) Ministries such as MoFED and MoA.

In addition, activities in relation to the CRGE largely remain as secondary objectives for almost all government officers involved, and "receive little advance capacity support before working with the external consultants on the strategy" (OECD, 2013 p20). Much of this applies more widely within the context of the Ethiopian government and the various national research/technical agencies involved. With little investment in the people and institutions needed to collect, study, and disseminate relevant data, policymakers are left with large uncertainties with regards to baselines and potential impacts of climate-related policies (OECD, 2013).

While capacity to deliver the CRGE remains limited throughout government, institutional strengthening is a core component of the CRGE's next phase of implementation (EPA, 2011b). Indeed, this lack of capacity is widely attributed to a reliance on external international consultants in the provision of technical inputs to the CRGE Strategy. Interview respondents express some concern over the strong influence of external actors, rather than seeking greater inputs from national actors, with the capacity to better identify domestically-driven solutions suitable to Ethiopia's complex social, political and institutional context.

Coupled with limited consultation, a lack of institutional capacity may hinder the potential of the CRGE to deliver transformational change as the winners and losers of which have not been clearly identified. For example, one of the primary objectives under the GES is a promoted shift away from 'large ruminants' such as cattle, towards 'low-emitting animals' like poultry, sheep, goats and fish on the basis of reduced emissions (EPAC, 2011). Though recommendations for such a transition have considerable merit with regards to achieving Ethiopia's ambitions emission-reduction goals, these recommendations reflect the inputs of the external consultants used. Largely missing is an appreciation of the economic, social and cultural impacts on large portion of the population dependent on cattle as a means of livelihood or the role cattle play in providing animal traction for farm operations. It also neglects the complex political history of pastoralism in Ethiopia (Catley *et al.*, 2013).

6 Insights into the delivery of transformational climate policy: wider lessons and observations

Ethiopia's experience offers a number of valuable insights into the design of transformational climate policies.

6.1 Pioneering green growth and climate resilience in Africa

Ethiopia has spearheaded a process of designing and implementing an ambitious strategy in the pursuit of green growth and climate resilience. Its vision of achieving carbon-neutral middle-income status by 2025 is similarly aspiring and determined, demonstrating Meles Zenawi and the Ethiopian Government's confidence in showcasing Ethiopia's economic prowess. Notwithstanding the capacity to deliver the objectives of the Vision and Strategy, the scale of change and transformation proposed under the CRGE is noteworthy. Alongside the GTP, the CRGE represents one of the most far-reaching climate and development plans in any developing country context, let alone for Africa: one that deserves the label 'transformational' in terms of the scale of change and institutional reform outlined.

In light of growing international calls for transformational climate policy to be enacted (Bahadur & Tanner, 2012; Kates *et al.*, 2012), Ethiopia should in many ways be commended for taking action and embracing the CRGE wholeheartedly within broader development and climate policy. Engagement and ownership from influential line ministries like MoFED is testament to this; few other developing countries have succeeded in expanding their climate change agendas outside of the mandate of Ministries of Environment (typically a weaker line-ministry) (Revi, 2008).

Indeed, a key sign of this is the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to spending two percent of its internal budget on CRGE implementation (EPA, 2013). Though it is in itself far from sufficient to fund the CRGE on its own, and demonstrates the government's heavy reliance on external sources of finance in its delivery, it does demonstrate a financial commitment to supporting climate-related investments through domestic revenue that is unparalleled in Africa (outside perhaps of South Africa). Moreover, the structure and complexity of institutions created to oversee the design and implementation of the Strategy – though in itself a barrier to progress – far surpasses that of any other African countries seeking to design and implement transformational climate policy.

6.2 Balancing central ownership with inclusion and local engagement

Despite its ambitions, the experience of the CRGE points to a number of risks and shortcomings in the programme's design and delivery. It also reveals a number of important considerations and trade-offs that are of relevance to the development of transformation climate policy in other contexts. Perhaps the largest of which relates to the balance of high-level ownership with bottom-up inclusion and engagement.

As alluded to in Section 4, despite outlining the need for the CRGE agenda, and strong support from donors and multilaterals alike, the CRGE agenda remains largely driven by momentum generated by Ethiopia's political leadership (notably Meles Zenawi). A failure, and in some cases unwillingness, to meaningfully engage wider stakeholders in critical stages of the Vision and Strategy's consultation process raises the prospect of misrepresenting local communities' needs and priorities. The GES demonstrates this clearly; pushed through in a short period of time, heavily dependent on external consultations, and largely void of the complex social, cultural and political implications of the main recommendations of the strategy.

Evidence of more inclusive and thorough processes in delivering the CRS and other components of the CRGE, though promised, has yet to materialise. Given the transformational nature of many of the reforms outlined by the Strategy, and the social and economic implications associated with them, the risk of exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, influencing local power dynamics and promoting maladaptive pathway remains high, particularly during the implementation phase. Similar experiences in balancing trade-offs between top-down and bottom-up approaches to consultation are documented in the delivering adaptation policy in Bangladesh (see Alam *et al.*, 2011).

No doubt vision and ownership from senior political figures, quick turn-around, and the top-down nature of the consultation process contributed heavily to CRGE's momentum in Ethiopia. Many parallels can be drawn from Rwanda's *Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy*. Spearheaded by Paul Kagame, the process was developed also against the back-drop of a tight nine-month timeline before its launch at COP17 in Durban (CDKN, 2011). Heavily dependent on the technical inputs of international consultants and donor funding, the strategy matches the levels of ambition detailed in Ethiopia's CRGE. It likewise seeks to capitalise on domestic and international investment opportunities in exploiting low-carbon development options (GoR, 2011). However, uptake and implementation in Rwanda have so far been slower than and not as widespread as in Ethiopia – in part due to weaker levels of ownership and engagement from central line ministries and hesitance to progress without further commitments from the international community and private sector in funding identified activities.

A more interesting comparison should be drawn with Kenya's Climate Change Action Plan, which identifies low carbon and climate resilient development options to be integrated into wider government planning. On paper, more bottom up engagement and greater technical inputs from nationally-based actors point to a useful contrast with Ethiopia and Rwanda experiences (GoK, 2012): one deserving of further research once implementation of the plan commences. Another consideration is the implication of Meles Zenawi's death on the implementation of the CRGE. Given the late Prime Minister's central role in the providing the vision and drive behind the CRGE, questions thus remain as to whether this momentum will be maintained under new leadership, led by Hailemariam Desalegn. Though any definitive observations are perhaps premature, key informants are united in suggesting continued commitments towards the full delivery of the CRGE - in part due to the advanced nature of the design process, and as a means of capitalising on Meles Zenawi's legacy.

6.3 'Best fit' or 'best practice'?

While comparison of experiences in delivering climate policy in other countries is undoubtedly useful, lessons learned must be placed in the context of complex institutional and political arrangements. The challenges faced in balancing strong centralised political leadership with inclusion and local empowerment are by no means unique to the climate discourse. Indeed, much can also be drawn from the experiences in the delivery of wider public services in Africa.

For example, in their assessment of the evidence base of the effectiveness of programmes aimed at promoting 'good governance' in the delivery of African public goods, Crook and Booth (2011a) highlight that the 'universal best practice approach' to governance for development is bankrupt. Instead, they argue for a 'best fit' approach rather than a 'best practice' approach. Recognising the contextualised nature of policy development, this model maintains that less-than-perfect standards of transparency and accountability "are often considered acceptable so long as there is peace, development is visible and the distribution of benefits among the various segments of society is perceived as broadly fair" (Crook & Booth, 2011b p3). Much of this applies in the context of delivering transformational climate policy, particularly given the lack of momentum behind previous centrally-led climate initiatives and failure in generating ownership amongst influential Line ministries. With this in mind, the design of the CRGE Vision and Strategy demonstrates little in way of satisfying criteria for fair distribution of benefits, particularly with regards to the economic, social and political trade-offs at the local level. Further assessment against these three criteria once the CRGE is in the latter stages of its implementation would be of considerable merit.

7 Conclusions and further reflections

The development of Ethiopia's CRGE Vision and Strategy provides a number of useful insights into the political and economic drivers of transformational climate policy. Ethiopia stands as one of few developing countries to have embedded climate-related objectives into the heart of development and growth model. A number of relevant factors point to this achievement, notably: strong leadership from politicians at the highest level of government; ownership, inclusion and interest from influential Line Ministries; the prospect of being an early pioneer of green growth and attracting international climate finance; and careful framing of the climate discourse around economic growth and development.

However, the design of the CRGE points to notable concerns with regards to the institutional design and processes used in delivering transformational climate-policy. A lack of internal capacity to provide key technical inputs towards the policy's design, as well as failure to acknowledge important social, cultural and political implications of the CRGE's actions have serious implications for its success and sustainability in the long-term. In addition, the separation of the Green Growth and Climate Resilient elements of the Strategy points to a failure to capitalise on potential overlaps and synchronicities between the two. More importantly, a failure to meaningfully engage stakeholders at all levels of society, particularly at the local level, raises key issues of equity, representation and recognition. The implications of which will be felt by those already politically and socially marginalised - often the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of the climate change as well as (more immediately) the impacts of the CRGE's policies.

Alongside other early assessments of political and economic challenges in the delivery of climate policy in developing country contexts (see Tanner & Allouche, 2011; Alam *et al.*, 2011; and Ayers *et al.*, 2011), these findings point to delicate considerations and trade-offs in matching the need for delivering transformational change with a need to recognise the implication of the policies on complex social-economic and political realities at both national and local levels. Above all, it suggests that, alongside technical inputs, it is important to give consideration to 'softer' issues – vested interests, incentives, and power – and institutional processes within the design and implementation of transformational policy.

Failure to do so risks not only underestimating the complex political and cultural factors that affect successful take-up of policy reform, but misalignment between the needs and interests of different stakeholders and communities - from the local to the national. With this in mind, the Ethiopian example echoes the observation that, in many cases, a 'best fit' model of governing transformation and policy reform is preferred to a 'universal best practice' approach (Booth, 2011). Caution should therefore be applied in calling for transformational climate policy to take place in any given context without nuanced appreciation of the social, political and institutional arena within which the design and delivery of policy reform is likely to take place.

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