

**Abstract Title:**  
*Forest co-management policy and transformational adaptation in Burkina Faso*

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[The Politics and Anti-Politics of Adaptation to Climate Change II](#)

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**Abstract:**  
In most regions of West Africa, livelihoods depend on goods and services from savannah ecosystems, in interplay with agricultural and livestock production systems. Economic, ecological, social and political changes represent challenges for the governance of the commons. In the international development agendas, adaptive co-management appears as an emergent and promising strategy in complex and multi scale, overlapping, governance mechanisms among socio-ecological systems. In Burkina Faso, under state control, forest policies have been introduced since the 1980s' that give more rights to communities to access and collectively manage forest resources in bounded areas. In two villages involved in this devolution process, we conducted vulnerability assessment surveys and focus group discussions. We analyse how vulnerability and adaptive capacity of people, belonging to different social groups, using common resources, evolve under the implementation of this co management system promoted by the state on behalf of sustainable development. We also analyse how the management norms shape people's collective action and adaptive capacity and how they reflect their ordinary priorities. We discuss the pertinence of this resource management system to both incremental and transformational adaptation to climate change. Our results show that co-management applied without reinforced rights and leadership of the most vulnerable, including a radical change in behavioural and institutional patterns, tends to maintain existing power relationships, renders powerless groups vulnerable and inhibits institutional adaptive transformation to climate change.

**Keywords:**  
[Adaptation to climate change](#), [Adaptive capacity](#), [Adaptive Governance](#), [transformational adaptation](#), [co-management](#), [Burkina Faso](#)