



African Conservancies Volume

Towards Best Practices

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FOREWORD



Kaddu Sebunya
President

Conservation in Africa is facing unprecedented challenges. While Africa's protected area network is extensive, it is not adequate alone to safeguard Africa's natural heritage and ecosystem services upon which wildlife and people depend. Wildlife and habitat outside of protected areas must be protected through creative mechanisms, such as conservancies. Conservancies are effective tools for protecting wildlife and habitat, diversifying tourism products and driving financial benefits to landowners. For this reason, the African Wildlife Foundation worked with an extraordinary group of practitioners from across the continent to pull together this volume on conservancies.

This *African Conservancies Volume* is aimed at promoting and fostering cross pollination of experiences, expertise and ideas between practitioners in various countries and regions across the continent about wildlife conservancies. While there are various initiatives promoting collaboration and learning among protected areas, this has not existed for conservancies. It is for this reason that the African Wildlife Foundation launched this initiative, which has received great interest from practitioners. We are confident this volume will be useful to a wide range of practitioners and communities in conservation and policy makers.

While there are radical differences among African countries as well as conservancy models, there are common threads which at one point or another all conservancies need to consider: policy frameworks;

governance; and ecological, economic and socio-political viability.

These are the precise topics on which this volume is focused. For the purposes of this initiative and in this volume as a whole the term 'Conservancies' is used loosely in order to be inclusive.

In production of this volume AWF worked with various partners across the continent. Many of these partners have experience in establishing, implementing and managing conservancy programs, research and analysis over the past decades which has resulted in a body of knowledge that has not been tapped into. This series aims to share successes, failures, trends, and promising and emerging practices.

By engaging in fruitful deliberations, conservation partners and communities should be able to build best practices that will help to develop and sustain conservancies as a tool for conserving wildlife outside protected areas on community and private lands. We trust that this volume will trigger and promote a wider engagement of conservancy experts and practitioners across the continent and result in the expansion of effective and well run conservancies across Africa.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'KAS', located at the end of the foreword text.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are deeply grateful to many people for their role in making this volume happen. We wish to thank all the authors of individual case studies who have contributed their stories, knowledge and experiences. Without their commitment, effort and enthusiasm this publication would not have been possible. We extend the same gratitude to various organizations that allowed the same authors to commit time and resources to developing articles in this volume.

We extend our gratitude to all participants of the workshop on Conservancies in Africa held on 20 April 2016 in Nairobi, their engagement in vibrant discussions on that day provided significant insight and material which has now been used to build this volume. We thank Gabriella Waugh for taking minutes and capturing all the conversations at this workshop.

Thank you to the editorial team, Edwin Tambara, Sarah Chiles, Kathleen H. Fitzgerald and Alistair Pole for their work on this volume. We extend our gratitude to all staff at the African Wildlife Foundation who have given time and support to this initiative.

This work was supported by funding to AWF from Royal Netherlands Embassy to Kenya (The Netherlands Ministry for European Affairs and International Cooperation) through the 'Integrated Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Natural Resources for Humans and Economic Benefits in Kenya' Project. Thank you.

We trust this information will help advance conservation across Africa and look forward to future dialogue and sharing of conservancy best practices.



AN OVERVIEW: THE CENTRAL ROLE CONSERVANCIES PLAY IN BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION IN AFRICA

This is an edited excerpt from a chapter by K. H. Fitzgerald in Protecting the Wild: Parks and Wilderness, the Foundation for Conservation.¹

K. H. Fitzgerald

Introduction

Africa's wildlife and people depend on the long term protection of large landscapes—a mosaic of conservation lands including strictly protected conservation areas, community and private owned conservancies, forest reserves and wildlife corridors. Conservancies are a key piece to the overall conservation puzzle and for this reason AWF compiled this volume of papers on conservancies. AWF was keen to draw on best practices from across Africa so that we and our conservation partners can replicate and utilize these lessons to scale up the development and management of conservancies in Africa. The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) was founded in 1962 with a mission to work together with the people of Africa to ensure its wildlife and wild lands endure.

Habitat Loss

Much needed attention is currently being directed at the poaching crisis that grips the continent. Africa's iconic wildlife, elephant, rhinoceros and other species are at great risk from the insatiable demand of wildlife products from Asia and other countries. However, even if we stop the current onslaught of poaching,² viable populations of *in situ* wildlife in Africa will not survive given present rates of habitat loss. Habitat loss is African wildlife's silent killer, and it needs urgent attention and action—including the creation and improved management of conservancies.

Drivers of Habitat Loss

What are the main factors leading to accelerated habitat loss across the continent? The simple answer is growth. This includes economic, population, development, resource extraction, agricultural, and international growth—all of which is directly and indirectly resulting in habitat loss.

In the past decade, Africa's growth rates have been approaching those of Asia. In 2011, seven African countries were among the world's ten fastest-growing economies, with each having an annual growth rate of 8 percent or more.³ The African Development Bank projects that by the year 2030 Africa's population will grow to 1.6 billion—up from 1 billion today—representing 19 percent of the world's population. With more people and an expanding economy come new and increasing demands on land and natural resources, resulting in habitat conversion and fragmentation if not managed properly. Economic and population growth brings with it large scale infrastructure, and vice versa. Roads, oil pipelines, railways and dams are part of Africa's new landscape.

One factor driving Africa's economic growth stems from the removal of Africa's natural wealth through mining, drilling, and other forms of extraction, and it too is increasing in scope and scale across the continent. Be it a coal mine in Zimbabwe or a

¹ Wuerthner, G., Crist, E., and T. Butler *Protecting the Wild: Parks and Wilderness, the Foundation for Conservation*. Island Press. 2015. © Foundation for Deep Ecology.

² In 2007, 13 rhino were killed in South Africa. Over 1,000 rhino were killed in South Africa in 2013. This represents a 7,692 percent increase. The total rhino population in Africa is less than 25,000. African Wildlife Foundation Elephant, Rhino Strategies. 2014.

³ H. Van Rensburg, "Africa Is Rising Fast," *Forbes* (November 2012).

transmission line across northern Kenya into Ethiopia, these developments have an impact on habitat.

Africa's forests and woodlands are also subject to accelerated extraction. Comprising 17 percent of the world's forest cover, Africa hosts the second largest tropical forest in the world, the Congo basin forest, 250 million hectares.⁴ In addition to harboring extraordinary biodiversity—including four of the world's five great apes—the Congo basin and other forest systems across Africa provide regional and global ecological services as carbon sinks and water catchments. However, deforestation rates in Africa are four times the world average.⁵ Over the past twenty years, 200,000 square kilometres of ape habitat has been lost as a result of forest depletion due to increased logging, small-scale mining, palm oil plantations, and other extractive industries.⁶ This habitat loss combined with the bush meat trade has resulted in all African ape subspecies becoming endangered or critically endangered. With developing economies, increased access to forests through infrastructure development, and the lack of a firm regulatory framework, deforestation will continue to accelerate, eroding not only key habitat for primates and other wildlife but destroying a critical carbon sink and vital ecosystem services.

Rapid growth is also taking place in the agricultural sector. Small, mid, and large-scale farms are expanding across the continent. With increased attention occurring globally on food security from international and national governments and donors, subsidies and support for agricultural expansion have increased across the continent. This expansion is taking place without proper planning, leading to dramatic declines in important water resources and habitat.

International growth is also fueling change in Africa. Foreign governments and multi-national corporations are buying up large tracts of land in Africa due to a high global demand for food,

biofuel, and minerals. Between 2000 and 2010, 134 million hectares (331 million acres) were purchased in Africa.⁷ The targeted lands are highly productive for agriculture. These acquisitions result in large-scale development and land conversion, displacement of wildlife and people, and ecological degradation at a colossal scale. The demand for land is expected to rise with the global population nearing 9 billion, consumption patterns shifting toward more resource-intensive foods, and bio-based resources replacing fossil fuels used in transport and plastics. The world needs additional land to produce more, and Africa is widely viewed as the continent with the most land to spare.

Despite Africa's growth, the majority of the African populace remain poor. A majority of Africans are directly dependent upon natural resources for their daily survival in rural and urban areas. Biodiversity and ecosystem services underpin every aspect of human life, including food security, livelihoods, health, ethnic diversity, and cultural enrichment. A quarter of the total wealth of low-income countries comes from natural capital, compared to only 2 percent in wealthier nations.⁸

What does all of this mean for the long-term survival of wildlife and wild lands in Africa?

Africa hosts a significant percentage of the globe's biodiversity and is rich with endemic species. For example, one quarter of the world's mammals and more than a fifth of the globe's birds occur in Africa.⁹ Africa's diversity and density of wildlife is recognized globally and remains unparalleled on any other continent. From the massive elephant herds of southern Africa to the world-renowned wildebeest migration in eastern Africa to the awe-inspiring mountain gorillas in Central Africa, the continent holds some of the world's most unique, rare, and precious wildlife.

Africa is at a crossroads with development increasing and habitat and wildlife decreasing. With proper spatial planning and strategic conservation

⁴ See the website for *Congo Basin Forest Partnership*, <http://pfbc-cbfp.org/Stateoftheforest.html>.

⁵ Deforestation 'faster in Africa.' BBC. 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8066871.stm>.

⁶ Dwindling Space for Africa's Great Apes. Max Plank Society. September 2012. <http://phys.org/news/2012-09-dwindling-space-africa-great-apes.html>.

⁷ International Institute for Environment and Development. Land Grab Briefing. September 2013.

⁸ Where is the Wealth of Nations. Measuring Capital for the 21st Century. World Bank. 2006.

⁹ State of Biodiversity in Africa. 2010. United Nations Biodiversity Program.

investment, AWF firmly believes that Africa can host dynamic and productive economies while simultaneously supporting an expansive pan-African network of government protected areas, connected and complemented by community and private conservation areas. African governments have an opportunity to demonstrate that conservation and economic development can coexist and that a continent does not need to sacrifice its natural heritage to develop.

Role of Protected Areas

Protected areas¹⁰ have served as the main conservation tool in Africa and remain the fundamental building blocks of biodiversity conservation. They protect a diversity of ecosystems, provide key habitat and safe havens for wildlife, and support vital ecosystem services upon which wildlife and people depend.¹¹

Protected areas are important to national, regional, and local economies. For example, before the recent security issues, Kenya's wildlife-based tourism accounted for 70 percent of the country's tourism revenue, was the third-largest contributor to national gross domestic product (GDP), and was a leading earner of foreign exchange, generating approximately US\$745 million in 2007, up from US\$247 million in 2002.¹² South Africa's strong tourism economy is strongly underpinned by nature-based tourism. Over 60 percent of visitors to the country visit at least one protected area during their stay. South Africa's world-renowned parks, such as Kruger National Park, play a significant role in attracting international tourists. Tourist arrivals to South Africa grew by 10.2 percent in 2012 compared to the global tourism visitation growth of 3.8 percent for the same period.¹³

Protected areas are of key importance to climate change mitigation. While Africa contributes little to

climate change through CO₂ emissions, Africa's people, wildlife, and economies are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change given limitations in their ability to adapt to the projected changes. Climate change is recognized as a driver of species and habitat loss, and its impacts are projected to escalate in the future.¹⁴ Climate change adaptation initiatives could cost African countries more than 5–10 percent of their GDP.¹⁵ An expansive protected area network can help to effectively mitigate the ecological, social, and economic risks and costs related to climate change.

There are more than 1,100 national parks and reserves in sub-Saharan Africa. Since 1970, total protected-area coverage in Africa has increased nearly twofold and now encompasses 3.06 million square kilometres of terrestrial and marine habitats. Protected areas currently cover 15.9 percent and 10.1 percent of total land surface in the East/Southern African and West/Central African regions, respectively.¹⁶ Despite the number of protected areas, wildlife continues to decline at an alarming rate across the continent for the following reasons:

Too Small, Too Isolated. In many cases, protected areas are too small and too isolated to support viable populations of certain species, ecosystem dynamics, natural processes, biodiversity, genetic exchange, and wildlife movement.

Encroachment and Degradation. Some protected areas are surrounded by incompatible land use, resulting in encroachment on and degradation to, the protected area and species loss as they move outside protected area boundaries.

Poorly Managed. Many protected areas are poorly managed due to limited capacity and resources and

¹⁰ Reference to protected areas refers to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition, which includes six distinct categories ranging from strictly protected nature reserves and parks to protected areas with sustainable use of natural resources. Dudley, N. 2008.

¹¹ Dudley, N. (Editor) (2008). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

¹² P. Udoto. (2012) "Wildlife as a Lifeline to Kenya's Economy: Making Memorable Visitor Experiences," *The George Wright Forum* 29, no. 1 (2012): 51–58.

¹³ South Africa Tourism Annual Report. www.southafrica.net/uploads/files/2012_Annual_Report_v9_03092013.pdf.

¹⁴ D. J. McGahey *et al.* *Investigating climate change vulnerability and planning for adaptation: Learning from a study of climate change impacts on the Mountain Gorilla in the Albertine*. *Rift Natural Science* 5 (2013) 10-17.

¹⁵ International Panel on Climate Change. 2007. Report summary for policy makers.

¹⁶ B. Newmark. Isolation of African Protected Areas. *Ecological Society of America*. www.frontiersinecology.org.

do not effectively protect biodiversity or ecosystem services.

Overall, evidence from a broad range of African protected areas indicates that the main cause of wildlife declines is that many protected areas, due to size and shape, do not encompass the full range of functional resource gradients, migratory corridors, and seasonal habitats required to maintain a diverse array of productive wildlife populations.¹⁷ As a result, wildlife are dependent upon both protected areas and adjacent lands, resulting in a source-and-sink situation in many landscapes where the lands adjacent to protected areas are not managed in a conservation friendly way.

The source-sink dynamic is aptly displayed in Amboseli National Park in southern Kenya. The Amboseli ecosystem stretches from the park to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo West National Parks in Kenya to Mt. Kilimanjaro National Park in Tanzania. Amboseli National Park (392 square kilometers) forms the core of the ecosystem, while six surrounding group ranches—a form of communal land ownership—surround the park. Amboseli park is too small to support viable populations of elephants, predators, and certain ungulates. Wildlife is dependent on the unprotected areas outside the park, which is held by Maasai pastoralists. Many of the group ranches have subdivided the land into plots ranging in size from 10 to 60 acres. Fencing, cultivation, development, and other forms of habitat fragmentation, along with increased hostility toward wildlife due to predation on livestock and competition over resources, have a dire impact on wildlife and have resulted in a “sink” area.¹⁸

Solutions

African governments and partners can reverse the trends of habitat loss and protect viable populations of Africa’s wildlife and natural heritage by:

- increasing the number and size of protected areas;
- improving protected areas management;
- engaging communities in conservation a meaningful way; and
- increasing awareness and mainstreaming of the ecological and economic value of conservation.

While this volume is focused on increasing protected areas—conservancies, it is important to acknowledge the other key factors required for conservation success.

There is an ongoing academic debate between those pushing for strict protected areas and those promoting community-based natural resource management. The debate revolves around which approach is more effective for biodiversity conservation.¹⁹ The answer to this debate is quite simple—**we need both**. If biodiversity is going to survive there must be a robust, well-managed network of parks that is complemented by private and community owned conservancies.

Conservancies

Across the continent, the number of “conservancies,”—whereby communities and/or private landowners decide to set aside their land for conservation purposes—has increased. In Namibia, for example, approximately 16 percent of the country is in community conservancies.²⁰ In Kenya, there are over 140 conservancies—private and community-owned. If set up properly the establishment of conservancies can help expand land under conservation and, importantly, directly benefit communities and landowners.

Conservancy legislation differs country by country, and conservancies vary in size, structure, and land tenure. Despite the diversity among them,

¹⁷ W. Richard, S. Fynn and M.C. Bonyongo. Functional conservation areas and the future of Africa’s wildlife. *African Journal of Ecology*, 49. (2010). 175-188.

¹⁸ African Wildlife Foundation. Community Payment for Ecosystem Services in the Amboseli Ecosystem: Leasing Land for Livelihoods and Wildlife. <http://www.awf.org/about/resources/books-and-papers>.

¹⁹ J. Hutton, W.M. Adams and C James. Back to the Barriers. *Changing Narratives in Biodiversity Conservation*. Forum for Development Studies. No. 2-2005.

²⁰ Namibian Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management Support Organisation. <http://www.nacso.org.na/index.php>.

conservancies throughout Africa share somewhat universal benefits. Conservancies:

- complement state-owned protected areas by providing additional wildlife habitat;
- diversify the tourism economy by offering a different type of tourism product than state-owned protected areas, such as walking safaris and cultural interaction;
- diversify land management, providing a range of habitat types to support a broader diversity of wildlife and ecosystems; and
- directly engage and empower communities and private landowners in taking part in and benefiting from conservation, thereby incentivizing protection of wildlife and habitat, increasing the number of people benefiting from conservation, and decreasing animosity toward wildlife.

The benefit of conservancies in relation to protected areas is widely accepted. For example, Southern African countries host an important network of protected areas; however, they face severe challenges making the role of conservancies more vital:

- Threatened ecosystems. Not all ecosystems are represented in the protected areas.
- Incomplete ecosystems. Park boundaries are often not in line with modern principles of
- protected area design, leaving key areas of ecological importance unprotected.
- Park size. While many parks are large by world standards they are nevertheless too small to
- support viable populations of species and encompass whole ecosystems.
- Ecological isolation. Many protected areas are islands of habitat; isolated and fragmented
- wildlife populations pose a serious problem for large mammals.²¹

In 2012, AWF assessed conservancies in Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Tanzania, and Kenya and found the following consistent factors that lead to the long-term success of conservancies:

- Well-defined property, land and wildlife user rights.
- A vibrant national tourism economy and a diversity of tourism opportunities in the conservancy.
- Meaningful engagement of landowners and adjacent neighbors to ensure local support.
- Parties obtaining ownership/equity in conservancies bring resources, money, land, expertise, and assume a level of risk — hand-outs do not work.
- Strong legal structure, with bye-laws and constitutions to ensure good governance, transparency, adherence to conservation parameters, code of conduct, membership obligations, and revenue sharing.
- Adopted and updated scientifically based habitat and wildlife management plans.
- Professional management, a solid business plan and a formal institutional structure.²²

The motivation to establish a conservancy varies. For some, it is the best land use, whereas for others it is to preserve special cultural sites and traditions. In northern Kenya for example, communities have established conservancies with the Northern Rangelands Trust as a form of security against terrorists and cattle raiders. Bottom line, conservancy benefits must be determined by the communities and landowners, and designed in a way that meets their needs. In Zimbabwe for example, private conservancies were established as landowners realized managing wildlife in arid zones was more profitable than managing livestock. In 2003, private wildlife conservancies comprised 1.9 percent of Zimbabwe's total land base and 10.9 percent of the conservation land in Zimbabwe,²³ playing a key role in the country's wildlife conservation. Today, as a result of unplanned

²¹ AWF. Unleashing the Potential of Indigenised Wildlife Conservancies in Zimbabwe through Community Empowerment. September 2012. Nairobi, Kenya.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Zimbabwe National Environmental Policy, 2003

resettlement and irregular land allocations due to Zimbabwe’s land reform process and other associated legislation, there are less than approximately four viable private wildlife conservancies in the country. The 320,000-hectare (790,737acres) Savé Valley Conservancy is one of these last remaining conservancies in Zimbabwe. Located in the Lowveld (the lowlands) of southwestern Zimbabwe, the Savé Valley Conservancy hosts significant populations of endangered rhino, elephant, lion, and wild dog and is at risk because of unplanned settlement and lack of clarity around wildlife user rights and land tenure.

Zimbabwe, like other countries in Africa, has an incredible opportunity to increase conservation land and engage communities in conservation by incorporating community land into existing conservancies to expand the conservation area and to support new landowners in the establishment of conservancies. Providing the technical and financial support to expand and launch new conservancies is critical.

Engage Communities in Conservation

Conservation must matter to the local landowners and communities living with wildlife. If they do not benefit from conservation, it will not work—it is that simple. Therein lies the great opportunity for conservancies as they can drive benefits directly to communities and landowners.

AWF assessed a number of community based projects associated with the development and management of conservancies. These include tourism, agriculture and livestock programs. We determined the following factors as key to successfully developing community based programs:

- Community engagement must be voluntary.
- Communities must be engaged from the beginning of the project and their participation should be institutionalized so they play meaningful roles in governance and management.
- There must be clear conservation targets, such as the protection of a conservancy or the conservation of certain species.

- Conservation benefits must be tied to conservation responsibility in a *quid pro quo* scenario making communities responsible for conservation outcomes.
- Conservation benefits must be at a scale that deters non-conservation behavior. If a community can make more money from farming than keeping wildlife, they will do so.
- Community benefits should be reliable. If a community is uncertain as to if and when benefits will be derived, they may resort to non-conservation activities.
- Handouts do not work, and communities need to both assume a reasonable level of risk and bring something to the project, such as land, wildlife, money, or skills.
- Project structures must be transparent and set up to ensure equitable distribution of benefits and avoid elite capture.
- Projects must be economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable.



Many community-based projects are set up on the assumption that communities will automatically engage in positive conservation behavior if provided with certain benefits. This kind of wishful thinking does not work. For example, one may speculate that if a high-yield crop is introduced into an agricultural intensification program outside a conservancy, the farmer will grow more food in a smaller area and will not expand the farm into the conservancy. However, if this has not been codified through an agreement, the farmer will most certainly expand the farm area to grow more crops for market.

AWF utilizes a suite of conservation covenants in its programs to protect a particular natural asset, such as a conservancy and wildlife. In exchange for meeting these covenants, certain economic or societal benefits are derived—such as revenue from a business, help with access to a market, support for business development, educational support, or a combination of these. These conservation-derived benefits must be at a scale to have a meaningful impact on the communities. If, however, these covenants are not met, benefits are withheld. It is a *quid pro quo* arrangement that is secured through a legal agreement with the community. Communities are part of the process from the beginning and have the full freedom to choose not to be part of a program.

of ownership/equity in the business, agrees to set aside land for conservation, subscribe to a set of conservation covenants, and partner with a private sector operator who manages the facility on their behalf. The revenue goes back to the community and is tied to conservation performance, making nature conservation an incentive for communities. The engagement of the private sector in these models is important to ensure the long-term economic sustainability of the operation. AWF also requires that a percentage of the individuals employed at the lodge be from the local community, thus generating more revenue to and increasing the skill base of the community.



AWF's conservation enterprise program has succeeded in establishing community tourism programs in conservancies that further incentivize conservation and improve people's lives because the community benefits are substantial, reliable, and institutionalized with community equity. AWF has successfully helped communities that own land, customary and legal tenure, to establish conservancies and conservation lodges in Botswana, Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. With AWF's model, the community has some form

Conclusion

Walking through East African savannah woodland, I quietly follow my guide. It is early morning. The sun is rising and the mourning doves greet us with their common call.

I am relishing the sounds of the savannah, the stillness, and the bird songs. My guide is passionate about this landscape. He knows its natural history, inhabitants, and rhythms. He explains that as a senior guide he supports his children in good

schools, and provides them with clothing, a nice home, and ample food. Wildlife conservation changed his life.

We are walking in a community conservancy. My entry fee goes toward the community and the luxury lodge where I stayed the night before is owned by the community. This landscape was once degraded; however, now this conservancy is flourishing with wildlife—cheetah, lion, elephant, hyena, aardwolf, and more. Before the creation of the conservancy, this community fought wildlife—the people were not benefiting and wildlife was perceived as a nuisance. They now support wildlife and conservation. As we move deliberately between the whistling acacia, we see a group of ten elegant Maasai giraffe browsing. They watch us, determine that we are not a threat, and continue eating. We sit together on a fallen tree branch and watch the giraffes in silence, letting the morning unfold.

This conservancy demonstrates what is possible.

Africa is endowed with vast and varied wild nature. Its wildlife is unparalleled and its landscape diversity exceptional. The alarming trends of habitat and wildlife loss can be reversed. Across Africa, governments, non-governmental organizations, communities, landowners, and the private sector are joining together to create sustainable and viable conservancies. These creative partnerships are crucial now more than ever. For Africa's wildlife and wild lands to survive, more well-managed protected areas and community and private conservation areas are needed, and communities must be meaningfully engaged in conservation. We at the African Wildlife Foundation hope that this volume of articles helps elucidate best practices and results in an increase in and better management of conservancies.



Note about the author: Kathleen H. Fitzgerald, AWF's Vice President Land Protection. Kathleen has more than 20 years' experience directing landscape-scale conservation and community engagement. Prior to joining AWF, Kathleen held key positions at the Stowe Land Trust, the Wildlands Project, Wild Earth, and was a co-founder and the first Executive Director of the Northeast Wilderness Trust. Since joining AWF, Kathleen has been key in AWF's land conservation projects across Africa, including establishing community conservancies, securing wildlife corridors, and improving management of protected areas and community lands.



CONSERVANCIES IN AFRICA: TOWARDS BEST PRACTICES

Best Practices Workshop, Nairobi 2016

Report compiled by E. Tambara, S. Chiles & G. Waugh

Executive Summary

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) convened a workshop at its Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on 20 April 2016, to deliberate on wildlife conservancies in Africa. The workshop was supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy to Kenya, and provided an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned from across the continent, on mechanisms and processes for the establishment, governance and management of conservancies, and policy frameworks which are supportive of conservancy development. AWF was pleased to host individuals from NGOs, the private sector and from government representing ten different nations at the workshop — each bringing unique experiences and lessons learned from their countries and conservancies. The conservancies workshop was part of an AWF initiative aimed at stimulating interaction and cross-pollination of ideas and experiences among experts and practitioners in this field to advance the development and management of conservancies across Africa. The workshop was intended to inform conservancy best practices and help conservation partners to develop and sustain conservancies as a tool for conserving wildlife outside protected areas on community and private lands.

Conservancies have evolved in diverse ways across the continent and at different levels in the varied contexts represented, with some countries and/or areas having developed advanced conservancy models, extensive history and significant numbers of conservancies, such as Kenya, Namibia and Zimbabwe. It clearly emerged that within the varied contexts, conservancies are an effective tool for the conservation of wildlife outside protected areas, and an effective way to engage private landowners and communities. In all ten countries represented there are common threads with regards to policy frameworks, governance, and ecological, economic and socio-political viability, albeit to varying degrees. It was also interesting to hear how conservancies have provided strong, tangible benefits beyond purely conservation goals - including peace, security and social cohesion.



Background

Over the last few decades conservancies of different types have been developed across Africa as part of private and community-based natural resource management regimes. Today, conservancies play vital ecological, social and economic roles in many African countries. AWF and other conservation organizations have been supporting conservancies throughout Africa. However, there have been a limited number of initiatives to promote cross-pollination of ideas on conservancies in Africa.

In preparation for the workshop, AWF invited experts and practitioners across the continent to analyze and document their experiences and perspectives. This compendium of writings draw on pan-African expertise and explore: (i) the evolution of conservancies — community-based; private; and, a combination; (ii) probe lessons learned through success and failure in different conservancy models; (iii) highlight best practices; and (iv) derive a set of key elements for sustainable conservancies that are mostly likely to stand the test of time in a changing Africa. AWF expects that such material, dialogue and continued interaction among experts and practitioners will help shape how future conservancies in Africa are developed and strengthened.

Setting the Scene

After AWF President Kaddu Sebunya welcomed the participants to AWF, Kathleen H. Fitzgerald, *Vice-President Land Protection (AWF)*, provided an overview on conservancies in Africa and the focus of the workshop. She noted that Africa is changing rapidly, that it hosts some of the fastest growing economies in the world, and that the continent is marked by the increasing utilization of natural resources. Within this context, conservancies are becoming more important and they merit our investment. She stated that conservancies differ in size, shape, land tenure and structure, but that there are some fundamental commonalities, in that they: complement state protected areas ecologically; diversify tourism products; support different ecological management programs; and allow engagement and participation of landowners and communities. Conservancies are therefore ecologically, economically and socially beneficial.

Kathleen presented some thought-provoking questions: “Today is not about the ‘why’, of conservancies, we all agree on the ‘why’, we all know the rate of biodiversity loss, today is about the ‘how’? How do we ensure that conservancies across Africa are sustainable? Can we compete with alternative land uses such as farming? What kinds of land tenure/rights are needed? How can we get governments to recognize conservancies as a legitimate land use and ensure appropriate benefits? Do we need to zone conservancies or not? What are the key ingredients for successful conservancies?” Kathleen concluded by stating that these questions could be answered by the diverse group of experts in the room.

Conservancy Models

Alistair Pole, *Director Land & Habitat Management (AWF)*, provided an overview of the different conservancy models represented at the meeting. He emphasized the existence of many different conservancy models and structures, and that defining them is not easy. He indicated that for the purposes of the workshop, the term ‘*Conservancies*’ was used loosely in order to be inclusive, but that further discussion was needed on definitions (time was allocated for this aspect at a later stage in the workshop).

Alistair presented the five different models of conservancies across Africa, which were largely represented at the workshop: i) Private sector amalgamated properties; ii) Private sector and/or single properties; iii) State Owned Concessions; iv) Community Conservancies with zonation; and v) Community Conservancies/CBNRM Programmes.



Photo: Peter Chira/AWF

Thematic Panel Discussions

Alistair set the scene for the panel discussions, introduced the key thematic areas for the discussions, and highlighted that these were cross-cutting issues relevant to conservancies in different countries, and contexts, as well as different models. The key themes set for panel discussions were the following: Policy Frameworks; Governance; Economic, Ecological, and Socio-Political Viability; and, each of these themes pertained to the key questions originally asked by AWF: *How do you make conservancies sustainable - ecologically, economically, socially and politically?*

Each panel focused on one thematic topic, and each panel member was given an opportunity to provide some preliminary comments or opinions on the subject based on his/her experience. Alistair acknowledged that everyone participating in the workshop was an expert in his or her own right and therefore discussions, commentaries and responses to questions were not limited to the panellists.



Photo: Alejandro Tawil

PANEL I: Policy Frameworks

Key Questions on Policy Frameworks:

- What are the national policies that support the establishment of conservancies, what are the gaps in current policy and policies that have a negative effect?
- What is the level of government support for conservancies and other wildlife-based land use projects?
- Is a specific, national conservancy policy required?

Key Findings:

- Where feasible, policy should be guided by practical pilot schemes and examples from the field.
- The goodwill of the Government is necessary for the success of conservancies.
- Policies should provide checks and balances for conservancy management/operations.
- It was agreed that a national conservancy policy is helpful.
- Landowners, be they private or communal - must have commercial rights.
- Flexibility is important to enable conservancies to develop within their own context.
- Stronger incentives are required for conservancies.
- Policies should be driven by the end users.

PANEL II: Ecological Viability

Key Questions on Ecological Viability:

- How important is scale and connectivity to other wildlife areas in your conservancy?
- Describe adjacent land use and its impact on conservancies?
- Explain the conservation impact of the conservancies in your country including the future potential?

Key Findings:

- There are many case studies (Mara, Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), Savé Valley Conservancy) that demonstrate ecological success from conservancies.
- It is important to use spatial modeling to demonstrate what would happen if conservancies did not exist.
- Scale of conservancies is key and when conservancies themselves cannot be large in scale, the interlinkage with other protected areas is key to ecological viability.
- Endangered species such as rhino can be used to build a case for establishment of conservancies, which in turn benefit other species.
- Coordination with Protected Areas is key, and regional forums can help with this.
- It is necessary to incorporate climate change into planning and management.
- It is important to include communities in ecological monitoring, but try to keep it simple.

- In the tourism field, diversifying to include the domestic market in some countries is critical.
- Increasing African Government subsidies at country, local and regional as well as national level is important.
- Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) does provide an opportunity, but the markets are unreliable until regulations are put in place, and who is going to pay?
- The structure of any kind of private sector deal is key to ensuring revenue to operations and communities. Business alone is not a plus.
- Incentives must be used to drive ecological behavior; see for performance based payments.
- Green ratings of tourism facilities must include a rating for protected land.
- Other incentives besides direct income, such as security and social cohesion, must be included when considering benefits for communities.

PANEL III: Economic Viability

Key Questions on Economic Viability:

- How important is it for conservancies to be economically competitive against other land uses?
- What can be done to improve economic viability and are there new investment opportunities which could be explored?
- What role should donors play in assisting conservancies to reach economic viability (and avoid the creation of unviable conservancies)?

Key Findings:

- Asking conservancies to reach economic sustainability may not be feasible; national parks are not financially self-sustaining and rely on subsidies.
- Diversification of revenue streams is key.



Photo: Alejandro Tawil

PANEL IV: Socio-political Viability

Key Questions Socio-Political Viability:

- What are the expectations of communities as direct participants and also as neighbours?
- What are the expectations of national governments?
- How best can conservancies mitigate exposure to local and national politics?

Key Findings:

- We must be transparent about the costs involved in setting up a conservancy; that certain land uses will be prohibited, and therefore, an opportunity cost.
- Clear rules of engagement are required; identify stakeholders and outline who is to do what.
- Do no harm.
- Communities will not work with conservancies if there is not a real understanding of community dynamics and needs.
- Public Private Community Partnership (PPCP) is a good model to use. Naturally, there are variations in how this is structured but this model has proven successful - especially where a neutral party is facilitating.
- Rights vs. ownership; responsibility vs. rights. The context varies and what matters to the communities varies.
- Free Prior Informed Consent must be used from the beginning to ensure real buy-in from communities.

PANEL V: Governance

Key Questions:

- Which Governance structures work well and which ones don't work?
- Which internal factors affect governance and how can they be mitigated?

- Which external factors affect governance and how can they be mitigated?

Key Findings:

- NGOs should play the role of facilitator and assist in capacity building.
- Governance structures work best when they are developed by the community, with guidance.
- Social cohesion is an important factor in governance and a solid process for collective decision making.
- Transparency and accountability is a core component of good governance.
- There must be good conflict resolution in place.
- There should be clarity of roles; not everyone can drive the bus.
- Governance is a process.



Conclusions

Vote of Thanks

Alistair Pole highlighted that 'only the surface had been scratched' with this workshop, and he thanked attendees for participating and also authors who took the time to pen articles. He noted that time was very limited and that it was clear that more time was required for these types of discussions. The group concurred that the day had proved extremely useful.

Closing Remarks

Kathleen Fitzgerald gave the closing remarks: "This has been a productive day. Ten countries, all with different and innovative conservancy practices, have been represented. Thank you for your hard work, your commitment to ensuring conservancies flourish across the continent, and your tireless efforts on behalf of Africa's wildlife. AWF will continue to facilitate this dialogue. This is the beginning of a longer conversation."



Photo: AWF

2016 Workshop Participants

	Name	Organisation	Position	Country
1.	Clive Stockil	Save Valley Conservancy	Founding Member	Zimbabwe
2.	Bryan Havemann	Timbavati	General Manager/Warden	South Africa
3.	Richard Vigne	OI Pejeta	Chief Executive Officer	Kenya
4.	Mark Saunders	Malilangwe	Executive Director	Zimbabwe
5.	Matt Perry	Grumeti	Conservation Manager	Tanzania
6.	Peter Lindsey	Panthera	Policy Coordinator	Mozambique
7.	Juliet King	Northern Rangelands Trust	Research & Monitoring Coordinator	Kenya
8.	John Salehe	AWF Tanzania	Country Director	Tanzania
9.	Daniel Sopia	Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Asc.	Chairman	Kenya
10.	Helen Gibbons	Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association	Chief Executive Officer	Kenya
11.	Zealelem Tefera	Born Free Foundation	Country Representative	Ethiopia
12.	Rob Dodson	Wildlife Works	Vice-President	Kenya
13.	Cara Braund	Wildlife Works	Conservation Manager	Kenya
14.	Dickson Ole Kaelo	Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association	Chief Executive Officer	Kenya
15.	Lilian Goredema	Independent	CAMPFIRE Expert	Zimbabwe
16.	Samson Kenneth Kaunda	Kalahari Conservation Society	Senior Lecturer & Research Coordinator	Botswana
17.	Shylock Muyengwa	Consultant	CBNRM Specialist	Zambia
18.	Rodgers Lubilo	WWF/SAWC	CBNRM Governance Specialist	Zambia
19.	Steve Collins	ASL-Foundation SA	Executive Director	South Africa
20.	Mark Gerrard	Wildlands Conservation Trust	Strategic Manager for Community Conservation	South Africa
21.	Sam Mwandha	AWF Uganda	Chief of Party	Uganda
22.	John Makombo	Uganda Wildlife Service	Conservation Director	Uganda
23.	Calvin Cottar	Cottar's Wildlife Trust	Director	Kenya
24.	Raoul du Toit	Lowveld Rhino Trust	Director	Zimbabwe
25.	Irene Amoke	Kenya Wildlife Trust	Project Coordinator	Kenya
26.	David Williams	African Wildlife Foundation	Director Geography	USA
27.	Richard Diggle	WWF Namibia	Business/CBNRM Specialist	Namibia
28.	Ms. Juniper Neil	USAID Kenya/East Africa	Director NRM	Kenya
29.	Beatrice Wamalwa	USAID Kenya	Deputy Director for Kenya	Kenya
30.	Mikala Lauridsen	USAID Kenya/East Africa	Senior CWT/Conservation Advisor	Kenya
31.	Ben Wandago	USAID	CBNRM Specialist	Kenya
32.	Benson Maina	African Conservation Centre	Project Assistant	Kenya
33.	Maurice Nyaligu	WWF Kenya	Program Officer	Kenya
34.	Allan Earnshaw	Private sector/KWCA/MMWCA	Chairman	Kenya
35.	Nick Lapham	Kenya Wildlife Association	(US Body)	Kenya

	Name	Organisation	Position	Country
36.	Kundishora Mpandaguta	Zim Ministry of Environment	Principal Environmental Officer	Zimbabwe
37.	Tawanda Gotosa	Zimbabwe Parks & Wildlife Management Authority	Regional Manager Central	Zimbabwe
38.	Sebastião Pejul Pedro	ANAC	Director	Mozambique
39.	Kamweti Mutu	Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group	Program Officer	Kenya
40.	Timothy Ole Mosiany	OI lentille Conservancy	Manager	Kenya
41.	Ann Kahihia	Kenya Wildlife Service	Assis. Director Community Wildlife Service	Kenya
42.	Benson Leyian	Amboseli Ecosystem Trust	General Manager	Kenya
43.	Rancher Koikai	Amboseli Ecosystem Trust	Coordinator	Kenya
44.	Iain Leckie	Lions Bluff	Lease Holder/Director	Kenya
45.	Donald Bongosa	Taveta Conservancies Association	Chairman	Kenya
46.	Richard Bell	Lake Naivasha Riparian Association	Chairman	Kenya
47.	Judy Kepher-Gona	Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda	Lead Consultant	Kenya
48.	Janet Matota	Assistant Director	Integrated Rural Dev. & Nature Conservation	Namibia
49.	John Mamai	Chairman	Naibunga Conservancy	Kenya
50.	James Makurian	Chairman	Makurian Conservancy	Kenya
51.	Ole Kiyaa Maisuilia	Chairman	Iingwesi Conservancy	Kenya
52.	Wangeci Mwai	Blue Ribbon Concepts	Principal Consultant	Kenya
53.	Morris Mutsambiwa	Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area	Secretariat Executive Director	Botswana
54.	John Sengeny	Naibosho Conservancy	Chairman	Kenya
55.	Moses Sikona	Siana Conservancy	Chairman	Kenya
56.	Guy Levene	Jember Ltd	Managing Director	Ethiopia
57.	Liz Rihoy	Executive Director	Zeitz Foundation	Kenya
58.	Kaddu Sebunya	African Wildlife Foundation	President	Kenya
59.	Per Karlsson	African Wildlife Foundation	Programme Design	Kenya
60.	Sarah Chiles	African Wildlife Foundation	Conservation Strategy & Issues Analyst	Kenya
61.	Alistair Pole	African Wildlife Foundation	Director Land and Habitat Protection	Zimbabwe
62.	Kathleen Fitzgerald	African Wildlife Foundation	Vice-President Land Protection	Kenya
63.	Edwin Tambara	African Wildlife Foundation	Conservation Planner	Kenya
64.	Gabriella Waugh	African Wildlife Foundation	Intern	Kenya
65.	Sylvia Wasige	African Wildlife Foundation	Conservation Management Associate	Kenya
66.	Muyang Achah	African Wildlife Foundation	Conservation Management Associate	Kenya



CONSERVANCIES IN AFRICA: BEST, PROMISING AND EMERGING PRACTICES

E. Tambara & S. Chiles

This synthesis on best, promising and emerging practices for conservancies in Africa was largely informed by outcomes of the Conservancy Workshop that was convened in Nairobi at the headquarters of the African Wildlife Foundation. The workshop provided an opportunity to share lessons learned and experiences from across the continent on mechanisms, processes and practices for supporting the development, management and viability of conservancies. The focal themes of the workshop were policy frameworks, governance, economic viability, socio-political viability, and ecological viability; these form the framework for the synthesis. The synthesis was further enriched by articles from conservancy experts and practitioners from across the continent who analysed and documented their experiences and perspectives. A literature review was conducted to capitalize on existing work and to incorporate effectively any applicable practices from different countries and regions. The practices presented here are by no means an exhaustive or perfect set but can provide practitioners with guidance and options for consideration in the development and management of conservancies.

Introduction

There is growing interest globally in developing solutions for conservation outside of state-owned protected areas, primarily through involvement of communities and private land owners. In Africa, several modalities of community-private-public land management for conservation have emerged, which can be grouped under the *conservancies'* umbrella. Experience in establishing and managing conservancies over the past few decades has resulted in a significant body of knowledge on the continent, however, this body of knowledge is diffuse. While conservancy practitioners have interacted at national levels, there has been very limited interaction at regional and pan-African levels to encourage learning and the cross-pollination of ideas. It is timely and important that conservancy practitioners interact at a supranational level to discuss and document what has been done, what works, why it works and for whom it works. This will provide a foundation for improved efficiency and effectiveness of existing conservancies, and guide the development of new conservancies into the future.

The sharing of solutions is key to avoid reinventing the wheel in each community of practitioners. While there are few one-size-fits-all solutions for conservancy establishment, governance and management, with the availability of information and an open-minded approach, practitioners can learn from each other and adapt ideas from elsewhere to local contexts. While Africa's conservancies vary between countries, and even within countries, there are a few guiding factors that have been shown to lead to the success of conservancies²⁴.

These guiding factors can be considered conservancy "best, promising and emerging practices." This chapter is an attempt at highlighting several of these practices for prompting practitioners, private landowners and communities to reflect on their own contexts and practices, and carefully consider options for strengthening conservancy development and management.

The application of these practices will vary across conservancy models, regions, and countries. As a

²⁴ Fitzgerald, K. (2012) Understanding the Ecological, Economic and Social Context of Conservancies in Zimbabwe. African Wildlife Foundation - Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group.

result, there is a clear bias towards addressing practices which are general enough to avoid being overly prescriptive, and to provide flexibility in application. The authors steer away from explicitly categorising practices presented here into best, promising or emerging practices. Although conservancy practitioners in Africa largely agree that many of these practices have been tried, tested and proven to work, there is need to obtain a sufficiently rich empirical base through experience, research and analysis²⁸ to support categorisation.

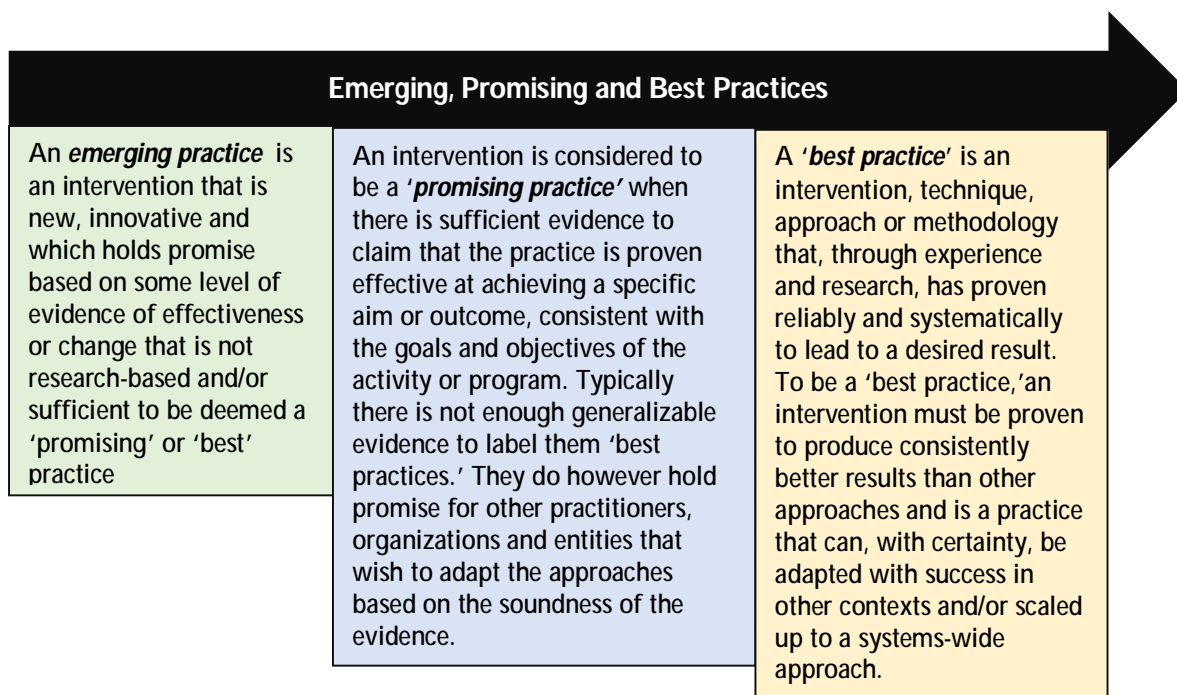
What are Best, Promising, and Emerging Practices?

It is necessary to define the terms “best”, “promising” and “emerging practices” as applied in this chapter. Three types of practices are defined here in order to inform a learning framework for conservancies. These types sit on a linear, temporal scale. ‘Best practices’ for complex conservancy issues are context specific and often contested against a background of imperfect knowledge. As portrayed in the below diagram, it is more useful to think of emerging, promising, and best practices as part of an adaptive learning process rather than as fixed sets of rules or guidelines.

The approach taken in this paper is to encourage improvements in the quality of ongoing work on conservancies as well as to promote continuous learning as the conservancy movement gathers momentum. For this reason, the authors take these practices as lenses which provide insight into what has worked thus far, current innovations and improvements to come, and the need for a sustained supply of new practices.

There are temporal, spatial and complexity considerations in the selection of emerging, promising, and best practices. Some conservancies were established over fifty years ago while many countries are in the beginning phases of setting up conservancies. Taking into account regional and historical variation, conservancies can be considered along a spectrum of mature, maturing, and newly established. Few conservancies can be considered mature. There are therefore arguably not enough cases across the continent to be able to establish scientifically rigorous “best practices.”

Further, given the complexity of conservation outside protected areas in Africa, the different contexts and varying models of conservancy practices, there are significant challenges in asserting that a given practice is consistently applicable spatially and temporally as an intervention that systematically produces the best results.



Another important aspect to be noted is that the practices highlighted here do not include the detailed or ground-level operational aspects of conservancies. Instead, these practices focus mainly on high level processes, underlying values in the regulatory processes, mechanisms and approaches that influence conservancy establishment, decision making and management.

How were Best, Promising and Emerging Practices Selected in this Volume?

This chapter offers information that has been gathered and synthesised from different sources, including the conservancy workshop, relevant literature, expert and practitioner interviews, and field experience. The practices presented here are by no means an exhaustive or perfect set but can provide practitioners with guidance and options for consideration in the development and management of conservancies.

Best Practices Workshop

A workshop was convened in Nairobi at the headquarters of the African Wildlife Foundation for deliberations on wildlife conservancies in Africa. The workshop featured representatives from ten countries: South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya. The workshop provided an opportunity to share lessons learned and experiences from across the continent on mechanisms and processes for the development and management of conservancies. The workshop was one component of an initiative (to which this paper belongs) to stimulate interaction and cross-pollination of ideas and experiences among experts and practitioners in this field.

The outcomes of the 2016 workshop formed the primary source of information used in drafting practices presented here. The workshop was defined by five thematic discussion sessions focusing on; Policy Frameworks; Governance; Economic, Ecological, and Socio-Political Viability. Key lessons learned were pulled from these sessions feeding into this paper. Provided as footnotes for each thematic session is a list of

panellists that were leading discussions at the workshop.

Literature Review

The authors are not aware of any substantive work that has compiled conservancy practices at a pan-African level, however, some work has been done at a national level, some conservancy models as well as for the wider field of community based natural resource management (CBNRM). A literature review was conducted to capitalize on existing work and to incorporate effectively any applicable promising practices from different countries and regions.

Expert/practitioner Articles

The African Wildlife Foundation convened various experts and practitioners on conservancies across the continent to analyse and document their experiences and perspectives. This compendium of writings draw on pan-African expertise and explore the evolution of conservancies—community based, private and a combination—probe lessons learned successes and failures of different conservancy models. These articles were reviewed, and key approaches that were highlighted by authors as effective were extracted and incorporated here where relevant. Where possible a specific article was cited for a specific practice, however in many instances certain practices are not attributed to one particular article, thus all articles in this volume have been cited and provided in the references.

Chapter Structure

The conservancy promising practices presented here are organised according to the five thematic areas that have been introduced in preceding sections of this volume and were the focal topics at the 2016 pan-African conservancy workshop hosted by the African Wildlife Foundation. These areas are: Policy Frameworks, Governance, Ecological, Economic and Socio-Political Viability²⁵. Depending on the thematic subject, these practices address issues that are relevant at national, regional (sub-national), or local (conservancy) level.

²⁵ Viability refers to the assessment of whether a conservancy has the capacity to meet and maintain its defined objectives over a particular time scale.

Within these thematic subjects, an ‘emerging’, ‘promising’ or ‘best’ practice can be considered as one or more of the following types of practices: *activity* – a particular kind of action based on a particular approach that may have an impact; *program* – a set of related activities that is intended to produce integrated outcomes; *agency* – collection of programs and activities within an institutional framework; *policy* - a stated principle or rule to guide decisions and actions which have an impact on conservancies; and *community response* – an organised effort by a group of individuals to address a particular issue or opportunity relevant to conservancies.

1. Policy Frameworks

Within a country’s legal system, a hierarchy of legal instruments and operational tools is typically in place to regulate conservation. A principal legislative element (an act or law) usually provides the key requirements, and various codes, decrees,

policies, norms, rules and subsidiary orders add the implementation details. Sound conservation policies and strong, effective laws are essential and provide a basis for protecting critical wildlife habitat, preventing habitat fragmentation, delaying or averting reckless resource extraction, and otherwise preserving natural ecosystems. Policies also guide land tenure and resource allocation which are key factors in creating conservancies.

Even in countries where supportive policies exist, the significant changes taking place in Africa and individual countries affect the delivery of conservation; thus, raising the need for continued alignment of policies and other legislative instruments. We draw on the experiences and outcomes from the 2016 conservancy workshop, expert/practitioner articles across Africa and literature to generate broad emerging, promising and best practice insights into Policy frameworks for conservancies in Africa.

No.	Practice	Overview
1.	Policy development needs to be grounded in experience at the grassroots level.	In some countries, communal conservancies have developed largely without a national policy framework, such as in Kenya, and thus have been pioneered at a grassroots level. The question posed at the AWF workshop was ‘whether to lobby government agencies for a policy framework, or take the grassroots, experimental path to piloting a conservancy program?’ Some practitioners pointed out some conservancies have thrived within a solid framework, and others have thrived without policy framework. There is some consensus, however, that where possible, allowing for piloting and then following with policy makes most sense, as the policy can reflect actual testing and trialing and be sensitive to empirical realities. Kenya has an example of this type of process.
2.	Policies should provide an enabling structure and should not be overly prescriptive.	The conservancy movement has shown that policy developed with input from grassroots and sensitive empirical realities provides recognition and other support for conservancies. It is critical, however, that policy is relevant without being overly prescriptive. The diversity of conservancy models within countries and across the continent is an indication of the differences in the contexts within which conservancies have evolved. Each of these models have required some level of innovation and trial and error in developing context-appropriate solutions that achieve conservation, social and economic goals. It is important that policies do not stifle innovation, which has proved to be an essential element in the development of conservancies. It is essential that policies are developed with full participation of stakeholders to achieve a balance between guiding practice and enabling innovation.

No.	Practice	Overview
3.	Clear frameworks on rights of various stakeholders are needed, especially regarding community land tenure.	In many countries, wildlife is owned by the state and the major challenge is the devolvement of rights to stakeholders on the ground. This can be further complicated by different land tenure systems. In several cases, policies have not clearly defined rights of stakeholders; thus, creating conflict and limiting stakeholders from maximising on opportunities. To realise the intended development paths of conservancies, conservancy policies should provide clear rights frameworks, and relevant laws and regulations need to be enacted to implement policies effectively. Policy should spell out laws and regulations related to e.g. land use/conservation planning, wildlife management and user rights. Further to their incorporation in policy, stakeholders should be involved in formulation process as well as ensuring, rights are effectively communicated and well understood.
4.	Other policies should be used to support conservancies in the interim, prior to conservancy policy finalisation.	In many countries, legislation and policy does not clearly or in a single record address the conservation of land outside of state protected areas, primarily due to variable land tenure, and multi-sectoral relevance. Multiple relevant policies may exist. Conservancy practitioners recognise that it can take many years to have specific policies and supporting regulations in place for conservancies. In most African countries, a national constitution recognises and addresses issues of environment and conservation, which provides the foundation for the interpretation and application of specific policy and legislative provisions. Practitioners and communities have used other supportive policies to establish effective conservancies while waiting for policies specific to conservancies. Some of the most important policies in this regard relate to wildlife, forestry, land tenure, rural development, indigenous people empowerment, and fisheries, among others.
5.	Effective conservancy policies require effective public participation.	Effective policies for conservation are dependent on the level of engagement and support from citizens, and key stakeholders in particular. Stakeholders can include individuals and groups from communities, the public sector, the conservation sector, and the business sector, such as community associations, tourism operators, farmers, foresters, scientists, and civil servants. Policy development for conservancies requires a robust stakeholder engagement plan, and may also require a strategic environmental assessment, depending on country requirements. Beyond policy formulation, stakeholders should be given opportunities to participate actively in policy implementation through e.g. input and comment on draft regulations, and management strategies.
6.	Policy lobbying and development should be strategically timed.	Conservancy policy and legislation development processes can be lengthy. Experience has shown that timing is key for successful lobbying and subsequent development of conservation policies. If necessary political will and capacity is identified for developing conservancies, land owners and practitioners ought to seize the window of opportunity for policy lobbying. This can involve advocating for conservancies in line with strategic country development targets such as poverty alleviation in rural areas, and for mainstreaming conservancy adoption as a national development strategy and for the achievement of international obligations such as the Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Central to effective lobbying are the landowners – it is far more effective when a group of community landowners seek attention of the minister or government than a conservation NGO.
7.	Policies should articulate incentives for conservancy development clearly.	Conservancies provide development services which can be considered to fall within the remit of government obligations. Conservancies can actively facilitate development for formerly marginalised communities, providing systems for local security, and alternative incomes. They can also support the provision of critical ecosystem services for other areas such as towns and cities. Rarely have these values been actively recognised, and conservancy owners and practitioners been compensated or incentivised to manage conservancies more effectively and establish more conservancies. Policies should form the basis for articulating incentives for developing conservancies for both government and land owners. With regards to land owners, several case studies show that the granting of user rights to land owners and communities living in wildlife areas is key in empowering them to participate effectively in decision making processes and to benefit from the use of wildlife resources. Policies should provide room for the identification and prioritisation of incentives for land owners involved in conservation.

No.	Practice	Overview
8.	Conservancy policy should be harmonized with other NRM policies, and responsibility allocated clearly for this process between government departments.	Careful attention should be paid to harmonizing conservancy policy with existing natural resource management policies. This requires clear allocation of responsibilities to relevant government departments during the policy development process, after policy establishment, and during policy review. It is critical that all relevant government departments understand the synergies between relevant policies for coordinated support of conservancy development. Grassroots institutions can also maximize on these synergies at the implementation level by being informed.
9.	Policy should allow for the use of hybrid environmental management and financing arrangements.	Policy should not restrict the types of management or financing arrangements for conservancies. It should allow for the use of hybrid management and financing arrangements for the achievement of conservancy objectives. Examples of hybrid management arrangements include co-management (community-civil society-state; CBNRM-water resources authority); community-private-civil society partnerships for concessioning; private-social partnerships for financing and social benefits (payments for ecosystem services) ²⁶



²⁶ **Policy Frameworks Panelists**

Steve Collins
 Richard Diggle
 Dickson Ole Kaelo
 Lillian Goredema

Executive Director
 Business / CBNRM Specialist
 Chief Executive Officer
 Independent

The African Safari Foundation
 WWF Namibia
 Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association
 CAMPFIRE Expert

2. Governance

The choice of governance arrangements for community or private conservancies can either promote and strengthen or obstruct achievement of desired outcomes. According to the Community Conservation Research Network, the term *governance* describes the manner by which communities, societies and organizations of many kinds choose to organize themselves to make decisions about a goal or issue (such as the environment), which includes a concern with politics and the way power is distributed between different actors in society²⁷. Governance is therefore about who decides what the objectives are; what to do to pursue them; and with what means²⁸. How are decisions taken? Who holds power, authority and responsibility? Who is (or should be) held accountable?²⁹

It is key for practitioners to ask to what extent the interests of local resource users are matched by meaningful involvement in decision-making processes. How can governance arrangements deal

with the realities of delivering benefits for household-level livelihoods which are arranged and managed in complex ways? To what extent are the governance processes emerging in complex conservation situations adaptive to social-ecological change and uncertainty?³⁰

We draw on the experiences and outcomes from the 2016 conservancy workshop and expert/practitioner articles across Africa to generate broad emerging, promising and best practice insights into governance for conservancies in Africa.

Good governance is a measure of the effectiveness of decision-making processes by the Conservancy as an institution representing its Community. Weak governance can lead to low community participation, expropriation of benefits by community leaders and will ultimately erode trust in and support for the Conservancy.

King et al. 2015: Establishing a Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya: a Guide for Private Land-owners and Communities

No.	Practice	Overview
1.	Transparency and accountability provide a critical foundation for good governance.	These attributes help to generate trust, ownership and social cohesion which in turn allows for effective, collective decision-making in conservancies. Strong by-laws and constitutions, transparency measures (such as regular public meetings), conservation parameters and guidelines, codes of conduct, membership obligations, management objectives, and revenue sharing measures should be put in place, and be widely accessible to stakeholders to ensure good governance ³¹ .
2.	A conservancy should have a clear vision to support effective governance.	It is essential that stakeholders understand the future desired state of their conservancy from the outset. A participatory visioning process helps to ensure that stakeholders are clear on the 'destination' and what needs to be done to get there. The vision that is developed and owned by the stakeholders sets the framework in which management strategies and objectives are anchored, safeguarding against any deviation from the intended purpose of the conservancy. A clear vision helps to ensure a consistent management focus, and cooperation among stakeholders.

²⁷ Armitage, D. 2008. Governance and the commons in a multi-level world. *International Journal of the Commons*, 2: 2-32.

²⁸ Ostrom, E. (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

²⁹ Borrini-Feyerabend, G. and Hill, R. (2015) 'Governance for the conservation of nature', in G. L. Worboys, M. Lockwood, A. Kothari, S. Feary and I. Pulsford (eds) *Protected Area Governance and Management*, pp. 169–206, ANU Press, Canberra.

³⁰ Berdej, S., D. Armitage and A. Charles. (2015): *Governance and Community Conservation*. Working Paper No. 2. Community Conservation Research Network. Halifax, Nova Scotia.

³¹ King J., Kaelo D., Buzzard B. & Warigia G. (2015). *Establishing a Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya: a guide for Private Land-owners and Communities*. Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association.

No.	Practice	Overview
3.	Setting up structures for good governance requires foundational analysis of social and ethnic dynamics.	Conservancies across the continent are established in contexts with complex social and ethnic dynamics which have a bearing on ownership and use of natural resources. These are fundamental aspects to take into account for the establishment and governance of conservancies. Participatory research should be undertaken to give stakeholders a collective understanding of gender, age, and ethnic dynamics, and how these are linked to natural resource governance in the target area. Understanding these dynamics allows for identifying relevant entry points for developing effective participatory governance, enterprises and benefit sharing. Examples of dynamics to explore include historical land uses, community sub-groups, and gendered divisions of labour, migrant labour, nomadic groups, immigrants.
4.	Property and/or land user rights must be well-defined.	Land ownership in cases of private conservancies is generally straightforward, but not necessarily so, in many areas aspects such as mineral, water and wildlife use rights rest with the government. Registered owners of the land are the key stakeholders. In community conservancy cases, ownership and use rights are more complex. It is essential to establish customary and legal owners of the land in these contexts. There are often issues with regards to claims on historical use, and some community groups having customary rights to land without being the legal owners. Nomadic groups which use particular areas/land on a seasonal basis are an example. The 'community' needs to be well-defined and the rights of its constituents identified and collectively agreed upon. This provides a critical foundation for effective governance and conflict resolution, and is vital for long-term success.
5.	Collective responsibility and accountability measures can provide important checks and balances for good governance.	In many contexts, there are a few individuals or groups who/which violate conservancy by-laws and regulations, often with confidence that the conservancy management entity is powerless to enforce the bylaws and regulation. This is common in community conservancies. Many practitioners are increasingly realising the value of collective community accountability (risk-based investment in governance) in supporting good governance. If a member of the conservancy violates the set by-laws, benefits (payments and rights) are withheld from the collective (community). It is upon the community to bring the offender to book. This approach can align with cultural norms relating to traditional decision making mechanisms in many communities. This however does not necessarily deal with third-party violations, which are often more difficult to enforce.
6.	Board rotation coupled with fair representation helps to ensure that self-serving interests do not take hold.	Board composition and length of tenure is an important aspect of conservancy governance. The board should always seek to identify, balance and meet stakeholders' expectations. It is essential that a conservancy board has a defined term limit and is democratically elected (ideally at an annual general meeting). Practitioners agree that a conservancy board is more stable and performs better when it has: equitable representation (from ethnic groups, women, youth and settlement zones); ex-officio representatives from government, tourism, and conservation sectors; meets regularly (at least quarterly) to review progress; communicates with its members regularly; and exemplary board members who uphold conservancy by-laws.
7.	Boards and management entities should be separated and a greater focus placed on capacity building for management.	A strong management entity, and 'separation of power' between management and the board can create healthy checks and balances for effective governance. It is important to ensure that board members have the skills necessary to govern a conservancy well, however, too much emphasis can be placed on the board to the detriment of the management entity. Conservancy boards have a high turnover rate compared to conservancy management, which should be consistent. The management entity ultimately implements the agreed-upon strategies and makes day-to-day decisions on the conservancy. Thus, greater emphasis on capacity building should be placed on management or professionalizing management altogether. Management capacity needs can include conservation and business planning, transparency, accountability, conflict resolution, anti-poaching, monitoring and reporting.

No.	Practice	Overview
8.	Existing traditional customs, leadership, beliefs should be integrated in meaningful ways into conservancy governance.	Conservancies are never established in a cultural or administrative vacuum. Communities have their own formal and customary institutions. Traditional governance systems can be strong and effective, and traditional authorities are often highly respected, having intimate knowledge about its community and landscape. It is essential to recognize and integrate these customary institutions from the onset of conservancy development with any new regulatory systems proposed. Case studies show that conservancy issues can be resolved quicker and at lower costs when they are handled by customary institutions. It is important to note customary institutions are often effective when dealing with members of the community, and also require appropriate checks and balances.
9.	Smaller/lower-level governance groups should be established and strengthened.	To improve the participation of the wider community in decisions and planning of community activities, smaller governance groups need to be established and supported. By disaggregating community participation into working groups, individuals within the community can develop a better sense of ownership over activities, and engage with and question decisions more meaningfully. Opportunities exist at lower administrative units to establish assemblies can be used to create this lower-level platform. Low-level platforms (e.g. village assemblies) can allow community members to have a say in the planning of operations and also receive information first hand from the conservancy management. This participation leads to stronger support for conservancy activities. Any new developments can be discussed fully before implementation, rather than implementation preceding community reaction and queries.
10.	Governance systems need to be dynamic.	Governance systems need to adapt, change and evolve. Because of this, governance analysis, and opportunities for cross-pollination of ideas is needed. Analysis should deal with: <i>who</i> makes decisions and <i>how</i> actors and decisions connect and relate with other actors and decisions in society; and <i>how they learn and evolve</i> through time, shaping the ecological and social history of the concerned area.
11.	Conservancies should take a diversified approach to benefit sharing at the community level.	Linked to point 2., recipients of conservancy benefits are diverse, belong to different social groups, and have different needs. Benefit sharing structures and systems need to account for diversity and tailor benefit sharing for specific groups where needed. For example, some conservancies ensure individual and direct disbursements for members of the community who are considered vulnerable, such as the elderly or chronically ill. Other case studies show that looking beyond traditional CBNRM benefit sharing approaches to village savings or credit schemes can provide opportunities for more equitable and effective benefit sharing. Benefit sharing is one of the most fundamental processes to get right given its influence on community attitudes towards conservancy governance and buy-in for conservancy development.
12.	Effective, regular communication to communities and other stakeholders is critical for building trust.	A structure for regular and effective communications needs to be set out as part of a conservancy governance strategy, including annual general meetings, smaller meetings, and noticeboards. Conservancy members, and employees can feel alienated if they do not have comprehensive and timely access to information which informs decision making. Perceptions of good governance are directly associated with effective communication from the board to members, how satisfied the community is with conservancy programmes, and whether the board is trusted with revenues. Communication is a form of public relations and needs to be prioritised by conservancy boards and management entities. It is also critical for conveying conservancy success to indirect stakeholders to garner more external support ³²

³² *Governance Panelists*

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3. Economic Viability

Economic viability refers to whether a conservancy has the capacity to meet its defined objectives, to generate enough revenue or finance to cover running costs, and to generate economic benefits for stakeholders such that it can be justified as an effective economic vehicle for conservation and development. Assessing economic viability requires an analysis of the stability and growth potential of revenue streams, the revenue mix, and revenue or funding projections.

Economic viability, while important, need not be considered the overriding criterion for success of a conservancy. Some conservancies may appear to have very low potential for economic gain but are viable and offer gains in terms of technical, social and institutional factors. There are several examples where social and environmental factors are very strong but economic gains are low. It is

important to realise that the viability of a particular conservancy depends on a number of factors, including financial dynamics.



Photo: Elerai Satao Lodge

No.	Practice	Overview
1.	Creating a business case upfront can support economic viability.	Many established conservancies were developed in the absence of a solid business plan and this meant that the majority of these conservancies were developed with misplaced ideas on real economic opportunities that could be developed. Comprehensive business plan development can often follow conservancy establishment. Case study analysis suggests that understanding and articulating the business case upfront, and developing a business plan, creates efficiencies in the set-up and long-term management of a conservancy. Business plan development should include a thorough, forward looking economic risk assessment for supporting long-term adaptive management. The risk in setting up a conservancy without a business plan is expectations are raised by stakeholders and conservancies fail to deliver.
2.	Conservancies should integrate into wider economic frameworks.	In addition to business planning at the conservancy-level, conservancy practitioners should think about a conservancy's economic role and relationship within local and regional (and possibly even global) economies. This entails being conversant with local and regional economic growth plans, understanding local and regional enterprise opportunities, threats, and identifying synergies with existing or proposed enterprises from other sectors. Understanding a conservancy's local and regional economic context and its contribution to the same allows for the articulation of a broader justification for the conservancy, as well as ensuring that the conservancy is positively integrated, outward and forward looking. Demonstrating how a conservancy helps achieve local, regional and country objectives gives significant political capital to the conservancy.
3.	Community ownership/equity in conservancies and risk-based contributions promote economic success.	Handouts do not work ³³ , and communities need to assume both a reasonable level of risk and bring something to the conservancy project, such as land, wildlife, money, or skills. Why is this important for success of the conservancy? Without meaningful, risk-based contributions, communities will view a conservancy project as belonging to an outside entity. Contributions from communities helps to build a sense of ownership and thus a collective desire to see the conservancy succeed. Risk-based contributions by communities furthermore break patterns of dependency and economic passivity entrenched in contexts heavily dependent on development aid. Lastly, contributions from communities legitimise their role in decision making.

³³ Fitzgerald, K. H. (2012) Understanding the Ecological, Economic and Social Context of Conservancies in Zimbabwe. Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group

No.	Practice	Overview
4.	Implementation of new revenue sources should be properly planned.	Related to the diversification of revenue streams, it is important to note that branching out into new revenue streams needs to be done right. Conservancies that have successfully diversified have ensured that expertise is developed in a particular enterprise, and a degree of success realised before a new enterprise is developed. Branching into new revenue streams requires proper business planning and due diligence, appropriate skill sets, capital investment in capacity development for staff, technology and infrastructure.
5.	Diversification of revenue streams is necessary for reducing risk and increasing long-term viability.	Few conservancies are sustained from the interest of a large endowment or have guaranteed, sustainable multi-year revenues from one source. Thus, diversifying revenue streams is essential for reducing risk and ensuring economic viability. For example highly tourism-dependent conservancies in some countries have collapsed due to fluctuations in the tourism industry caused by external pressures, such as violent political events, terrorist events or disease. The same can be said for conservancies which are highly dependent on hunting revenues, in light of recent international scrutiny on trophy hunting, and proposed or enacted restrictions on trophy imports to traditional markets. Some conservancies have successfully developed business plans which introduce well-planned, diversified and integrated revenue streams such as: tourism concessions; domestic livestock operations (breeding, trading and embryo flushing); selective agriculture; residential property development, payments for ecosystem services, among others. Conservancies with diversified commercial models consistently demonstrated their ability to cope with external economic shocks.
6.	Demonstration of conservancy 'social services' delivery can attract financial support from governments.	Not all conservancies will present economic potential. Some conservancies have, however, been shown to provide an array of social services which were previously non-existent for marginalized communities in wildlife-rich areas. In many instances, conservancies provide social services such as security, community livelihoods, infrastructure (roads, dams, boreholes, and cattle dips), amenities (health and education), livestock management and marketing, and water provision. These social services are often the mandate of local and/or national governments. The role of conservancies in providing these services has not gone unnoticed as some governments have now incorporated conservancies in their fiscal budgets for support. Governments are beginning to realise that conservancies are well-positioned to deliver these services on their behalf and thus are willing to provide them with funding. Where opportunities exist, conservancies should seek recognition from local governments and solicit for budget support. Once such funding streams are secured, they provide balance and buffer conservancies from dips in commercial or donor funding ³⁴ .
7.	Conservancies need to invest in local development projects.	Apart from core programs necessary for conservancy operations and management, many conservancies have invested in and provide support to a broad range of initiatives that ensure sustainability of operations and increase benefits to land owners or adjacent community members. Such initiatives typically include: student bursaries; holistic livestock management; emergency re-stocking of livestock; medical support; water; health and education services; adult education; sports; micro-enterprises among others.

³⁴ King, J., Lalampaa, T., Craig, I., & Harrison, M (2016) Community Conservancies in Northern Kenya: The Northern Rangelands Trust Model. In: *Conservancies in Africa: Towards Best Practices*. Volume 1. African Wildlife Foundation, Nairobi

No.	Practice	Overview
8.	Conservation enterprises need accountable representation within community institutions.	It is critical to select carefully the appropriate legal vehicle for community management of revenues from conservation enterprises. Many conservancies and NGOs have focused on setting up 'social' institutions such as trusts. Practitioners are beginning to question, however, whether these institutions are truly representative and effective e.g. in some countries, it is illegal for trustees to be removed by any entity other than the board of trustees, which is clearly at odds with the principle of accountable representation. Thus, practitioners are beginning to look at other options such as shareholding corporations (i.e. commercial as opposed to social vehicles). These not-for-profit companies provide a means of bringing commercial governance standards into community processes ⁴² .
9.	Conservancies need to be transparent about funding generation and expenditure.	Central to good governance and success in any conservancy is financial transparency and accountability. In the absence of transparency, speculation can create destabilising politics. Regardless of the size of the budget concerned, stakeholders need to be informed about conservancy revenues from commercial operations and donor funding. Equally critical is disclosure on how finances are disbursed for conservancy operations, salaries, and member benefits pay-outs. Conservancy boards that have managed to build credibility have been open to annual audits, disseminating findings widely and publishing their financial reports (often at an AGM). Successful conservancies have gone a step further and made this a requirement in their constitution. Conservancies which model sound financial management and reporting have been shown to attract more support from funding agencies and investors.
10.	Wildlife utilization supports economic viability where systems have integrity, and policy is supportive.	In many contexts where wildlife densities are low, where there is limited accessibility and poor infrastructure and/or security concerns, conservancies do not have the option to promote conventional photographic tourism. In some countries, wildlife utilization such as trophy hunting has provided a critical source of income for conservancies as well as for households ³⁵ . In other cases, conservancies which can support photographic tourism rely on hunting to diversify income streams. Other forms of utilization of wildlife such as harvesting indigenous medicinal plants and grass for thatching, fishing among other uses, have supported livelihoods, prevented alienation of local communities, and supported habitat management. Fundamental to the success of wildlife utilization in conservancies has been the existence of strong national systems that are clear on land owners' rights over wildlife, sound monitoring, and clear conditions and procedures for wildlife utilization e.g. the case of Namibia ³⁵ .
11.	Conservancies should consider new financing approaches.	Conservation financing is not increasing at the rate required due to competition with other pressing global funding needs ³⁶ . Traditional donor approaches to financing conservation, while still important, are proving to be limited in meeting the estimated funding gap in conservation financing. In the funding and commercial space, conservancies find themselves competing with other protected areas and conservation concerns. Conservancies need to look at new financing approaches. Some conservancies are beginning to explore market-based conservation strategies. Most practitioners now accept that the philosophical and mechanical logic of market tools has practical value, and that these tools will become more important in the future ³⁷ . As such, practitioners are now looking at tools such as payment for ecosystem services and specifically Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), export-protected zones, tax breaks, investment in ecosystem service protection, impact financing (i.e. impact philanthropy, impact investing), social and development impact bonds, green bonds, biodiversity offsetting, corporate social responsibility and sustainability (management of environmental, social and reputation risk), among others.

³⁵ Jones, B. T.B (2016) Institutionalized Community Conservancies in Namibia. In: *Conservancies in Africa: Towards Best Practices*. Volume 1. African Wildlife Foundation, Nairobi

³⁶ Credit Suisse AG, World Wildlife Fund, Inc. & McKinsey & Company (2014). *Conservation Finance: Moving beyond donor funding toward an investor-driven approach*.

³⁷ Parker, C., Cranford, M., Oakes, N., Leggett, M. ed., 2012. *The Little Biodiversity Finance Book*, Global Canopy Programme; Oxford.

No.	Practice	Overview
12.	Business planning is needed for community livelihoods.	Mainstream conservancy enterprises, such as tourism or hunting, are often not sufficient for sustaining economic viability of community livelihoods or enterprises. Grassroots-level community enterprises play a significant role in uplifting communities and in sustainable resource management in areas surrounding a conservancy. Conservancies, governments and conservation organizations have supported the establishment or development of community-level micro enterprises. Many of these enterprises, however, perform poorly after the completion of the donor project. The key mistake is these enterprises are often viewed as mere projects and not as businesses, thus lacking proper planning and long-term strategies for production, management and marketing of produced goods or services. It is essential that so-called 'community livelihoods projects' be guided by a complete business plan that integrates all aspects from production to marketing, and integrates the enterprises into broader planning for conservancy economic viability ⁴² .
13.	Tourism operators and investors need to be encouraged to diversify their focus on state PAs and reserves to conservancies.	Conservancies are key to the ecological viability of many state protected areas as they provide buffers, corridors and other habitats for wildlife. As such, state protected areas should not compete with conservancies for tourists; the two complement each other. Central to achieving this is attracting tourism operators and investors who have traditionally sought opportunities in national parks and reserves for wildlife-based tourism. Some conservancies have successfully put themselves on the map and integrated into traditional tourism circuits by investing in educating tourism operators on what they can offer and how they can diversify the tourism product and enrich the client's experience in the area. Some conservancies have also successfully promoted to investors the advantages of investing in tourism facilities outside PAs ³⁸



Photo: Nqoma Safari Lodge

³⁸ **Economic Viability Panellists**

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>Calvin Cottar</i> | <i>Director</i> | <i>Cottar's Camp, Maasai Mara, Kenya</i> |
| <i>Rob Dodson</i> | <i>Vice-President</i> | <i>Wildlife Works, Tsavo, Kenya</i> |
| <i>Wangeci Mwai</i> | <i>Principal Consultant</i> | <i>Blue Ribbon Concepts</i> |
| <i>Bryan Havemann</i> | <i>General Manager/Warden</i> | <i>Timbavati Private Nature Reserve, South Africa</i> |

4. Socio-Political Viability

The success of conservation efforts ultimately depends on understanding the relationship humans have with each other and the environment in which they live³⁹. Establishing, governing and managing a conservancy without considering the complex interactions of social, political and cultural realities invites conflicts. Socio-political viability refers to an assessment of whether a conservancy can sustain social and political structures and processes which support its long-term success. It is important to analyse and be clear of certain issues before establishing a conservancy, among such important aspects to be considered are stakeholder profile,

demographics, land uses, historical and traditional land use, development needs, governance capacities among other issues. Disregarding socio-political issues has led to weakened support for some conservancies as well as inefficient use of human and natural resources. In many ways, considering the socio-political context helps to better understand the context of human-related sources of ecological stress, and identify broad characteristics and values of various stakeholders and how these may affect the development and management of the conservancy.

No.	Practice	Overview
1.	Developing a strong sense of community ownership is critical to long-term conservancy stability and success.	Fundamental to the success of conservancies, in particularly those on community owned land, is developing a sense of ownership and political goodwill. Communities and other key stakeholders should be central in the conceptualization, establishment, governance and management of a conservancy. As pointed out earlier, communities should have some form of tangible contribution and in addition they should participate and be involved in certain decision making, vision setting and development of conservancy strategies. Practitioners, conservation organisations and investors should be careful regarding how they play their roles in conservancy establishment and management. Organisations and external parties should focus more on facilitation, guidance and monitoring. Their involvement should essentially entail mentoring to ensure all key aspects are followed on conservancy formation as well as good governance, and management once the conservancy is established. However, there exist example cases where external organisations had to take up roles in governance and management of conservancy due to complete lack of capacity and skills within the community. In such situations it is important to ensure that external support does not undermine community ownership and autonomy.
2.	Conservancy socio-political legitimacy goes beyond legal documentation.	It is critical that conservancy legitimacy in the eyes of owners and stakeholders is built upon acceptance, a consensual process, removal of uncertainty, addressing or going over past experiences, and inclusive governance. The socio-political legitimacy of conservancies cannot be based on legal documentation or rubber-stamping from authorities. Glossing over issues and focusing only on potential benefits from and successes of conservancies can be politically detrimental in the long term. Conservancy stakeholders should be well informed upfront on the opportunity costs involved establishing a conservancy, failures that have been experienced elsewhere and the reasons for these failures. Expectations of conservancy development need to be acknowledged in the participatory planning phase. Study tours, which are often used to demonstrate successful conservancies to prospective conservancy owners or stakeholders, need to touch on problems as well as successes to convey a balanced view.

³⁹ Kazmierski, J., Kram, M., Mills, E., Phemister, D., Reo, N., Riggs, C., and Tefertiller, R. (2002). Upper Manistee River Watershed Conservation Plan. School of Natural Resources & Environment, University of Michigan

No.	Practice	Overview
3.	Decision-making needs to be founded on equitable information sharing.	It has been previously mentioned that effective communication is key for good governance. The issue of equitable information sharing is related. For information to be widely accessible to conservancy owners, members or stakeholders to inform participation, information needs to be legible by all. Given social variability in any given community, different levels of education, and different needs for information access, a diversified approach is needed for information sharing in order to achieve equitable access.
4.	Conservancies need to deliver social goods that land owners actually require.	It is important that conservancies generate services that are truly useful for communities and other stakeholders. A context-relevant approach to delivering social goods should be adopted. It is important that stakeholders, and in particular communities, have input on the types of social goods they need/require from conservancies. In many cases, conservancy facilitators or organisations, assume to know what communities need; many investments have been unfruitful as a result. In cases where community consensus cannot be reached, practitioners point to the usefulness of having intimate knowledge about the community for facilitating decision making. Several support tools exist for assisting with identifying what communities really need in terms of social goods and services from conservancies.
5.	Conservancies should acknowledge and avoid harm/costs to communities.	Wildlife can come at a cost to communities that live in or next to wildlife-rich areas. This needs to be acknowledged in conservancy development. Human-wildlife conflict can entail livestock loss, human injury and sometimes death, crop and infrastructure damage. The opportunity cost for conservancy establishment in some cases is not fully acknowledged or accounted for. This can develop into a key source of resentment for communities. It is important that any potential harm or cost to the community arising from the establishment or existence of the conservancy is at a minimum acknowledged, and where possible, systems should be put in place for compensation or incentivisation. The economic bottom line for conservancies should not trump community rights. Conservancies should not dispossess communities of their land, neither should resources therein be exploited without community benefits.
6.	Private-Public-Community Partnerships (PPCP) can be successful.	A partnership approach can be critical for mobilising resources and operationalising conservancies or related enterprises. Land owners (in particular communities) can lack capital and the skills needed to establish and manage conservancies and associated enterprises ⁴⁰ . Skills and resources gaps can apply also to public entities. Communities and public entities are often the principal players in the establishment of conservancies. There is value in conservancies creating partnerships with both public and private entities for the development and/or management of enterprises ⁴¹ . Such partnerships have been useful for conservancies to leverage private sector capital and skills; distribute risks and allocate risk management to the best-equipped party; deliver budgetary certainty; and deliver high quality service and transfer of specialist skills to communities and public sector.
7.	There is need for establishing simple and clear rules and ethics of engagement between stakeholders.	Where multiple parties are involved in conservancy establishment or management, roles and responsibilities, as well as simple protocols for engagement should be agreed upon and established. This can guide effective communication and collaboration, reducing the likelihood of miscommunication and stakeholder friction, which can undermine the political stability of a conservancy. Ethics common to all stakeholders should also be identified through a participatory process. Sound ethics at all levels provide a good foundation for socio-political viability.

⁴⁰ Van der Duim, V.R., D. Meyer, J. Saarinen and K. Zellmer (eds.). 2011. *New alliances for tourism, conservation and development in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Delft: Eburon Academic Publishers

⁴¹ Nthiga, R., B. Mwangela and K. Zellmer. 2011. Conservation through Tourism: The conservation enterprise Model of the African Wildlife Foundation. In: *New alliances for tourism, conservation and development in Eastern and Southern Africa*(eds. Van der Duim, V.R., D. Meyer, J. Saarinen and K. Zellmer) Pp. 107-126. Delft: Eburon Academic Publishers.

No.	Practice	Overview
8.	Strengthening the governance capacity of communities for conservancies can provide benefits beyond conservation gains.	At community level, social, economic, political and environmental issues are intertwined and decisions made in one area affect other aspects of the community. Communities that successfully govern conservancies tend to self-organise easily and make good decisions in other areas outside conservation. Building the governance capacities of communities in natural resource management has benefits that go beyond conservation gains. Community institutions developed or strengthened for conservancies eventually provide key functions that are essential outside of conservation. The sustainability of these institutions can be strengthened through consistent conservancy investment and acknowledgement of the central role they play in governing multiple aspects of community life.
9.	Open, honest and solid partnerships between the private sector and communities are needed to translate economic gain into conservation gain.	Successful conservancies recognize the importance of open, honest and solid private sector-community agreements that generate conservation enterprise success, community benefits, and conservation gains. Conservation enterprises are developed to incentivize conservation and to generate profit. Even where profit is realized and a private sector entity is transparent and fair in the disbursement of agreed upon profit percentages to land owners, there can be challenges in ensuring that conservation gains are realised. There are many cases where conservation guidelines have been ignored, landowners have shifted conservation boundaries, shrunk wildlife corridors, or engaged in livelihood activities that contradict conservation. Contractual agreements between land owners, conservancy management and enterprises should be made to ensure strict adherence to the agreement. There should be no grey areas for engagement that can undermine the principles upon which the conservancy or enterprise was established ⁴² .
10.	Continual and effective communication is needed to mitigate destructive politics.	Conservancies exist and operate in complex and challenging socio-political spaces in which people and/or groups have different interests and ambitions. Sources of political risks are innumerable. In many cases, these risks cannot be avoided but can be planned for and managed. As noted previously, a key driver of conflict in conservancies can be the lack of or ineffective communication with communities and other stakeholders and lack of transparency, which then fuels miscommunication. Concealment of information provides a breeding ground for people to generate perceptions which serve their own interest. There are a number of ways to help mitigate the wide array of socio-political risks that are inherent in any conservancy but key among these is mitigation against destructive politics through continual and effective communication. Stakeholders should be continually informed on key decisions, financials, management strategies, benefits and beneficiaries, violators, challenges and opportunities, among other issues.
11.	The misconception that conservancies are 'anti-development' needs to be dispelled.	Land pressures, competing land uses, and government and community development priorities mean that conservation as a land use has to prove itself. Conservancies are often viewed by outsiders as under-utilized land. Conservancies can be misperceived as strategic methods for restricting development. It is critical to dispel these misconceptions. Stakeholders should be well informed on the value of conservancies based on experiences elsewhere including protection of ecosystem services, income generation to local, regional and national government, employment and security. Contrary to the anti-development myth, conservancies have proved to be vehicles for development for some of the most marginalized communities on the continent. Practitioners have found it useful to invest in exchange visits and information sharing between communities and stakeholders from established conservancies, and those who are exploring conservancy opportunities ⁴³

⁴² African Wildlife Foundation (2011) Conservation Enterprise: A Decision Support Toolkit. 50pp. AWF, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁴³ **Socio-Political Viability Panellists**

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5. Ecological Viability

Ecological viability refers to whether a conservancy's ecological functionality can be sustained in the long term. This relates to whether a conservancy can sustain habitat health and viable wildlife populations in the face of threats. Ecological systems are complex and more so in modified areas

with interlinked ecological, social, political and economic dynamics. There are various factors involved in sustaining ecological integrity in a given landscape.

No	Practice	Overview
1.	Provision of empirical evidence on ecological viability and benefits of conservancies can provide a strong justification for conservancy development.	Use of evidence-based evaluation tools/methods to assess the effectiveness of conservancies and associated projects in delivering conservation outcomes is important. Spatial analysis and maps can be useful visual tools for portraying the ecological successes and benefits of conservancies. Analysis and effective packaging of information can help to build a strong case to government/stakeholders for the ecological importance of conservancies. More so, this information can be used for adaptive management within the conservancy, which in turn supports viability. Likewise such tools have been shown to be effective in engaging communities and landowners
2.	Monitoring and measuring impacts beyond conservancy boundaries is necessary for identifying and managing 'leakage'.	Conservation actions in one locality can influence human activities in another locality because of natural resource use patterns and pressures across a landscape. It is not enough to look at conservation impact within a conservancy only. An area targeted for protection might realise conservation gains, but in the process, anthropogenic threats can shift to adjacent areas. This trend is evident in areas where livestock grazing is a key land use activity. Establishment of conservancies may lead to livestock grazing exclusion (except under strict managed grazing regimes). While the conservation area quickly recovers from reduced pressure from grazing, the pressure may shift to adjacent areas where host communities quickly notice an upsurge in the number livestock grazing in their areas leading to environmental degradation outside the conservancy. It is important to investigate whether or how conservancies displace environmental pressures, where these pressures are shifted to, and how host areas are responding to the increased pressure. Where possible, conservancies should anticipate problems and create solutions through partnerships at a landscape level.
3.	Strong partnerships and communication between conservancy and PA authorities are needed to promote ecological viability.	Conservancies can complement the purpose and function of state protected areas in many landscapes ⁴⁴ and can play a critical role in meeting Aichi Target 11 for protected areas. Conservancies and other state protected areas manage shared wildlife and habitats, which cannot persist if managed in isolation. Most PA authorities view conservancies as competition while others recognize the complementarity. Conservancies and state PAs can thrive where they work cooperatively and seek mutually satisfactory solutions to cross-boundary issues. There are mutual gains from collaboration with regards to spatial planning, research, protection of migration routes, anti-poaching activities, tourism and other aspects. Central to these collaborations is communication and willingness to share information and data. Where PA authorities actively undertake statutory advocacy to protect natural and cultural resources outside public conservation lands and waters, conservancies are better supported.

⁴⁴ Elliott, J. Gibbons, H., King., D., King., A., and Leménager, T. L., (2014) Exploring Environmental Complementarity between Types of Protected Areas in Kenya. Focales series, AFD

⁴⁵ Woodley, S., B. Bertzky, N. Crawhall, N. Dudley, J.M. Londono, K. Mackinnon, K. Rendford and T. Sandwith (2012), "Meeting Aichi Target 11: what does success look like for protected area systems?", *The International Journal of Protected Areas and Conservation (PARKS)*, 18: 1.

⁴⁶ Western, D., S. Russell and I. Cuthill (2009), "The Status of Wildlife in Protected Areas Compared to Non-Protected Areas of Kenya", *PLoS ONE*, 4 (7): e6140.

No	Practice	Overview
4.	In-depth analysis is required to identify and communicate success factors in ecological recovery.	Conservancies should seek to measure their effectiveness in conserving biological diversity. This is not only important for measuring success but for setting conservation objectives, assessing threats to biodiversity, identifying monitoring and research needs, and communicating management information to stakeholders. Conservancies have proven to be effective in the restoration of habitat, however, it is important for conservancies to identify and communicate the factors involved in ecological recovery to support replication of success elsewhere. In-depth analysis is required before attributing ecological recovery to a particular factor. This often requires technical skills, time and can be an expensive endeavor. Thus, it might not be possible to carry out very regularly. Some conservancies have successfully maneuvered these limitations through partnerships with other institutions that can carry out these assessments and analysis on their behalf. In the long term, conservancies should invest in building their own capacities to carry out analysis on ecological recovery in ways that are scientifically sound, practical and comparable among conservancies over time.
5.	Policies and planning around co-existence of livestock and wildlife can support ecological viability.	Today, as competition over land and natural resources grows, livestock compete for land with wildlife, agriculture, and people. Wildlife and livestock have, however, historically coexisted in some of the continent's richest wildlife areas under traditional pastoral strategies. Current trends entail seasonal movement of wildlife outside of protected areas to grazing land which is occupied by livestock. Many conservancies have managed to realize mutual gains for wildlife, and pastoralists and their livestock through well-crafted policies and planning. Some conservancies have developed grazing plans with communities, used livestock grazing as a management tool, acted as grass banks in drought years, developed livestock enterprises, guaranteed market access to prevent unsustainable land use, improved breeds, and developed fattening programs for better returns to livestock owners.
6.	Planning for ecological viability needs to integrate emerging threats.	In many landscapes, key current threats to biodiversity are well understood. However, as ecological systems become increasingly modified, new threats are emerging and previously low magnitude threats are growing in severity and extent, exacerbated by climate change, population growth, infrastructure development, unplanned developments, and unsustainable land use practices. A case in point are invasive alien plants which are exponentially spreading to and in many important wildlife habitats across the continent. Climate change is also projected to alter habitat suitability and wildlife migration patterns in many areas. Preemptive and early planning, monitoring and managing for emerging threats to conservancies will help to ensure minimum damage to ecosystems as well as lowering costs for managing their impacts in the long term.
7.	Conservancies should adopt simple ecological monitoring systems.	The value of ecological monitoring within and outside conservancies cannot be over-emphasized. Monitoring helps conservancies to identify what is working well, what is not working well, and guides adaptive management. It also ensures effective and efficient use of resources by allowing managers to make informed decisions about where to deploy resources and personnel. Complex ecological monitoring frameworks are often not useful because they limit broad participation and produce results which can be illegible to stakeholders. Simple ecological monitoring systems, such as the Management Oriented Monitoring System (MOMS) developed and adopted in Namibia, promotes shared responsibility for monitoring, participation in analysis, results legibility, community/group ownership of conservancy health, capacity building, and knowledge transfer.

⁴⁷ Parrish, J. D., Braun, D. P., & Unnasch, R. S., (2003) Are We Conserving What We Say We Are? Measuring Ecological Integrity within Protected Areas. *BioScience* 53 (9): 851-860.

No	Practice	Overview
8.	Conservancies should adopt and update management plans for maintaining ecological viability.	A management plan is a working document that is used, adapted and referred to as a tool to guide conservancy management, ensuring focus on priorities that have been agreed on by stakeholders. Management plans are critical in providing for sound and strategic ecological management, continuity in management and providing points of accountability for managers and boards. Conservancy management plans are also useful for fundraising and highlighting where additional resources are required ⁴⁸ .
9.	The presence of endangered and threatened species can act as a trigger for conservancy establishment.	Endangered or threatened species require special attention with regards to habitat availability, protection from exploitation and other threats. Conservationists have found it relatively easy to bring attention to such species, and mobilise support and organised efforts towards their conservation. Thus, there is an opportunity to justify conservancy establishment on the basis of presence of endangered species. This can galvanise attention for the relevant conservancy and resources for the same. This has been a key strategy in the formation of many lowveld conservancies in Zimbabwe and rhino based conservancies in Kenya and South Africa ⁴⁹



⁴⁸ African Wildlife Foundation (2011) Community Conservation Planning Framework Manual. A practical self-help manual for developing community conservation area management plans. AWF, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁴⁹ *Ecological Viability Panellists*

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Peter Lindsey
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Policy coordinator
Project Coordinator
Director

African Wildlife Foundation
Panthera
Kenya Wildlife Trust
Lowveld Rhino Trust

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INSTITUTIONALIZED COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES IN NAMIBIA

B.T.B Jones

Abstract

Communal area conservancies in Namibia receive user rights over wildlife and tourism once registered by government. They derive income mainly through trophy hunting and photographic tourism, and importantly they reinvest part of their income in active wildlife management - such as the employment of game guards, anti-poaching patrols, annual game counts and regular game monitoring. Conservancy members derive a wide range of tangible and intangible benefits from wildlife and tourism, which range from additional land uses, to crop and livestock farming. There are well-documented increases in species numbers on communal conservancies including elephant, black rhino and lion. Several conservancies provide connectivity between Namibian protected areas as well across international boundaries.

Introduction

There are currently 82 community conservancies in Namibia, covering a total area of 162,030 km² or approximately 19.6% of Namibia's land (see Figure 1). The conservancies are located on land under communal tenure in 13 of the country's 14 regions. A community conservancy is an area of communal land with mapped boundaries and a defined membership that is formally recognized by the government and receives legal rights over wildlife and tourism under national legislation.

Community conservancies cover a range of habitats from desert and semi-desert in the west, to broadleaf woodland, riverine forests and floodplains in the north east. They vary widely in both their size and the resources they manage. The smallest conservancy covers an area of 43 km² and the largest an area of 8,992 km². While some conservancies have major tourist attractions and charismatic species such as elephant, rhino and large predators; others have few tourist attractions and they manage species such as oryx and springbok. Within conservancies, residents practice livestock and crop farming, but also include tourism and wildlife management in their land uses. The larger conservancies, with higher wildlife numbers, usually set aside exclusive wildlife and tourism areas⁵⁰.

The Namibian conservancy approach is rooted in the concept of user rights and the benefits derived from tourism and wildlife; as incentives for communal area residents to manage their wildlife and other resources sustainably.

Namibia's Conservancy Policy Environment

The principal legislation and policies supporting conservancies

The community conservancy approach was first elaborated in Namibia's Policy on Wildlife, Management, Utilisation and Tourism in Communal Areas (1995), which was then put into effect through the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996. The Act enables the Minister of Environment and Tourism to register a conservancy if it has the following elements in place:

- A representative committee;
- A legal constitution, which provides for the sustainable management and utilization of game in the conservancy;
- The ability to manage funds;
- An approved method for the equitable distribution of benefits to members of the community; and

⁵⁰ Conservancies zone their land area for these different uses in their management plans.

- Defined boundaries.

Once the registration of a conservancy is published in the Government Gazette, the conservancy gains the following user rights over wildlife:

- The conservancy can use huntable species (oryx, springbok, kudu, warthog, buffalo and bushpig), as it wishes for its own use, although the Government does operate a quota system to monitor conservancy use of huntable species.
- The conservancy can enter into a contract for a trophy hunting company to buy the conservancy's trophy hunting quota, which is allocated by government, but based on conservancy monitoring of wildlife numbers and their annual population counts;
- The conservancy can enter into a contract for a tourism company to develop a lodge or lodges and other tourism facilities;
- The conservancy can apply to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) for a permit to carry out other forms of wildlife utilization, such as live capture and sale of wildlife or the use of protected species; and
- The conservancy receives all income directly from its tourism and wildlife activities, and neither receives this income from, nor is obliged to share its income with, the State. Conservancies decide how to use their income with no interference from the authorities.

Various national policies provide for conservancies to manage tourism on their land; obtain tourism concessions in protected areas; and, manage Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC).

The National Policy on Community Based Natural Resource Management (2013) recognizes the rights and development needs of local communities as well as the need to promote biodiversity conservation. It aims to empower communities to manage and benefit from wildlife, forestry, fisheries and other natural resources in an integrated manner and states that community rights include rights to "access, use, control and benefit" from natural resources⁵¹.

Government support for conservancies

There has been strong government commitment to the community-based approach to natural resource management since independence when politicians and senior civil servants gave political backing to communal area conservancies⁵². Community-based natural resource management has been integrated as a multi-sectorial approach to rural development and conservancies in particular are recognized in national development policies and programs⁵³.

MET personnel play a strong role in assisting communities to form conservancies, in the first instance, and then by monitoring compliance with legislation once conservancies have been officially registered. An important contribution from MET has been the reintroduction of wildlife species into various conservancies. Between 1999 and 2013 more than 10,500 animals had been translocated to communal area conservancies including, most significantly, 44 black rhino⁵⁴. MET personnel also provide technical support to conservancies for developing management plans, conducting species counts, addressing human wildlife conflict, quota setting, etc.

²⁵ GRN. 2013. National Policy on Community Based Natural Resource Management. Government of the Republic of Namibia. Windhoek. P.2.

²⁶ Jones, B. 2012. Recognition and Support of ICCAs in Namibia. In: Kothari, A. with Corrigan, C., Jonas, H., Neumann, A., and Shrumm, H. (eds). *Recognising and Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved By Indigenous Peoples And Local Communities: Global Overview and National Case Studies*. Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, ICCA Consortium, Kalpavriksh, and Natural Justice, Montreal, Canada. Technical Series no. 64.

⁵³ NACSO. 2010. Namibia's Communal Conservancies: A Review of Progress and Challenges In 2009. Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations. Windhoek.

⁵⁴ NACSO. 2015. The state of community conservation in Namibia: a review of communal conservancies, community forests and other CBNRM initiatives (2014/15 Annual Report). Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations. Windhoek.

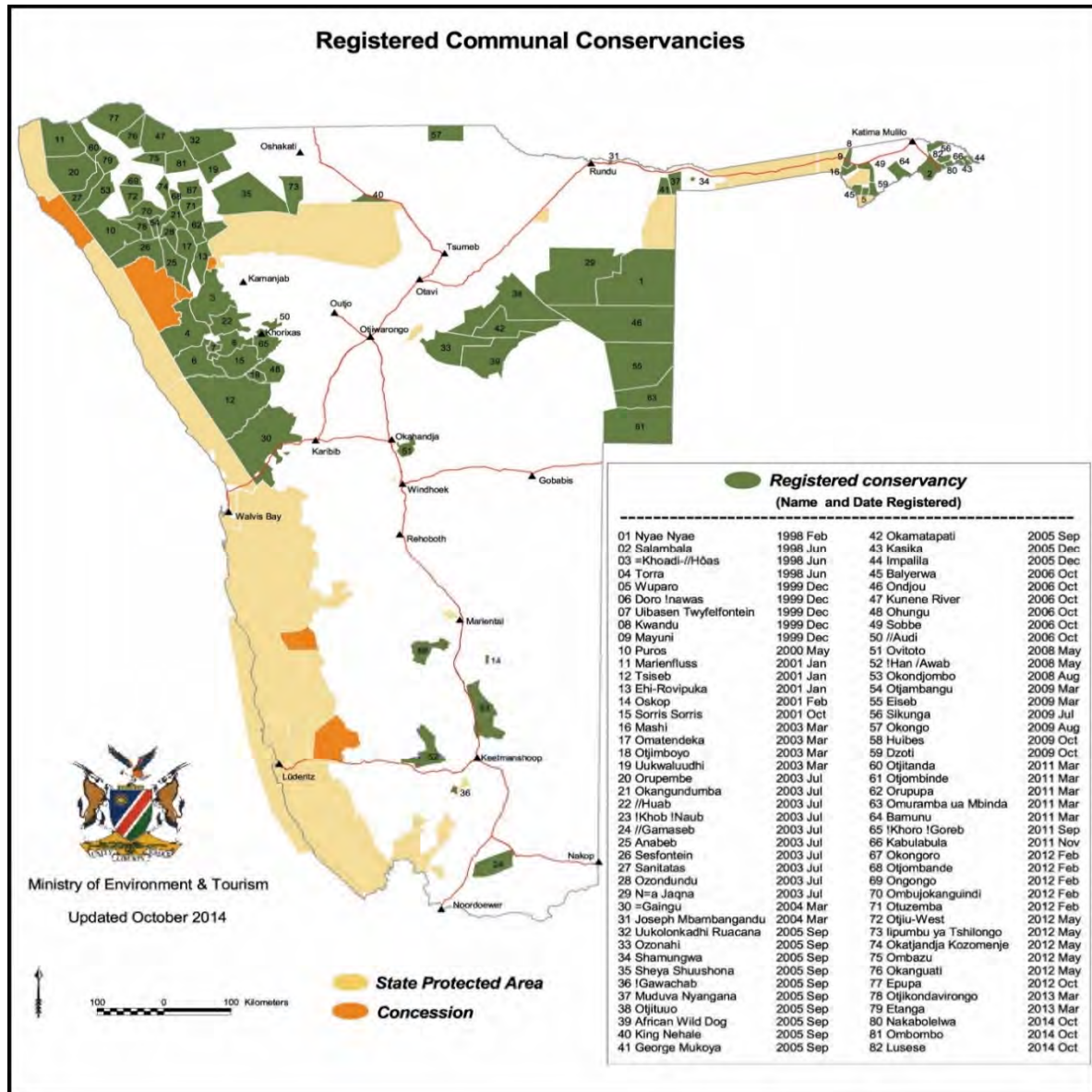


Figure 1: Registered conservancies in Namibia, October 2014

Conservancies can offset losses of crops and livestock due to human wildlife conflict through payments to members. MET has periodically provided each conservancy with Namibian \$60,000 to help fund these payments with the expectation that conservancies would supplement these funds from their own income.

The role of conservancy legislation and policyAs indicated above, Namibian conservancies derive their rights over wildlife and tourism from legislation. Various policies set out the Government’s aims, objectives and intentions, but the legislation aims to put these objectives into practice.



The distinction between policy and laws has considerable importance for community institutions such as conservancies. Policy can be changed at the stroke of a pen (or keyboard) whereas laws can provide a stronger set of community rights that can be defended in court. Binot *et al.*, suggest that policy statements “are far less important than legislative or constitutional changes that provide the basis for citizens’ rights and privileges.”⁵⁵ Lindsay emphasizes the need for community rights to be secure and suggests that the following are important aspects of security of tenure over rights⁵⁶:

- Clear definition of rights - not just vague phrases such as “the right to manage”;
- Certainty that rights cannot be taken away or changed arbitrarily;
- The duration of the rights must be articulated and must be long enough for benefits of use to be fully realized;
- Rights must be exclusive so that the holders of rights need to be able to exclude or control access to the resource by outsiders. This implies that the boundaries of the resource to which the rights apply must be clear, and there must be a defined group of users to whom the rights apply; and,
- The law should provide a mechanism for the holder of the rights to acquire a legal personality, with the ability to apply for loans, enter into contracts, collect fees, etc.

The Namibian conservancy legislation provides for secure rights that cannot be easily removed: it defines clearly the rights of communities over wildlife (although less so for tourism); the rights are in perpetuity unless removed under a defined process by the Government Minister; the rights provide for exclusive use by a defined group of people; and, the legislation provides for conservancies to acquire a legal personality.

Another important aspect is that while the conservancy legislation prescribes certain conditions and procedures, it is flexible in that it enables conservancies to craft constitutions that meet their own individual needs and objectives, and crucially it allows communities to define themselves, and negotiate their boundaries with their neighbours.

However, there are some gaps in the legal and institutional approach to conservancies. One of the key challenges is that conservancies receive resource rights and not land rights⁵⁷. So although a conservancy can exclude others from using its wildlife, it cannot exclude someone from outside that community from bringing their livestock into an area within the conservancy which is exclusively zoned for wildlife. These powers lie with the traditional authority which may or may not be supportive of the conservancy.

The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Policy of 2013 is useful in that it articulates the aim of enabling a community to obtain rights over all natural resources within its boundaries, which would increase a community’s ability to exclude outsiders from using their land and resources. The policy aims at enabling a community-based institution such as a conservancy to acquire rights over a full suite of natural resources on its land. However, such integration is difficult because sectoral legislation still provides for different community entities: wildlife conservancies; community forests; water point management committees; and, community fishing reserves. Legal reform is required if the integration objectives of the CBNRM Policy are to be realised.

Economic Viability of Conservancies

Income and other benefits from conservancies

For the year 2014 the 82 communal area conservancies in Namibia earned a total of Namibian \$33,399,313 (US\$3,036,301⁵⁸), which

⁵⁵ Binot, A., Blomley, T., Coad, L., Nelson, F., Roe, D., and Sandbrook, C. 2009. “Community involvement in natural resources management in Africa – regional overviews.” In Roe, D., Nelson, F. and Sandbrook, C. (eds.), *Community management of natural resources in Africa: Impacts, experiences and future directions*. International Institute for Environment and Development. London.

⁵⁶ Lindsay, J. 1998. “Designing Legal Space: Law as an enabling tool in community-based management”. Presented at the World Bank International CBNRM Workshop. Washington, D.C., May 1998.

⁵⁷ Jones 2012. *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ At the 2014 exchange rate.

consisted of Namibian \$21,861,482 from various hunting activities; Namibian \$11,394,916 from photographic tourism; and, Namibian \$142,915 in fees from managing the harvesting and marketing of indigenous plant products⁵⁹.

Conservancy residents earned a total cash income of Namibian \$44,049,635 from enterprise wages, of which Namibian \$26,386,260 came from joint-venture photographic tourism; Namibian \$11,031,642 from employment in conservancies, Namibian \$3,929,312 from hunting activities, and Namibian \$2,273,974 from employment in small businesses such as conservancy-run camp sites. In addition, conservancy residents earned a total cash income of Namibian \$3,353,934 from the harvesting and sale of indigenous plants and Namibian \$ 1,209,928 from craft sales. In total, 522,104 kg of game meat worth Namibian \$10,510,880 was distributed to conservancy residents. Conservancies distributed Namibian \$6,979,965 in cash directly to members; some of which was retained by households and some of which was used for community projects⁶⁰.

However, the aggregate figures mask considerable differences between high and low earning conservancies. Some conservancies with high value wildlife species and tourism attractions earn up to Namibian \$2 million a year while others with fewer assets might earn in the region of Namibian \$80,000 to Namibian \$100,000.

The viability of conservancies depends very much on whether the conservancy management committee manages its budget effectively. Operating costs in high earning conservancies generally include wages for conservancy rangers and office staff, allowances for committee members, vehicle running costs, office running costs, refreshments at community meetings, and

addressing human wildlife conflict (HWC). Capital expenditure includes office construction, vehicle purchase, equipment for rangers, and office equipment. In contrast to conservancies with lower numbers of wildlife, those with high numbers of

wildlife and with species such as elephant and lion, have higher operating costs than conservancies with less wildlife due to more investment in wildlife management; where they employ more rangers and conservancy management staff - in order to monitor wildlife numbers, carry out anti-poaching patrols, implement wildlife counts, and reduce and mitigate HWC.

There has been a tendency for conservancies to increase their operating costs by boosting employment, often leaving no income for benefits such as cash payments to members or to community projects. However, community attitude surveys consistently demonstrate that jobs are one of the most highly valued benefits for conservancy members. So whilst expenditure on wages can result in high operating costs, this is perceived by community members as part of providing benefits from the conservancy.

At the end of 2014, 30 conservancies were covering their own operating costs out of a total of 44 conservancies reporting data on this issue, while 38 were distributing cash or in-kind benefits to members, or investing in community projects. Generally speaking, conservancies may be in a position to cover their operating costs through photographic tourism and trophy hunting, but increased and diversified income streams are required to ensure wildlife can be a viable option for conservancy members, who are mostly farmers.

Barnes carried out a cost-benefit analysis of five conservancies, which represent conditions in the communal lands of the dry North West and the wetter North East and found that these conservancies derive positive net returns to their investments in wildlife management and tourism⁶¹. He suggests that in arid and semi-arid Namibia, the opportunity costs for land are low, and the non-consumptive tourism potential is high; characteristics which may help explain conservancy viability in those areas.

⁵⁹ NACSO 2015. *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Barnes, J.I. 2008. Community-based Tourism and Natural Resource Management in Namibia: Local and National Economic Impacts. In: Spencely, A. (ed). *Responsible Tourism: Critical Issues for Conservation and Development*. Earthscan. London. 343-357.

The role of donor support

There has been considerable donor, Government and NGO investment in the Namibian conservancy program, totaling Namibian \$1.8 billion between 1990 and 2014⁶². However, a large amount of the international donor support has not gone directly to conservancies but has been used to fund NGOs and support Government in providing assistance to communities to establish and operate their conservancies. Direct support to conservancies has taken the form of initial payment of staff salaries (particularly rangers' salaries), some funding of vehicle and travel expenses, office construction and purchase of vehicles. Donor funding has also been used to help fund community equity in joint venture lodge development. External support to staff and other operational costs is usually conditional on a conservancy covering these costs itself, once it starts to earn sufficient income.

According to Barnes⁶³, donor and government grants have significantly enhanced the returns to conservancies and have been important in providing strong incentives for communities to invest in land use change and adopt wildlife and tourism, "but indications are that CBNRM investments could be fundamentally viable for some communities even without grants."

Ensuring sustainability

The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO) is working on a sustainability plan for the national CBNRM Program. This includes establishing a CBNRM conservation fund, exploring payment for ecosystem services (PES) options, increasing the number of conservancy enterprises/products, and increased commitment of government resources to supporting conservancies. PES approaches would be particularly useful for low-income conservancies which nevertheless have an important conservation value (e.g. not having much tourism or hunting potential, but being part of an elephant migration route). Several conservancies have the opportunity to expand their tourism enterprises, but lack the

capacity to take on additional activities themselves, or manage additional contracts with the private sector.

The largest portions of conservancy returns come from photographic tourism and sustainable wildlife use, including trophy hunting as indicated above. There are 48 hunting concessions in conservancies and the Namibian conservancy approach demonstrates that it is valuable to generate returns from both photographic tourism and consumptive use of wildlife. Naidoo *et al*⁶⁴ evaluated the financial and in-kind benefit streams from tourism and hunting on 77 communal conservancies in Namibia from 1998 to 2013. They found that the main benefits from hunting are income for conservancy management and meat to the community at large, while the majority of tourism benefits are salaried jobs at lodges.

They ran a simulated ban on trophy hunting and found that this significantly reduced the number of conservancies that were able to cover their operating costs, whereas eliminating income from tourism did not have as severe an effect. They conclude: "Given that the benefits generated from hunting and tourism typically begin at different times (earlier versus later, respectively) and flow to different segments of local communities, these two activities together can provide the greatest incentives for conservation"⁶⁵.

A significant aspect of the importance of trophy hunting lies in its diversification value. In arid and semi-arid environments, it makes sense to diversify land uses so that if, for example livestock or crop farming is hit by drought; hunting and photographic tourism can still bring in an income. In addition, Namibia has experienced sharp decreases in photographic tourism at times in the past; for example when fighting between warring factions in neighbouring Angola spilled into the Caprivi Strip and a secessionist movement in the then Caprivi Region attempted an unsuccessful, armed rebellion. However during the same periods trophy hunters

⁶² NACSO 2015. *op. cit.*

⁶³ Barnes, J.I. 2008. *op. cit.* P. 355.

⁶⁴ Naidoo, R., Weaver, L. C., Diggie, R. W., Matongo, G., Stuart-Hill, G., and Thouless, C. 2015 Complementary benefits of tourism and hunting to communal conservancies in Namibia. *Conservation Biology*, doi: 10.1111/cobi.12643.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* P.2.

continued to visit the country, enabling conservancies to continue to receive income.

Social and Political Viability

Benefits at conservancy level

The social viability of conservancies depends largely upon whether members believe they are receiving sufficient benefit from a conservancy for them to continue to support its activities. There is a wide range of benefits provided by conservancies to members, which includes - jobs, cash payments, community projects, meat distribution, funding for sports tournaments, support to schools and kindergartens, funding of medical treatment, financial support to traditional authorities, financial support to the elderly, financial support for students from the conservancies, funeral assistance, transport for the elderly and school children, and mitigation and reduction of HWC⁶⁶.

Other less visible or tangible benefits include the transfer of knowledge and skills to conservancy staff and committees, a sense of empowerment and ownership over natural resources, increased social cohesion, and the increased involvement of women in leadership positions⁶⁷.

The role of national and local politics

Overall there is strong political support for the conservancy approach at national level. The approach was developed within government and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism plays a key role in supporting the establishment of conservancies and ensuring their compliance with legislation.

So far in Namibia, there has been little competition for the revenues generated by conservancies. Nelson and Agrawal⁶⁸ suggest that key factors in facilitating the development and implementation of the Namibian conservancy legislation have been relatively low levels of institutional corruption and relatively low centrally captured revenues from wildlife use. These factors have reduced the

incentives for the state to hold on to control over wildlife and tourism on communal lands.

The situation at regional and local level is more nuanced. Regional councils do not receive much income of their own and often state that they should receive a portion of the wildlife income going to conservancies. So far this has not materialized. Local politicians use conservancies positively or negatively depending on the issue at hand – if they need votes of the livestock farmers then it seems like conservancies are often viewed in a negative light. However, the entrenched legal rights of conservancies make it difficult for politicians at any level to interfere in their running.

Ecological Viability

The role of scale and connectivity

The ecological viability of conservancies varies from region to region. In the dry North West there is little conversion of land to crop farming and extensive livestock farming is the main agricultural activity. As a result, apart from the east west veterinary cordon fence, there are few fences to impede wildlife movement. In addition, human population numbers are low due to the semi-arid conditions. Overgrazing of some areas is a problem exacerbated by periodic droughts. In the North West the ability to move in search of grazing, and to a lesser extent water, is the key to sustaining livestock and wildlife populations. The relatively open system of the North West communal lands enables this movement to take place. There is connectivity from the Etosha National Park westwards through conservancies to the Skeleton Coast National Park. Elephant and lion are to known to move large distances across this area. This connectivity is important for both protected areas as well as the conservancies.

The situation is different in the wetter north east where crop farming is more predominant. Farmers fence off their crop lands and the area is more densely populated by humans. However, particularly in the Zambezi Region in the far North

⁶⁶ NACSO. 2010. *op. cit.*

⁶⁷ Jones, B.T.B., Davis, A., Diez, L., and Diggle, R.W. 2013. Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Reducing Poverty in Namibia. In Roe, D., Elliot, J., Sandbrook, C., and Walpole, M. (eds.). *Biodiversity Conservation and Poverty Alleviation: Exploring the Evidence for a Link*. Conservation and Science Practice Series. Wiley-Blackwell/ZSL. Chichester.

⁶⁸ Nelson, F and A. Agrawal. 2008. "Patronage or Participation? Community-Based Natural Resource Management Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa". *Development and Change* 39: 557-585.

East, there is also an open system enabling wildlife to move between protected areas and neighbouring conservancies. The conservancies provide important movement corridors - particularly for elephant between Botswana, Namibia and Zambia within the Kavango/Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area. While in the North West large numbers of wildlife are resident on communal land, conservancies in the north east depend on Namibian protected areas and parks and wildlife areas in neighbouring countries for their wildlife assets. In parts of the Zambezi Region in the north-east, conservancies, national parks and community forests implement co-management at a larger scale within conservation complexes.

Conservation impact of Namibian conservancies

The increase in wildlife in many Namibian conservancies has been well documented⁶⁹. In North West Namibia since wildlife populations were hit by drought and poaching in the 1980s, there have been considerable increase in springbok, oryx and Hartmann's mountain zebra. The numbers of black rhino, elephant and lion have also increased. Low levels of poaching indicate that the involvement of local communities in conservation has been significant. In the past two years there has been a sharp rise in black rhino poaching coinciding with the heavy rhino poaching in neighbouring South Africa. At the time of writing the situation appears to be under control with fewer reported incidents.

There have also been important wildlife recoveries in the Zambezi Region. These have been largely due to breeding, reduced poaching, introductions, and influx from Botswana⁷⁰. Although poaching had declined substantially over the last 15 years, there has been a recent, sharp increase in ivory poaching. Conservancy rangers, MET officials and the police have combined to address this problem bringing a reduction of ivory poaching in the conservancies.

An indication of the conservation impact of conservancies is the willingness of Government to

translocate wildlife from national parks to conservancies, including black rhino.

The communal area conservancies are conserving wildlife (including rare and endangered species) outside national parks and providing connectivity between protected areas and across international boundaries. They provide national parks with neighbours who have compatible conservation aims and objectives in areas where parks are unfenced.

Conservancies and other land uses

Although tourism and wildlife use can generate more returns per hectare than crops and livestock, and Barnes⁷¹ found that conservancies can be economically efficient and contribute to the national economy - the direct financial contribution to households is low. Some conservancies provide cash payments to members which might range from Namibian \$100 to \$400 per person. Although these amounts appear low when considered in US\$ they can be of significant value to cash-strapped households in areas of high unemployment. In addition, some households will benefit from conservancy jobs, and tourism and hunting employment associated with the conservancy. One person's salary is likely to assist in supporting a family of between five and ten people. However, the cash contribution to households derived from wildlife and tourism does not match the overall contribution of livestock or crop farming to most rural livelihoods. In addition, in some areas of Zambezi Region, crop and livestock losses to wildlife are high. However, it is interesting to note that for the majority of people concerned, the decision to tolerate wildlife is based not only in terms of financial costs and benefits - but also includes aesthetic values, and the sense of ownership and empowerment⁷².

Governance

Conservancies elect a management committee which takes care of day to day issues, financial

⁶⁹ NACSO. 2010. *op. cit.* NACSO 2015. *op. cit.*

⁷⁰ NACSO 2015. *op. cit.*

⁷¹ Barnes, J.I. 2008. *op. cit.*

⁷² Jacobsohn, M. 2003. CBNRM vs TBNRM – allies or enemies. IRDNC Discussion Papers. <http://www.irdnc.org.na/papers.htm> and Jones, B. 2001. The Evolution of a Community-based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia. In: Hulme, D. and Murphree M. W. (eds.) *African Wildlife and African Livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. James Currey. Oxford.

management and most interactions with outsiders such as Government or the private sector. The conservancy constitution sets out the governance structures and procedures for the conservancy as well as the functions of the management committee and the rights of members.

The most important areas of participatory decision-making in conservancies are: the election of the management committee; the development of the conservancy constitution; the development of the Benefit Distribution plan; the Annual General Meeting; and, the approval of the conservancy budget. In the past, conservancy management committees tended to develop the constitution and benefit distribution plan using templates, with little involvement of the membership. As a result members did not know their rights, committee members developed budgets without final community approval, and spent large sums of money on their own allowances and loans to themselves, leaving little for community benefit. Over the past few years, conservancies have been addressing these issues with the support of NGOs. Constitutions and Benefit Distribution Plans have been revised by holding village level meetings thus giving members the means to introduce curbs on the powers of committee members, and to make their own decisions about how they should benefit.

However, promoting “people’s power” also has its drawbacks. There are examples of communities dismissing the entire management committee and conservancy staff, having discovered the committee’s mismanagement of funds and having realized that there should be enough income for increased community benefit. Such blanket dismissals can often precipitate a period of instability and uncertainty, as a completely new committee tries to make sense of past decisions and the justification for conservancy activities, in the absence of any form of continuity. Essentially, communities are experimenting with types of local democracy, that: i) were not present under the South African colonial administration prior to Namibian Independence in 1990, and ii) often conflict with traditional decision-making processes within community structures.

Lessons Learned

Successes

The key successes of the conservancy programme have been the following:

- Increases in wildlife in most conservancy areas
- Increased areas of land with active wildlife conservation taking place
- Maintenance of connectivity between protected areas
- Improved relationships between communities and government rangers
- Provision of additional jobs and cash in poor rural areas where there is high unemployment
- Income which communities can use at their own discretion for conservation and local benefit
- Establishment of community-run enterprises such as camp sites and establishment of joint-venture lodges

Failures

The key failures experienced by conservancies have been around the breakdown of a number of community enterprises established with the Government or NGO support. Examples include – community- run campsites established without due consideration of market demand for such a facility at that particular site and, the economic viability of such a venture before its development.

There are still a number of key challenges:

- Ensuring good governance (although individual conservancies often go through fluctuations in this respect) and, transparency in conservancy decision making;
- Increasing direct income to conservancy members to make conservation more competitive with other land uses *at the household level*;
- Increasing conservancy-level income through the addition of new

enterprises/products (for which there is considerable opportunity in many conservancies);

- Increasing the capacity of conservancies to manage additional enterprises, and to operate more effectively as businesses in their own right.

Critical success factors

The most critical factors to ensuring the successful establishment and sustainability of conservancies in Namibia are the following:

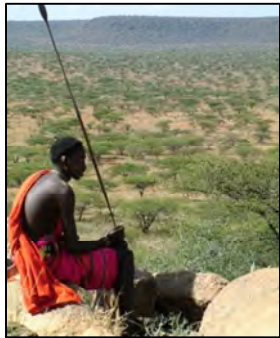
- An approach developed within government (i.e. home- grown), not imposed by donors

or foreign NGOs, and based on demand from communities themselves;

- Community rights over wildlife entrenched in legislation and clearly defined;
- Strong political support from government;
- Strong support from NGOs, which has been backed by donor funding for nearly 25 years;
- Relatively low levels of corruption so there is no competition between communities and elites for the hunting and tourism income.



Note about the author: Brian Jones. Brian is an independent consultant and researcher based in Windhoek, Namibia, with an M.Phil in Social Science. A former Chief Planning Officer in Namibia’s Directorate of Environmental Affairs, he is currently a member of IUCN’s Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), an Honorary Member of the Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas and Territories Consortium and an Associate Member of the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO).



COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES IN NORTHERN KENYA: THE NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST MODEL

J. King, T. Lalampaa, I. Craig & M. Harrison

Abstract

Community Conservancies have been in operation in Northern Kenya since 1995, when the first Conservancies; Il Ngwesi and Namunyak, in Laikipia and Samburu Counties, were formed. However, it was not until early 2014, when Kenya's new Wildlife Act 2013 came into effect that Community Conservancies were legally recognized as a form of land-use. The process of forming Community Conservancies and their mode of operating have therefore evolved over almost 20 years in the absence of a legal framework. This article describes the process of establishing Community Conservancies in Kenya using the Northern Rangelands Trust model; drawing on NRT's experience and documenting some examples of successes, challenges and best practice in different areas of Conservancy development. The aim is to share what has evolved over the past decade since NRT was formed, which may be applicable elsewhere in the world, where communal ownership of natural resources exists, and where communities can benefit from a better-structured and planned approach to management of these resources.

The premise behind these Community Conservancies is a mix of formal and customary institutions. Conservancies aim to uphold and strengthen the customary governance and norms of decision-making in a society, enabling the Community to create new rules for the use and sustainable management of their natural resources. The formal institution is a legal entity, a registered company that puts communities in a stronger position to tap into business and negotiate with investors, with a view to creating benefits that leverage the 'incentive for change' in how their members are using the land and resources. This mix of formal and customary institutions makes the best of both worlds – it provides strong, well-governed institutions that draw on traditional decision-making whilst having a legal, corporate structure with which to do business like any other company. Whilst Conservancies are having significant impacts within their communities; creating jobs, building peace and security, building business opportunities, improving the condition of the land and effectively addressing wildlife crime - importantly conservancies are also providing a cohesive 'voice' for their members.

Background

The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) was established in 2004 as an umbrella organization to initiate and support Community Conservancies in northern Kenya. Its mission is to develop resilient Community Conservancies that transform lives, secure peace, and conserve natural resources. NRT believes that the long-term success of conservation on Community land depends on building strong, well governed Community-owned institutions that ensure rights and responsibilities of conservation by local land-owners, and equitable benefits to communities from conservation. Community

Conservancies recognize the coexistence of people, their livelihoods, and wildlife, and the integration of all these in the management of the land; they do not create 'hard' boundaries which separate people from wildlife nor do they exclude other people from using the land. By 2016, NRT membership had grown to 33 Community Conservancies in 10 Counties covering 44,000km² of land in northern Kenya, representing more than 400,000 people.

In 2013, Conservancies were legally recognized under the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 as a form of land-use, and defined

Conservancies as 'land set aside by individual landowner, body corporate, group of owners or a Community for purposes of wildlife conservation'; prior to this, Conservancies had no legal recognition and the evolution of Conservancies in Kenya has come about in the absence of a legal foundation. NRT defines a Community Conservancy as a 'Community-owned and Community-run institution which aims to improve biodiversity conservation, land management and the livelihoods of its constituents over a defined area of land traditionally owned, or used, by that constituent Community'. The difference in these definitions lies in the term 'land set-aside' which infers land has been specifically put aside, whereas, NRT Conservancies build on existing land-use and integrate livelihoods with conservation; they do not create hard boundaries or exclude people from using the land. NRT's focus is on the Conservancy as an institution that manages the land, rather than using the term Conservancy to describe the land itself.

The NRT-Conservancy Approach

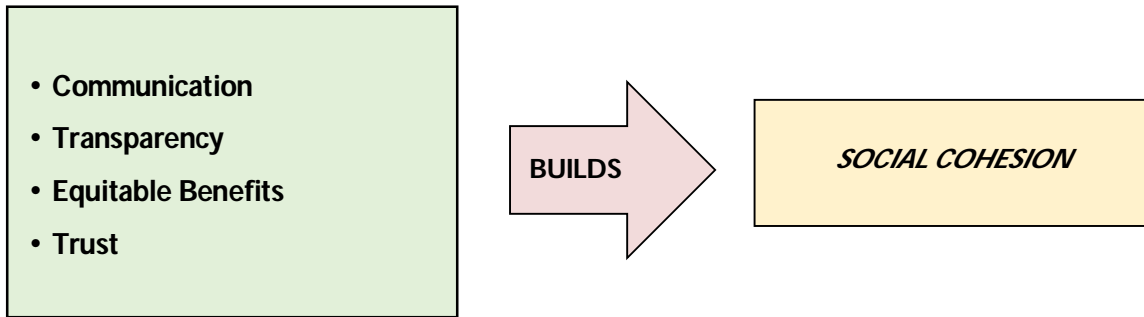
There are four areas that must be addressed in the process of forming and developing a Community Conservancy:

Community

- The members of the Conservancy are the customary or legal land-owners in a given area of land which is self-defined. Membership must recognize and reflect all people who have control or customary rights or use over a given geographical area, and may be made up of a single ethnic group or a combination of clans/multi-ethnicities.
- Critical to defining the membership is ensuring that it is inclusive of gender and age-sets, and does not marginalize sub-groups. Equally important is recognition from neighboring communities of who the 'Conservancy Community' is, to ensure they do not feel excluded and will recognize and support the Conservancy as a legitimate institution in future.
- Awareness of the plans to start a Conservancy should be inclusive, wide-reaching and transparent and give sufficient time to ensure

the wider Community is supportive and committed to the Conservancy concept.

- The drivers of Conservancy development on Community land have typically been peace and security, land-security (in areas where land-tenure is not formalized or clear), rangeland management underpinning pastoralist livelihoods, development of a Community institution for rural development and access to social services, creation of jobs and other livelihood alternatives. Wildlife conservation is rarely a primary driver; however there is recognition among communities, which are already aware of the Conservancy concept, that Conservancies bring development through wildlife conservation.
- Engaging Community leaders is important and where traditional institutions exist, Conservancies must recognize these and integrate them into the Conservancy institution. Conservancy governance structures and land management practices are a mix of formal and customary.
- Managing communal resources requires collective decision-making which can only be achieved if there is social cohesion in the Community. In traditional societies social cohesion was maintained through customary practices, laws and governance structures. However as communities become modernized, social values change and individuals pursue disparate goals, weakening these traditional structures and the ability for collective decision-making. Conservancies themselves are a means of building social cohesion, encouraging dialogue at a Community level and creating mechanisms whereby Conservancy leaders are accountable to their constituent members. The mix of customary and formal systems adopted by Conservancies is a means of reinforcing the traditional governance structures and ultimately building agreement and cohesion among the Community.



Land

- Defining the area of land on which the Conservancy operates comes initially from identifying who the 'Conservancy Community' is and what area of land they have under their control (through legal title or customary rights). In the NRT model, the Conservancy covers the entire area occupied or controlled by the Community and is not confined to tourism/wildlife zones where human activities and settlement are restricted.
- In defining the Conservancy boundaries, as with determining who the Conservancy Community is, care must be taken to ensure neighboring communities are aware that membership encompasses all communities and sub-groups who have customary rights to the land but who may not be the legal owners (as opposed to communities who may occasionally use the land during seasonal migrations but who are resident elsewhere). Understanding the history of use of the land by

different groups of people is an important component of defining the Conservancy area. If this is not done carefully, establishment of a Conservancy may have an unintended consequence of fueling conflict with marginal groups feeling excluded from land to which they have had customary rights and control.

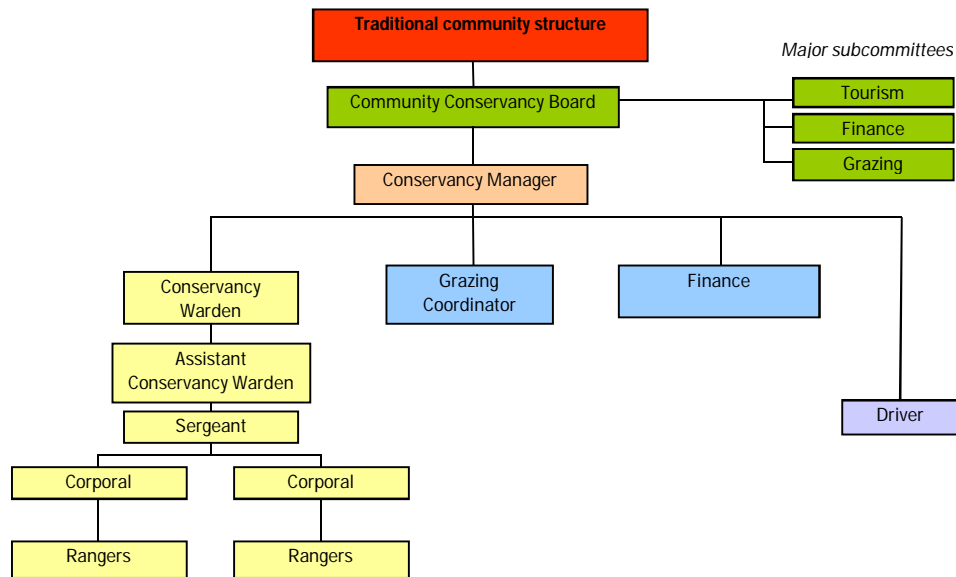
- The most secure and effective land tenure for Community Conservancies to date has been on Community land with strong legal ownership, such as Group Ranches. Areas where communities have weak land tenure, such as Trust Land, have been less successful.
- In areas where Conservancies overlap with gazetted protected areas (national reserves or forest reserves), co-management agreements with Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service or County Governments have been used and may have greater potential in future. A formal agreement for the co-management of National Reserves should provide security of tenure for Conservancies where they overlap on Public Land and this model could be further developed and applied elsewhere.

Institution

The institutional structure of a Community Conservancy consists of a democratically elected Board which employs all Conservancy staff under the day-to-day management of a Conservancy manager, with clear reporting lines of the staff.

- The Conservancy Board is the executive body of the Conservancy and responsible for managing its resources on behalf of the Conservancy members. Board members serve a term of 3-years and are elected during the Annual General Meeting.

- The AGM is a critical meeting that must be held every year to reinforce ownership and relevance of the Conservancy to its Community members; it is an opportunity to communicate progress and ensure accountability of the Conservancy Board to its members.
- The Conservancy develops a benefit distribution plan which is managed by the Board and must ensure transparent and equitable sharing of benefits across all settlement zones and ethnic groups. Typically in NRT Conservancies the revenue generated by Conservancies through tourism and livestock marketing is split 40:60, with 40% going to support Conservancy operations and 60% to the Community account which is used to support Community development priorities.
- A Community Conservancy can be registered as a Community Based Organisation, a Trust, or Not-For-Profit Company. To cover all aspects of a Conservancies' operations including legal agreements with investment partners as well as liability for employees and visitors; a not-for-profit company is the most appropriate and legally secure entity. A not-for-profit company can set out in the memorandum and articles the requirement rotation of leadership and establishes a legal firewall on litigation issues, avoiding Directors (or Board members) being personally responsible. The Conservancy constitution (similar to a Trust Deed) details the objectives, powers, operating principles, benefit distribution plan, property, membership and responsibilities of the Board and is the basis for registration of the Company.



The Conservancy Board is:

- Democratically elected by the Community at the AGM
- Has equitable representation of settlement zones, ethnic groups, women and youth
- Board members have a 3-year term of office
- Has ex-officio representatives from Government, development, tourism and conservation partners
- Meets quarterly to review progress and financial status
- Responsible for effective, sustainable and transparent management of the Conservancy

Conservancy *benefit distribution plan* is managed by the Board, and based on the following principles:

- Transparent and equitable sharing of benefits (including revenue, employment and communal benefits) across settlements/zones, ethnic groups and sub-groups
- Sets out the proportion of funds to be used for education bursaries, health and other development projects
- Individual benefits should be prioritized to the most vulnerable groups
- All payments to beneficiaries should be made by cheque, not cash
- Lists of beneficiaries and projects supported by the Conservancy should be displayed in public places and declared at the AGM
- Good governance of Conservancy revenue and benefits to ensure equitable, transparent and accountable distribution of benefits provides a foundation for strong Community support and ownership of the Conservancy.
- Poor management of Conservancy benefits will erode trust, create low Community participation and undermine the legitimacy of the Conservancy to its members

Programs

Most Conservancies have programs in:

- **Peace and security** – Conservancy scouts/rangers, peace committees, moran/youth engagement
- **Natural resource management** – wildlife management (including anti-poaching and wildlife monitoring); grazing management; fisheries management; forest management
- **Enterprise** – as a means of generating revenue and creating direct household benefits which provide leverage for conservation and financial sustainability of the Conservancy e.g. tourism, livestock marketing, microenterprises
- **Community development** – supported through the revenue from Conservancy enterprises or partnerships with Government and development agencies, and typically includes: student bursaries; medical support; emergency re-stocking of livestock; water, health and education infrastructure.
- **Infrastructure & equipment** – depending on the area of coverage may include headquarters, security outposts, roads, airstrips, vehicles, radio communication etc.
- **Management & administration** – this is primarily the role of the Manager supported by the Board and senior management team and it includes, for example: development and implementation of a management plan (a requirement for Conservancies under Wildlife Act 2013); monitoring; human resource management; financial management and budgeting; fundraising; and managing partnerships with other stakeholders. Typically an NRT Community Conservancy costs between US\$ 50-70,000 (Ksh 4-6 million) per year to operate

Principles for Successful Conservancies

For Conservancies to be successful and sustainable in the long-term they must be strong institutions, recognized and endorsed by the wider Community,

Monitoring is part of good management. It enables and empowers Conservancies to make better management decisions. But without regular analysis, reporting and feedback to guide and adapt management, the monitoring process is meaningless.

Monitoring is often overlooked or left to external agencies to carry out, who may have their own reasons for undertaking monitoring and therefore develop systems that are not directly linked to the management of the Conservancy and have little ability to influence management decisions.

NRT has developed the Conservancy Management Monitoring System (CoMMS) as a devolved system for monitoring wildlife and illegal activities, rangeland health, and changes in Community well-being and attitudes to conservation. Devolved monitoring is designed to be carried out entirely at a Conservancy level with the Conservancy involved in the design of the system, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and feedback for management and to the wider Community.

which provide a stable foundation for economic development and conservation. NRT identifies five key principles for successful Community Conservancies which are:

- i. **Ownership** – investing the rights and responsibilities for management of the land and natural resources in the Community, through the Conservancy as a legitimate institution of the wider Community. Ensuring formal and traditional rights and customary decision-making over communal resources are upheld by Conservancies, and active participation by members.
- ii. **Capacity** – ensuring Conservancies have the skills and resources for effective management. Investing in people and building skills to create a strong management team who understand their roles, are confident and competent in

their responsibilities and have the resources to carry out their duties, is key to success.

- iii. **Governance** – transparency, equity and accountability of the Conservancy to the wider Community. Good governance is a measure of the effectiveness of decision-making processes by the Conservancy as an institution representing its Community. Weak governance can lead to low Community participation, expropriation of benefits by Community leaders and will ultimately erode trust in and support for the Conservancy. Conservancy governance should seek to promote:
 - a. Responsive and accountable Conservancies
 - b. Legitimate Conservancies that are managed with integrity and transparency
 - c. Recognition and protection of stakeholder rights
 - d. An inclusive approach based on democratic ideals, legitimate representation,
 - e. participation, and rotation of leadership
- iv. **Leverage for conservation** – Leverage for conservation, or Conservancy benefits, can come from direct and indirect benefits and financial or non-financial benefits. Conservancies which have higher potential to generate benefits for the Community have a higher chance of success. An often overlooked benefit of Conservancies is the powerful role they play in creating a unified voice for the Community, a platform for dialogue, an institution that can manage use of common resources.
- v. **Facilitation or mentorship** – This is a crucial role played by NRT and can be done by other external organizations; to facilitate, empower and mentor Community Conservancies ensuring that key principles are upheld and supported. Experience from NRT highlights not only the importance of this role but also the way in which this support is delivered. Through an MoU between NRT and each of its Conservancy members, the expectations and responsibilities of both parties are outlined.

This provides a code of conduct to ensure Conservancies uphold key principles and also ties NRT to a long-term partnership providing continuity and consistent external guidance to its members. To be effective such a partnership must be viewed as a long-term commitment that goes beyond the life of a 'project' cycle.

The role of NRT

NRT, as an umbrella organization for Community Conservancies, plays a unique role to facilitate, guide and enable Conservancies ensuring communities benefit from their natural resources in a sustainable, structured and planned manner. NRT has no management role in, or land ownership of, Conservancies - it is purely a facilitating organization for its members. NRT's approach requires a balance between ensuring good governance and high standards of management whilst not undermining Community ownership and the autonomy of the Conservancy. NRT's institutional structure, with the Council of Elders as the highest governing body of the organization, made up of the Chairmen of all member Conservancies; allows it to play this role effectively. The way in which NRT works, empowering communities to manage their common resources, means that we are a trusted partner with a long-term relationship with our members.



Photo: Paul Thomson

The challenge of sustainability

By definition the words 'sustainable' and 'conservation' both include an ability to continue in the long-term. In the context of Community conservation, we often restrict our use of the term sustainability to mean the financial sustainability or longevity of a project or organization. Of course financial sustainability is important – and this is

where tourism and other mechanisms that pay for conservation are so vital – but equally important is that we are looking at the institutions that exist to manage communal resources, including wildlife. The cultural and social sustainability of these institutions, their ability to continue in the long-term, must also be central to our thinking if we are to change behaviour in order to address the massive challenge of dwindling wildlife and declining health of the land.

Financial sustainability remains a challenge for NRT Conservancies. Historically the Conservancy model was based on the assumption that tourism would generate sufficient funding for Conservancies, however, in northern Kenya where densities of wildlife are low and many Conservancies do not have the sufficient wildlife to support conventional photographic tourism; this has proved to be impossible. Tourism currently generates less than 30% of Conservancy operating costs in Conservancies which have tourism facilities (noting that tourism revenue is split 40:60 with only 40% used to support conservancy operations and 60% for community development priorities). In 2015, donor funding represented 77% of overall income to NRT Conservancies, with commercial income 12% and County Government providing 11%. To

improve financial sustainability and reduce dependency on donor income, NRT's focus by 2020 is to diversify and balance the ratio of Government, commercial and donor funding, through the following objectives:

- Increasing County Government finance;
- Increasing commercial income (tourism, livestock marketing, beadwork, carbon trading, Community companies providing services);
- Establishing a Conservation Trust Fund; and
- Maintaining private and public agency donations.

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- Elinor Ostrom – Nobel Prize 2009





THE USE OF PROTECTED AREAS AS ECONOMIC DRIVERS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

M. Gerrard

Abstract

Community-owned protected areas are vital for biodiversity conservation at a landscape level, and by working effectively with such communities within greater conservation corridors, we hope to achieve both development and conservation targets. This paper outlines the experience of the Gumbi community, a community that received land through the land restitution process. It outlines how the community conservation area, and the broader KZN province, is developing economic incentives and governance structures to improve the sustainability of the product and therefore ensure biodiversity conservation.

Introduction

Community owned protected areas are vital for biodiversity conservation at a landscape level in South Africa. Wildlands⁷³ philosophy is ‘A Sustainable Future for All.’ It prioritises the conservation and use of natural resources in a way that supports community development while protecting the natural biodiversity of these areas and therefore the ecological infrastructure on which human life is dependant. Through the establishment of community conservation areas within the Lebombo Corridor in Northern KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Wildlands aims to implement conservation businesses within this philosophy. By generating benefits through conservation businesses and operations, communities are incentivized to maintain the land in this natural state, thus allowing their own development without the destruction of resources on which they are often dependant.

In the current climate of economic uncertainty as well as one where there is potential for innovation; Wildlands aims to be dynamic in developing income-generating models. Although traditional business development has the ability to create sustainability, conservation practitioners and development agencies need to think laterally in terms of income and benefits to local communities. Somkhanda Game Reserve and Tshanini-Bhekula Nature reserves are two such protected areas within the Lebombo Corridor where a combination of

business, fundraising and other initiatives assist in covering the associated running costs as well as providing relevant benefits to the landowners. Both reserves follow very different operations in terms of conservation and income generation, with these differences being guided by situation and available assets. Through the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme, the land is protected under government legislation, providing security to landowners.

South Africa follows the modern principles of democracy, while at the same time recognizing and honouring the traditional structures which many local communities adhere to. In terms of operations and establishment of protected areas, this has a very real impact in that two bodies of power exist – that of the legislative land owner (a legal trust) and the traditional structure (the chief and the supporting village heads) – and this can lead to conflict. Additionally, the institutional structures of these communities are poorly developed, leading to a lack of engagement at village level and therefore the occurrence of wealth capture at leadership level, with a resultant lack of project support from the majority.

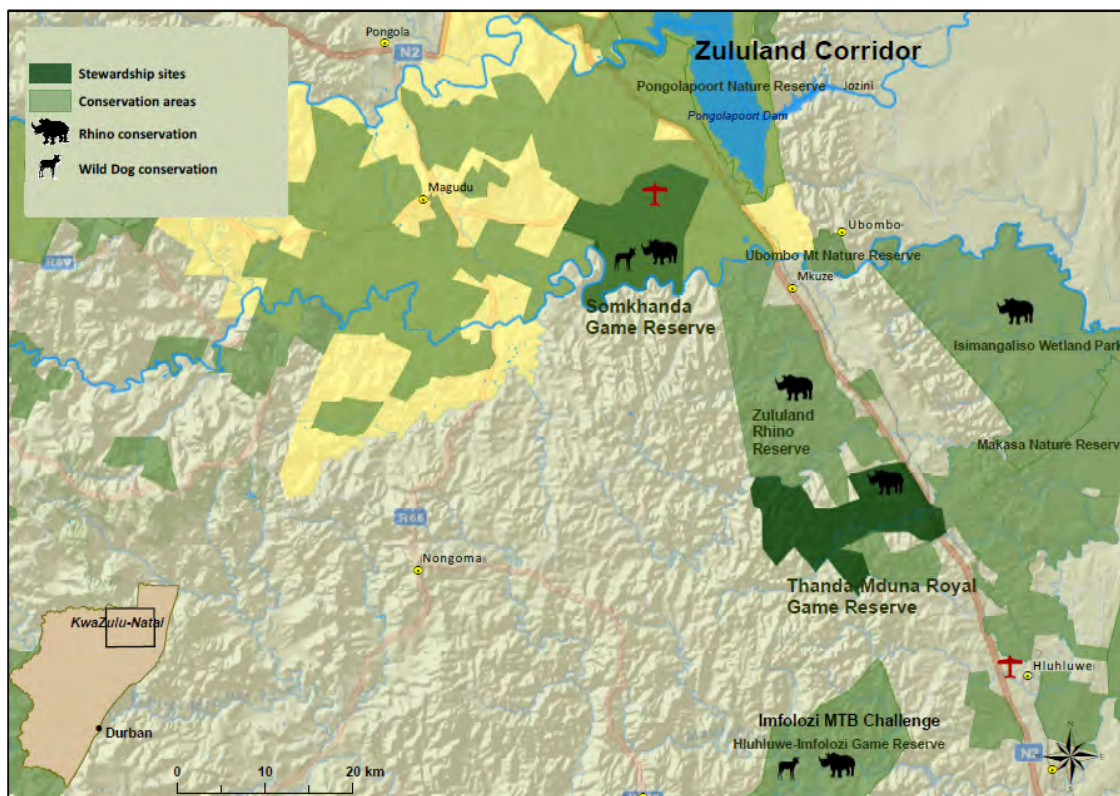
Conservation and development projects being implemented in the community sector need to establish principles of participatory governance. It is also vital that these projects strengthen the

⁷³ Wildlands is a South African based environmental NGO (www.wildlands.co.za)

institutional structures of these communities before developing appropriate benefit and income generating models. Investors and donors, working with conservation and development agencies, need to be aware of this and therefore the time-frames associated with such projects so as to manage expectations. The economic and social situation in South Africa differs significantly across the landscape and population. The legacy of apartheid results in a large sector of the population living in poverty, while much of the minority have access to better facilities and resources. This is described by the Gini coefficient which measures inequality⁷⁴. In South Africa in 2013, the Gini coefficient was at 0.69, marking the country as one of the most unequal in the world (Bhorat, 2013)⁷⁵. Much of the land within the country is owned privately, with generally secure land tenure and the ability to carry out ones' own activities depending on opportunity and profitability, while being guided by legislation. On the other hand, there is a large proportion of

communal land, either owned or held in trust and under stewardship by the traditional authority. In the latter case, traditional rules guide the use of the resources and land, with these being implemented or enforced by the traditional authority, consisting of a chief (iNkosi) and headmen (iZinduna). Profitability and efficient use is seldom experienced due to open access rights to the community, often leading to resource degradation and an associated decrease in benefits. This is exacerbated further by the high transaction costs of doing business with complex traditional structures, where decisions have to be made as a group. This often leads to investment and business development taking place utilizing the easier route of private ownership.

In KZN, Wildlands works within the Zululand Corridor, an area rich in biodiversity but facing pressure due to increasing human populations and dependence on the land.



The Zululand Corridor, KwaZulu-Natal showing the Gumbi owned Somkhanda Game Reserve

⁷⁴ "The **Gini coefficient** (sometimes expressed as a **Gini ratio** or a normalized **Gini index**) is a measure of statistical dispersion intended to represent the income distribution of a nation's residents, and is the most commonly used measure of inequality." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini_coefficient

⁷⁵ Bhorat, H (19 July 2013). "[Economic inequality is a major obstacle](#)". *The New York Times*. Retrieved 20 October 2013.

This region consists of private, community and state-owned land which results in a segregated landscape, all with different management objectives. To preserve the biodiversity within this segregated landscape, it is imperative that conservationists understand the objectives and needs of the landowners and are flexible in incentivizing the maintenance of wildlife and conservation areas. A combination of state protected areas, and private and communal conservation areas (conservancies), is required, to ensure ecological viability.

The Biodiversity Stewardship Programme is an approach to entering into agreements with private and communal landowners to protect and manage land in biodiversity priority areas, led by conservation authorities in South Africa (SANBI, 2014). Through the Programme, this varying landscape is taken into account and landowners (of all types) can formally protect their land within the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, as gazetted by government in 2004. There are, however, still numerous challenges which arise with the management of land parcels within the landscape. Community protected areas adjacent to private and state protected areas are often viewed as a threat by neighbors due to the instability of the communal ownership models. This can reduce the success of projects aiming to increase areas of open, unfenced landscapes as landowners prefer to maintain control over their own land.

Wildlands' philosophy is "A Sustainable Future for All." It prioritises the conservation and use of natural resources in a way that supports community development while protecting the natural biodiversity within these communities, and therefore the ecological infrastructure on which human life is dependant. Further to this, it aims to improve the governance and institutional structures within these communities, thus improving stability and therefore increasing the chances of linking, through common land practices, theirs with private

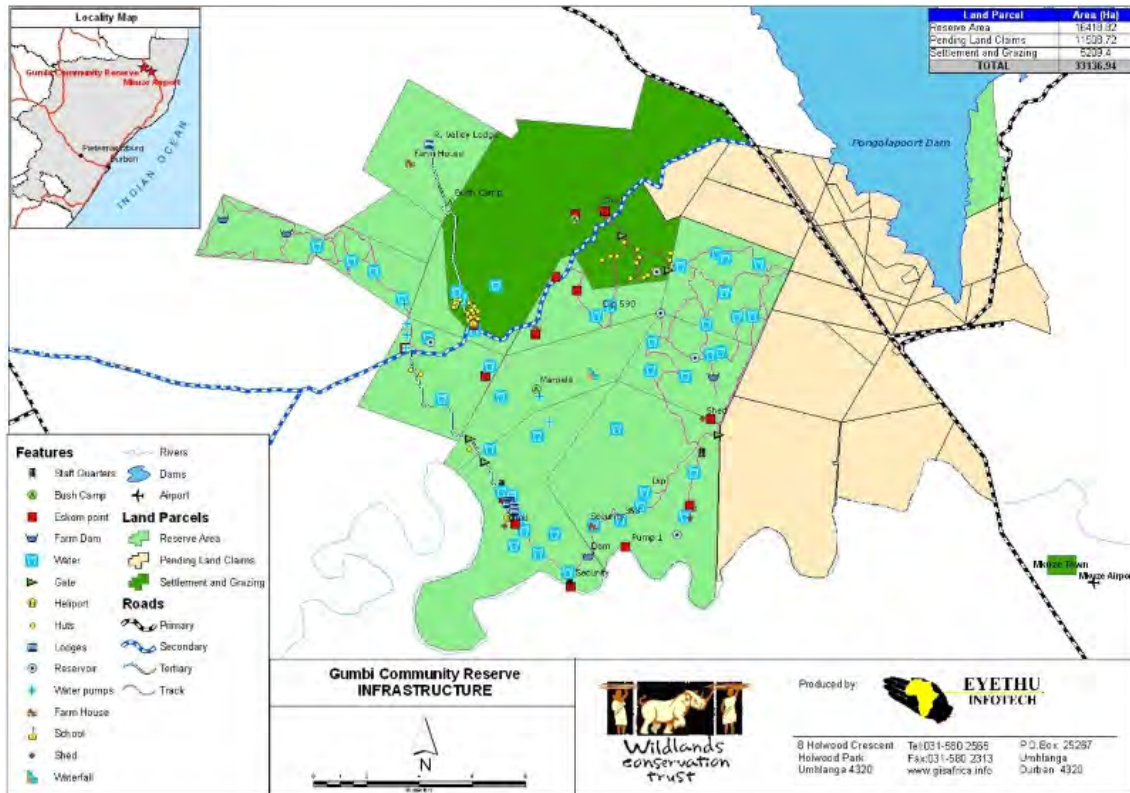
and state owned land. This is vital for maintaining and improving corridors and therefore landscape conservation.

Community Conservation in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

KwaZulu-Natal is a province typically experiencing many of the challenges referenced above. Historically settled by the Zulu tribe, there exists a strong traditional setting with much of the land owned by the Zulu King, King Goodwill Zwelithini - held in trust by the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB). This land is allocated to his constituents and ruled by the relevant iNkosi within the Zulu Traditional Authority. Any agreements needing to be made regarding the land need to be legally constituted through the ITB.

In other instances, due to the land restitution program being carried out by the South African government to compensate for land taken from local tribes during the apartheid regime, other models have emerged. One such model is that of the Gumbi community lead by iNkosi Gumbi. Land previously owned by private land owners was successfully claimed by the Gumbi community and thereafter placed in the hands of this community in a specified Trust consisting of listed members and beneficiaries, this is further described hereafter.

In northern KZN, approximately 33,000 hectares of private land was claimed through the land restitution process and legally conveyed to the Gumbi community in 2005. This land, claimed by the Gumbi traditional authority, was then legally registered in the name of the Emvokweni Community Trust, a trust which the government requested the traditional authority to establish to legally hold title under South African legislation. This trust was established through a democratic process with the community members listed, and a board of trustees elected to handle the affairs of the trust. This trust was constituted under South African law and guided by a Deed of Trust.



Somkhanda Game Reserve: The land claimed by the Gumbi community including the outlined Somkhanda Game Reserve

The Gumbi community elected to establish a 12,000 hectare game reserve to generate revenue and economic activity for the community, aiming to use the Reserve for tourism and other wildlife utilization activities. The reason for the establishment of the Reserve was due to the land being more suitable for wildlife and tourism, than conventional agriculture. They approached Wildlands to develop a partnership to assist in training, mentoring and conservation business development. Together, since 2012, the partnership has developed and the Reserve is now generating sufficient income to cover operational costs and also employ 80 local people in various roles. Income has also been generated for the trust which is earmarked for community development projects identified by members of the community. The Reserve has good populations of black and white rhino, which has added an extra level of cost, as security forces contend with the daily threat of poaching.

The Business Model

In the current climate of economic uncertainty in South Africa, Wildlands has looked for innovative methods of generating revenue to cover Reserve

operating costs and enable development, while also providing benefits for the community. Although traditional businesses have the ability to create sustainability, conservation practitioners and development agencies need to think laterally in terms of income and benefits to local communities. Tourism is facing extreme competition globally, while other forms of sustainable use come under increasing pressure from the general public who have a strong voice through online media platforms. These elements, such as hunting, need to be considered and weighed up for feasibility against other enterprises.

The Gumbi community has created a vision of the utilization of wildlife to create opportunities for their community. Wildlands, having strong links with business, conservation organizations and potential donors, has assisted in creating a model whereby a combination of activities takes place to generate this income and benefits.

The value of game animals sold in formal auctions alone in South Africa has increased from SA Rand 93 million in 2005 to more than SA Rand 1,8 billion

in 2014 – an estimated average annual increase of 26% over the past nine years (Cloete, 2015)⁷⁶. Due to this significant demand for live game animals, Somkhanda has based its business model on the sale of valuable wildlife species, such as Nyala antelope (*Tragelaphus angasi*)

Threatened Species Conservation

Somkhanda has introduced a number of threatened species to the Reserve, including black and white rhino, and African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*). Through these introductions, donor funding is made available from the conservation sector, and this is translated into direct benefit through employment of monitoring teams, field rangers (and associated benefits through other resource protection). In addition, by having such endangered species, the Reserve's attractiveness to tourists and investors is increased significantly. Additionally, much of the wildlife and ecological work on the Reserve has been funded through various engagements and activities with private donors who are passionate about conservation and wildlife. This donor participation requires significant time investment from Reserve management however, this donor revenue is crucial for the maintenance of rhino populations due to the high cost of their protection on the Reserve.

Tourism

With Somkhanda holding these populations of threatened species, as well as beautiful Zululand bushveld and spectacular landscape, the Reserve is attractive for visitors seeking a natural, wildlife experience. To take advantage of these natural and wildlife attractions, tourism infrastructure has been developed. However, the tourism product offered differs slightly from the traditional tourism product, in that it focuses on a *science on safari* model, providing guests with a hands-on experience in real conservation, whilst simultaneously generating useful information for Reserve management. An example of this is where international university students carry out practical work within their curriculum, for a fee; revenue is generated for the

Reserve, while data is collected in line with its management plan. This caters to tourists who want to do more than just see wildlife, they want to engage and make a difference.

Sustainable Utilization

In South Africa, legal ownership of wildlife is enabled through legislation, allowing land owners to utilize the wildlife as they see fit, but within the legal parameters. Sustainable utilization is incentivized through ownership and the ability to generate benefits directly and therefore over the longer term. With the current species composition and market value of certain species, Somkhanda follows a live game sales model, where high value species are sold to market, either directly off the veld, or through auctions. This has proved extremely profitable due to the high demand for Nyala antelope which thrive on the Reserve and fetch a high price. Although other species of antelope are sold, the current demand for Nyala results in this species forming the bulk of annual sales.

Associated Benefits

The South African Government, through its Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), is contributing significantly to the clearing of Invasive Alien Species as well as the rehabilitation of degraded landscapes. All properties which have been proclaimed as a Protected Area through the National Environment Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPA), are prioritized for support through this program. With Somkhanda being a formally protected Nature Reserve under the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme, and Wildlands implementing a number of projects through the DEA, the Reserve has been able to create significant employment in the region while improving its condition and therefore the ecological infrastructure, locally.

Community Governance and Power Struggles

The Gumbi community, and more specifically the entity holding title to the land claimed by the

⁷⁶ Cloete; F; "growth expectations for the south african game ranching industry", october 2015
<http://www.grainsa.co.za/growth-expectations-for-the-south-african-game-ranching-industry>

community - currently has two bodies of leadership in position, one traditionally and the other democratically installed. Combined, these two elements immediately created conflict, with two bodies of power existing to control a single entity. On the one hand, the Traditional Authority with inherited and lifelong powers having claimed the land for its people, whilst on the other hand the land was being placed in the control of a separate group of individuals, democratically elected and with a defined term of office, enshrined in law. Within the poor institutional structures in place, the ordinary members of the community have had little ability to question the leadership, leading to deterioration of the situation.

This poor governance has resulted in a number of challenges which threaten much of the work behind the land claim and establishment of Somkhanda as a Reserve, as well as other enterprises established by the Emvokweni Community Trust. Poor governance has resulted in the lack of a mechanism for community members to voice their opinions and ideas, and also excludes them from participating in decision making and planning. This is also true of decisions around income expenditure, resulting in elite capture of wealth within the leadership. Therefore, as the general public within the community have no say on expenditure and a lack of access to information, they are excluded from being able to question related decisions. Consequently, the incentive for community members to invest or protect the communal assets decreases significantly with a resultant degradation of assets and resources.

Improving Governance Structures

To improve the participation of the general community in decisions and planning of community activities, smaller governance groups need to be established. By reducing the size of groups with whom the community engages, a platform is created to allow individuals within the community to engage and question decisions. These groups are being labelled as 'village assemblies', and are currently being established to create this lower level platform. Through these village assemblies, communities from all around Somkhanda are able to have a say in planning of operations and also receive information first hand from the Reserve

management. This participation leads to stronger support for Reserve activities and any new developments can be discussed fully before implementation, rather than being reactive to problems and queries later on in the process.

These improved institutional structures within the community also create a democratic structure through which the community can engage with its leaders. The leaders can then be held accountable for decisions made, thus putting the onus on them to improve their performance. In order to support this process, there is a need to carry out ongoing leadership training with each group of newly elected trustees and traditional leaders, to ensure that they have the skills necessary to equip them for their governance task. In addition to general leadership training, trustees have been supported with legal training in the role and responsibilities of a trustee. By improving the structures through which community governance operates, as well as improving the capacity of all members within that chain, it is hoped that increased participation can take place within the community, around planning and decisions and leading to a greater and more relevant incentive scheme for all community members, which in turn will generate increased support.

Discussion

Community conservation in South Africa brings with it numerous challenges, but at the same time, a number of opportunities, both for social and economic development as well as for biodiversity conservation. Many communities are developing themselves, since the fall of apartheid, and lacking in the necessary institutional structures. Through understanding this development dynamic, this important aspect can therefore be taken into account during the planning phase. It is crucial from the project funding perspective, that this ground level work be carried out before business models and enterprise development models are implemented. The community as a platform needs to be in a strong and stable position before development can take place effectively.

South Africa's capacity in this sector is limited and investment needs to be made for additional progress to take place. With the land restitution programme

still ongoing⁷⁷ and new claims open until 2019, many cases such as that of Somkhanda will arise. It is therefore crucial that conservation practitioners in South Africa are aware of the potential challenges and understand how to address them. By working closely with the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme, and ensuring appropriate incentives are provided to landowners proclaiming their land, we have the ability to achieve both conservation and development targets. Organizations need to partner on this front to take on the various roles which are relevant to their own area(s) of expertise. Organizations, such as state conservation authorities, development and social agencies and environmental NGOs, can provide key roles by helping to support social cohesion and capacity development, while allowing the process to be driven and owned by the communities themselves. Enterprise development needs to be carried out in conjunction with other programs to support a broad

range of initiatives; thus ensuring sustainability of operations and also increasing benefits to community members who own the land. In addition, expectations of wildlife conservation need to be drawn up in the participatory planning phase, where bigger land-use decisions are based on real opportunities.

Wildlands continues to work in the space of community conservation within the greater Zululand Corridor in an effort to secure vital conservation links. With the majority of land in these corridors under communal ownership, it is imperative that we get the basic model right regarding operations and that all options available for income and benefit generation are utilized.

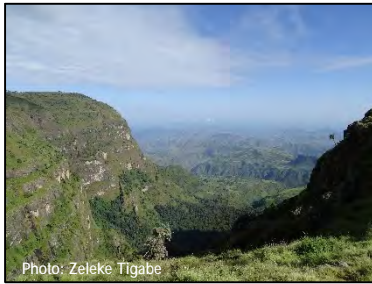
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⁷⁷ Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act 15 of 2014; Government of the Republic of South Africa



COMMUNITY NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY FROM THE HIGHLANDS OF ETHIOPIA

Z. Tefera Ashenafi

Abstract

Ethiopia does not have a formal conservancy framework. However, its indigenous natural resource management (NRM) systems can be considered a form of conservancy governance. These systems shed light on the sustainability of community-led governance of natural resources through political, social and economic change. This article examines how an indigenous NRM system in the Central Highlands of Ethiopia has survived various government-sponsored development and social changes in the District of Menz Guassa area, and how it has provided benefits to the user community and the endangered and endemic species of fauna and flora which exist in the area. The area is one of the few mountaintops where the most endangered canid in the world the Ethiopian wolf (*Canis simensis*), together with the mono-typic genus Gelada (*Theropitacus gelada*), survive. The Guassa Area, which for the purposes of this publication can be considered a type of conservancy, illustrates how community governance can be a real sustainable conservation model; the community led governance system evolved into a new institution that has sustainably managed the ecosystem without compromising the community use rights and biodiversity conservation.

Introduction

The success of managing natural resources sustainably requires both an understanding of ecosystem processes, and of the interactions between people and the ecosystem. Conservation biologists usually seek to understand the first, but often fail to understand the second. Recent interest in indigenous resource management systems arises for several reasons: first, from the failure of many formal, state-sponsored conservation initiatives and the search for viable and sustainable alternatives to current models of resource use that advocate exclusion in the name of protection, and second, from renewed interest in indigenous resource management systems arising in part from a new-found pride in traditional values and institutions in developing countries. Indeed, most cultures and practices in the developing world emphasize responsibility and a vested interest in the community, rather than on individualism⁷⁸ (McCay

and Acheson, 1987; Lalonde, 1993; Wavey, 1993; Alcorn, 1997).

Understanding of indigenous natural resource management systems and local institutions are important for conservation and development, as the “fence and fine” approaches towards conservation are increasingly questioned. The “fence and fine” model for biodiversity

conservation has helped the survival of many species and the establishment of various types of protected areas. However, it has led many rural communities world-wide to face serious environmental degradation - including deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, overexploitation of biodiversity, and serious air and water pollution problems. These later reduced the resilience of communities to environmental stress, which resulted in mismanagement of natural resources and above all the breakdown of traditional

natural resources management (NRM) institutions and resource sharing mechanisms which had been aligned with the functions of the ecosystem. NRM systems and institutions that are based on an understanding of the natural and social fabrics of the natural system often prevent instances of mismanagement of natural resources and lead to an authentic, sustainable NRM.

True indigenous NRM systems call upon the users to co-operate in the inclusion, exclusion and appropriation of the valuable resources that are governed under traditional rules. In such systems, there exist rules concerning who may use the resource; who is excluded from using the resource, and how the resource should be used with a minimum of internal strife or conflict among or between the users. Consequently, rules mutually agreed upon by all members of the group provide an efficient means of conflict resolution. Indeed, users themselves often point out that their local rules serve primarily to reduce conflicts over resource use, over and above other possible functions (Berkes and Farver, 1989). Indigenous common property resource management systems promote the ideals of communal welfare and responsibility. Such principles are enshrined in the codes of resource appropriation and protection. It is no accident that traditional resource management systems are almost always community-based.

Ethiopia was once richly endowed with common property resource regimes amongst the diversity of ethnic groups. The structure of indigenous land tenure systems in Ethiopia were varied and evolved through a complex of processes. The major forms of land right and land tenure system that operated in Ethiopia were *Atsme Irist* and *Gult*, features of which were analyzed by Welde-Meskel (1950), Pankhurst (1961), Hoben (1973), Markakis (1974), and Rahmato (1984, 1994). However, these tenurial systems were suspended by the 1975 Agrarian Reform, which was proclaimed as a result of a popular uprising against the monarchy that swept the whole of Ethiopia in 1974. Nevertheless, since 1975, the indigenous NRM system and the corresponding resource system management system in the Guassa area of Menz has continued to protect local livelihoods (Ashenafi and Leader-Williams, 2005), as well as endemic and threatened biodiversity, including an important population of

the Ethiopian wolf (*Canis simensis*), the world's most endangered canid (Ashenafi et al, 2005).

The Guassa NRM system worked under an indigenous resource management institution, known as the *Qero system*. The *Qero* system operated based on the existing indigenous land tenure system *Atsme Irist*. The rules of exclusion governing access to the use of the Guassa area resource were aspects of the *Atsme Irist* land tenure system that conferred usufruct right on the members of a group tracing their lineage back to their pioneer fathers. Furthermore, the user community was organized at parish level, an arrangement that gave the Guassa area the status of consecrated land, under protective patronage of the Coptic Orthodox Christian Church in Ethiopia.



Following the 1974 Socialist Revolution in Ethiopia, the then governing regime proclaimed Agrarian Reform by 1975. All land that was under private ownership or communal tenure was transformed into the state ownership. In turn, this resulted in the formal ending of the *Qero* system and other indigenous institutions. Furthermore, other social and economic changes took place, such as land

redistribution, villagization and, the Guassa area natural resource user community informally responded to these changes by forming new indigenous institutions that were in line with the new social and political order.

This paper aims to understand the dynamics of the common property resource management system that operated in the Guassa area of Menz of Ethiopia and how it has been affected through government-sponsored changes and its subsequent replacement by another form of common property resource management systems. Information on the past and present common property resource management system will be reviewed based on which factors determine past and current membership of, and exclusion from, the user group and which detrimental changes have occurred to affect the smooth operation of the traditional common property resource management and how have these changes been accommodated to retain the resilience within the system.

The Guassa Area

The Guassa area, located in the Central Highlands of Ethiopia, lies in the Amhara National Regional State of North Shoa Zone, in the Gera-Keya Woreda (District) popularly known as Menz.

Menz lies 265 km north-east of the national capital Addis Ababa by road. The total area of the Guassa is 111 km², and its altitude ranges from 3200 to 3700 m above sea level. The area's topography varies according to altitudinal gradients and the size of the mountain block, and its vegetation is characterized by high altitude Afro-alpine communities, where various different habitat types predominate, comprising: Euryops-Alchemilla shrubland; Festuca grassland; Helichrysum-Festuca grassland; and, Erica moorland.

The area derives its name from the so-called "Guassa grass," which comprises four species of Festuca highly valued by the local community. The area is rich in biodiversity and contains several endemic and threatened species of flora and fauna, including the second largest remaining population of Ethiopian wolves, and the largest population remaining outside a formally protected area (Ashenafi et al, 2005).

The Guassa is managed by the community for various uses such as grazing land, firewood collection, and the cutting of Guassa grass for various purposes such as thatching, and household and farm implements like ropes and whips (Ashenafi, 2001).



Photo: Kathleen Fitzgerald

The Guassa area is now managed by a recently established conservation council elected from nine Farmers' Associations; the local institutions that were established across Ethiopia following the 1975 Agrarian Reform.

The Traditional Qero System of Indigenous Common Property Resource Management

Community members in the area pointed out that their pioneer fathers (Aqgni Abat) in Menz, Asbo and Gera, started the indigenous resource management institution of the Guassa area in the 17th Century. At the outset, Gera noticed an expanse of open land in the eastern part of Menz and demarcated the Guassa area as his pastureland. Later, Asbo and Gera later sub-divided the land in two parcels, following a horse race, with the boundary sited where the first horse fell (Ashenafi 2001). The two pioneer fathers set the Guassa area aside for the primary purpose of livestock grazing and use of the Guassa (*Festuca*) grass. The right to use the resources of the Guassa area depended on the land rights and the prevailing land tenure system known within Ethiopia as *Atsme Irist* (Welde-Meskel 1950; Hoben 1973). *Atsme Irist* was a right to claim a share of land held in common with other rightful landholders based on an historical ancestor. Those who can establish kinship through either parent may stake a claim to a share of the land from elders controlling the allocation. Hence, under *Atsme Irist*, the Menz people who could trace their ancestry to the pioneer fathers, Asbo and Gera, could use the Guassa area.

To promote the sustainable use of resources in the Guassa area, the members of the land holding group in this land tenure system adopted an indigenous institution to manage the common property resources, known as the Qero system. The Qero system worked by choosing a headman (Abba Qera or Afero) who was responsible for protecting and regulating use of each area. The Asbo and Gera areas each had one Abba Qera (Afero). The Abba Qeras were mostly elected anonymously in the presence of all users of the common property resource. To be elected as Abba Qera a candidate had to be able to trace his ancestral lineage through his patriarchal or matriarchal line to Asbo or Gera. The terms of office of Abba Qera could last from a

few years to a lifetime, depending on the performance of the office holder.

The user communities of the Guassa were further subdivided at *Tabot* or *Mekdes* (parish) level. The Asbo side users were organised under six parishes, while the Gera users were organised under eight parishes. Each parish had one headman esquire (*Aleqa* or *Chiq-shum*) who was answerable to their respective Abba Qera. The organization of the user community into parishes gave the Guassa area the status of consecrated land, under the protective patronage of the long-established Coptic Orthodox Church in Ethiopia.

The Qero system could entail the closure of the Guassa area from any type of use by the community as long as three to five consecutive years. The length of closure largely depended upon the growth of the *Festuca* grass and the need felt by the community. Several participants suggested that the length of closure depended on the success of crop harvest and on the frequency of drought in the area.

When the Abba Qera of both Asbo and Gera felt that the Guassa grass was ready for harvest, they would announce to the rightful owners of the Guassa user community the date of the opening, either at church ceremonies, market places, burial ceremonies or at other public gatherings. The area was usually opened at the height of the dry season of that particular year, usually around February. Once the grass cutting was over, the livestock took their turn to graze the Guassa area.

When the wet season approached, the community prepared to leave the Guassa area. The date of closing was culturally predetermined as the 12 July (*Hamle Abo*) following the opening. The reason for this particular date is that it is the breaking day of the "Apostle's Fasting" (*ye hawariat som*), which is the second biggest fasting season next to Lent for the Ethiopian Coptic Orthodox Church.

Prior to 1941, the user communities used to pay a levy (*giber*) to the king through their respective Abba Qera. The levy for using the Guassa area was nine cloaks and an unknown number of sheep. During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the payment of tax in kind was abolished and payment was replaced by money. From 1941 to 1974

everybody with the user right to the Guassa area had to pay one Birr⁷⁹. The Abba Qeras collected this and kept the receipts in his own name to later show to the people.

Laws were enforced for the protection of the natural resource under the Qero system. This worked by enacting various bye-laws and by the entire community working together under the leadership of the two Abba Qeras. The Abba Qeras frequently patrolled their respective areas with the household heads (*gollmassa*) on dates chosen by the Abba Qeras. Every able male household head was obliged to go out on patrol for activities against to the community by-law, and failure to participate would result in severe punishment for absentees. In some instances, punishment could result in burning down the absentee's house.

Rules were in place that prohibited the use of the Guassa area during the closed season for grazing and cutting grass. Various bye-laws were enacted by the user community to enforce the protection of the common property resources. All informants made reference to penalties where someone who was found cutting or grazing livestock in the Guassa area during the closed season - was supposed to pay their respective parish the following:

- 100 daula of gomen zer (100 sacks of cabbage seeds);
- Irtib yeanbessa lemd (a wet lion skin);
- Andi kolet barya (a one-testicled servant);
- Yebirr zenezena (a silver pestle); and,
- Yekechemo mukecha (a mortar made out of a shrub which never grows a stem).

None of these items were available in Menz and some of them were not available anywhere at all. Hence, these penalties were taken as the price for violation of community rules because, if it were impossible to obtain, no one would dare to touch the common property resource in the closed season. In addition, if someone was found violating the bye-laws and unable to meet the prescribed penalties, he was stripped of his *Astme Irst* right of owning land and, thereby, forced to leave Menz.

When someone was found cutting grass in the Guassa area, the most effective and highly enforced bye-laws were those that involved corporal punishment. Furthermore, if someone thatched his house using Festuca grass that was cut during the closed season, his house was burned down. If livestock was found grazing, the livestock was slaughtered and the skin would be given to the parish church to make a drum. If a trace of freshly cut Festuca grass was found in someone's homestead, or if someone was seen to have made a fresh rope, he was considered to have cut the Guassa, and measures were taken by the Abba Qera of his area. If fresh dung was found in the Guassa area, it was the responsibility of the local squire to find out as whose cattle had been in Guassa.

The Decline of the Qero Natural Resource Management Institution

In 1974, a popular uprising (*Abiot*) against the monarchy, swept through the country. One of the most popular mottos of the revolution was "Land for the tiller" (*meret larashu*). The 1974 uprising was hijacked by a military junta called the "Derg" as a vanguard to the revolution. On March 4th 1975, the Derg, proclaimed the nationalization of all rural land and dissolved the relationship between tenant and landlord, and between customary tenure and privileges. The proclamation abolished private and community ownership of land and replaced this with state ownership. Therefore, the proclamation gave a uniform usufruct right to all farmers within the framework of state ownership of the land. The same proclamation also provided for the formation of farmers' associations by farmers. Hence, the Qero system of the Guassa area was formally abolished, together with its associated natural resource management rules and enforcing local level institutions.

Based on the prevailing political and social order, it was considered appropriate to pass the management to nine farmers' associations living adjacent to the Guassa area. Likewise, the Woreda (District) Administration Council passed a directive regarding Guassa area management. Based on this, the management of the Asbo side was given to Dargegne Farmers' Association and the Gera side

⁷⁹ Birr is the local currency of Ethiopia, US\$1= 21.20 Birr at present.

management was given to Qwangu Farmers' Association. This resulted in marginalization of the former rightful owners of the Guassa resource from its management.

The nine farmers' associations with control over the Guassa have boundaries drawn around them that are based on political and topographic considerations, rather than on including homogenous kinship descent groups. Discussion with study participants indicated that members of some farmers' associations living nearby Guassa had previously been marginalized from the management of Guassa on the pretext that they were not direct descendants of Asbo or Gera. Key informants mentioned that most residents in Yedi, Ferkuta and Yehata villages had been born outside the legitimate marriage of Gera, which is regarded as an important criterion for land distribution and ownership in the *Atsme Irist* land right system. Fewer members of some other farmers' associations, including Chare and Dargegne, fell in this category of marginalized users. In all cases, the marginalized users were settled in agriculturally marginal land close to Guassa, while the rightful owners remained settled in the low-lying agriculturally productive land further from Guassa, as they had been in the past. As a result, there was a marked change in those who controlled the Guassa after the Qero system had been abolished.

Most respondents described the management of the Guassa after the 1975 Agrarian Reform as ineffective and very bureaucratic. The responsibility for enforcing the laws was given to the farmers' association (*kebles*) adjacent to the Guassa area, but it undertook few patrols. The local militia had afforded little protection to the resource users, and only took infrequent action against offenders, because of corruption and inefficiency.

Management of the Guassa Area Since 1975

The community soon realized the consequences of an open access resource and responded automatically by seeking to re-instate an indigenous NRM system. A 51 year-old informant from Chare Farmers' Association noted as follows:

"Following the destruction of the Qero system, we the people - who had no choice of any other material to thatch our houses and with nowhere to go to collect firewood, formally complained to the

Woreda administration in 1977. The administration at first ignored our grievance. Later, with repeated nagging by our elders to the administrator, the Woreda administration at last agreed the Guassa area should be protected. Following this agreement the Woreda clearly notified us to stop the use of the old bye-laws which were working under the Qero system on the pretext that they oppose the right of individuals and are reactionary. The community bye-laws were replaced by a monetary fine to the Woreda Ministry of Finance Office and wrong doers should be prosecuted by the law at the local court."

One 64 year-old informant from Gagne Farmers' Association describes the Guassa management scenario as follows: "Since the revolution the Guassa was only once or twice closed properly. I remember clearly in 1982 we got news that the Guassa was being farmed from the Yifat (neighbouring district) side. Then we went out and pulled their crops and destroyed their farms, and later a serious conflict broke between the Yifat people and us. The local administration had to intervene to stop this situation and, after a big problem, they stopped coming again. After that it closed for only a few months in the wet season and it will be open again in the dry season. I think there are lots more people who need the Guassa grass and the number of livestock has increased, so closing it for a long period like in the old days has become a problem."

On the basis of information obtained from the group discussion and key-informant interviews, three important factors are responsible for the decline of effective management in the Guassa area, following the 1975 Agrarian Reform namely: institutional failure; repeated land re-distribution; and, villagization.

These days to bring back the conservation of the Guassa area and the protection of the biodiversity there is a new local institution in place as the community need the natural resources and the biodiversity there is in decline as a result of misuse of the area. The new local NRM institution put in place by the community in the area is the Guassa Conservation Council (GCC). The GCC was formed from the rightful user community to replace the former Qero system and to oversee the activities of the Farmers' association towards the protection of

the Guassa area. Currently, all the Guassa area users from the nine farmers' association select five members (Chair-person of the Keble, elder, religious leader, women and youth representative) for the GCC. The main function of the GCC is to control illegal uses of the Guassa area during the closed season. The council uses community scouts elected from the adjacent farmers' associations for enforcement of the by-law. Illegal users may be prosecuted in the local courts while repeated offenders will be taken to the District court.

Discussion

In response to tensions among individuals seeking access to resources, indigenous resource management institutions can arise to ensure continued access to the resources and to restrict use by outsiders (Mantajoro, 1996; Ostrom, 1991, 1997). Indigenous resource management institutions' operations include a wide variety of forms, rules and common understanding about how problems are formally addressed and solved in a particular community. Sometimes institutions are formed formally, with electoral procedures for specified tasks and rules that outline the rights and duties of all members. In other cases, institutions are not formally constituted, but still manage to regulate the use of the resources over a long period of time (Little and Brokensha, 1987).

Indigenous land tenure systems in Ethiopia were varied and evolved through a complex of processes before they were suspended by the 1975 Agrarian Reform. The major forms of land right and land tenure system operating in Ethiopia were *Atsme Irist* and *Gult*. Features of these tenurial systems have been analysed by Welde-Meskel (1950), Pankhurst (1961), Hoben (1973), Markakis (1974), and Rahmato (1984, 1994). However, the indigenous common property resource system of Guassa has not been described previously, and this study has provided the first such description.

The *Atsme Irist* land right and land tenure system worked by conferring inalienable usufruct rights equally to all living members of cognatic descent groups who could trace their lineage to a particular pioneer father (Aqgni-abat) who was credited with the original clearing or establishing of a recognized claim to the land. Those who could establish kinship

through either parent could enter a claim to a share of the land from elders controlling the holding and allocation of land. This in effect, is a descent corporation. That is, a person could inherit *Atsme Irist* from either parent because of ambilineal descent principles prevail in *Atsme Irist* areas (Hoben, 1973; Cohen and Weintraub, 1975).

The Qero system was an indigenous NRM institution that arose based on the existing *Atsme Irist* indigenous land tenure system. The rules of exclusion governing access to the use of the Guassa area resource were aspects of the *Atsme Irist* land tenure system that conferred usufruct right on the living members of a group tracing their lineage to the pioneer fathers Asbo and Gera. Only those persons who could prove their lineage to these two pioneer fathers were recognized as full members of the user community (*ristegna*) and permitted to exploit the common property resource on an equal footing. Needless to say, all persons who did not belong to the two (*ristegna*) groups of Asbo and Gera were excluded.

The roll and function of the Abba Qera was to mobilize the beneficiary communities for equitable resource distribution, and to enforce bye-laws for protecting the common property resource. This indicates that it was a formal institution, which was established in response to a need to regulate the use of the natural resource in the Guassa area. Rules of protection and utilization, as well as their enforcement, were essential aspects of the Qero system. These rules were tied up with the traditional tenure system and reflected the prevailing feudal system. Thus, the commons were not outside the overall socio-economic and political system, but rather were an integral part of it. The management of the common property resource was part and parcel of the wider tenurial and administrative system.

The indigenous NRM system of the Guassa area has been managed for hundreds of years by these rules, which were enforced by the members of the community acting individually and in groups. Outsiders, and even rightful owners, not abiding by the rules and regulations governing the mode of resource appropriation and enforcement of the law were excluded. The protection of the common property resources was re-enforced with the

prestige, power and authority of another local level institution, the church (parish). Hence, the rules of protection and utilization and their enforcement operated and survived by leaning on another more hallowed institution, the church. In the process, the Guassa area became a kind of sacred entity, equivalent to what Durkheim (1965) called "the extraordinary contagiousness of sacred character."

The Guassa area has not been brought under crop cultivation, despite the general desire for land in Menz, due primarily to its peculiar physical attributes. The Guassa area is above the tree-line, and neither trees nor crop cultivation yield the expected results. Hence, there is no permanent human settlement in the area. However, the Guassa area plays an important role in the economics and survival strategies of the communities living adjacent. Therefore, it is not surprising that the community has a vested interest in safeguarding the Guassa area. This in turn supported a wide variety of wildlife to survive and reproduce.

The Resilience of the Former Qero System

The Guassa area shows what happens when the rules by which common property resources were traditionally managed suddenly collapse under pressure from modernizing forces. The reason behind the Guassa's demise, and the subsequent suffering of those who depend on its resources, is easy to pinpoint. In Menz, the undermining of the Qero NRM institution is no doubt the most debilitating impact of the 1975 Agrarian Reform. The transformation of land ownership from communal tenure into the state or public land tenure system abolished the regularity of the Qero system. Thus, an indigenous natural resource governance regime that formerly provided assurance that the resources on which all rightful owners collectively depended would be available in a sustainable way, is no longer fully functional. The same assurances cannot be provided by the adoption of different governance systems, in this case state ownership; since the approaches for sustainability and equity are different.

Two major and five minor redistributions of land have taken place since the 1975 Agrarian Reform in Menz. Other studies in the Central Highlands have found that 85.5% of households have less land than

before the 1975 Agrarian Reform (Wolde-Mariam, 1991; Admassie, 2000). Whenever land redistribution has taken place, this has also brought a partial or complete change of farmland. This repeated redistribution of land has decreased the size of private crop and grazing land holdings, which has ultimately increased pressure on the Guassa area for grazing and for encroachment as agricultural land. In turn, this has resulted in the inability of the community to be self-sufficient in food production, as well as to lose interest in communal land management practices.

The villagization program is another state-sponsored social change that seriously affected the Menz population. The Ethiopian villagization campaign began in late 1985 until it was shelved in 1990s (Pankhurst, 1992; Tafesse, 1995). The impact of the program in the Guassa area was an extensive collection of Guassa grass for thatching. Communities living far from the Guassa area, in some cases up to a day's walk; came to collect the grass, which increased the number of users to very high levels. Another influence of the villagization program was that increased distances to other grazing lands, coupled with the problems of livestock management - forced people to move their livestock into semi-permanent residence in the Guassa area. This was because there was no designated space in the villages where livestock could graze under the watchful eye of a household member. If left unsupervised, the animals were likely to trample someone's crops. Pressure from within and from outside forced the then military government to abandon its villagization programme in March 1990. The Guassa community quickly responded to this by abandoning the new villages and going back to their former homesteads. Although the program itself has now been shelved, its impact has nevertheless endured in the area.

The total cost of these exercises was resented by the community, mainly due to the misaligned perceptions of government and those of the local communities; contributing to absolute poverty.

The Existing Management of the Common Property Resource

Gibbs and Bromley (1989) described common property resource management institutions as

having the capacity to cope with changes through adaptations. This in turn leads to the stability of the management system and an ability to cope with surprises or sudden shocks, which further increases the resilience of the system. This has been evident in the Guassa area. When the Qero system was abolished, the community responded by forming another indigenous conservation system under the Guassa Conservation Council (GCC), which is online with the existing political socio-cultural situation of the country, which is a different form of community-based management institution for the management of the Guassa resource.

A series of new Guassa committees has been formed in each of the nine local community associations, while a new overarching GCC has been formed at Woreda (District) level. This GCC at the district level works with the local administration and judiciary to prosecute offenders who break bye-laws. The bye-laws have been strengthened following the formation of the new councils at Farmers' association level and Woreda level. The recent by-law work under the *Idir* system is an indigenous institution formed to help members in times of difficulty. Prosecutions under the *Idir* system have the respect of every member of Ethiopian society. In recent years the Guassa Community-based Conservation Area is established covering a total area of 10,000ha by the Amhara National Regional State to be managed under the governance of the GCC and the council is the highest decision making body at the moment.

Since diversification of the benefit derived by communities is crucial; the development of tourism in the Guassa area is important. The community owns a community lodge and manages the tourism in the area with support from conservation NGOs

like the Frankfurt Zoological Society. Communities in the Guassa area are now benefiting from tourism through renting out mules/horses, guiding visitors, cooking and above all from the use of the community lodge and entrance fees to the area. This has engaged and increased the interest of the community as it generates income for individuals and community development.

In conclusion, we have seen how the indigenous management regime in the Guassa area of Menz,

Ethiopia, has proved resilient despite many social and political impacts, and still continues to manage the Guassa area resources. Therefore, unlike the "Tragedy of the Commons" model proposed by Hardin (1986), the community governance of Guassa has responded to these changes by maintaining traditional values, and thus preventing the resources on which they rely, becoming *de facto* open access. While the management of the area has changed many times, the Guassa users have moved to ensure that their area retains necessary preconditions to ensure community management of the area. Since Ethiopia does not have regulations to establish conservancies, as is common practice in many other parts of Africa; the Guassa case can be considered a pilot model upon which regulations can be developed. This practice of community designation of an area for protection, and benefiting rare and endangered species, represents one model of expanding conservation areas and the protection of endangered species found in a human-dominated landscape. Similar activities are being undertaken in many other areas which have similar land holding systems, like Abune Yoseph, Choke, and the Guna mountain ecosystems.

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NO EASY ROAD: AN EVALUATION OF THE MAKULEKE COMMUNITY CONSERVATION MODEL

S. Collins

Abstract

The Makuleke Contractual Park is 26,500 hectares in size and lies at the northern extremity of the Kruger National Park, bounded by the Limpopo River in the north, Luvuvhu River in the south and Mutale River in the west. The Limpopo River is also the boundary between South Africa and Zimbabwe, while the meeting point of the Limpopo and Luvuvhu Rivers is where South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique meet. This piece of community owned land is called the “Heart of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area.” The Makuleke Contractual Park is a unique and special place and boasts a long and interesting social history as well as being home to 80% of the biodiversity found in the Kruger National Park (KNP). It is owned by the Makuleke Communal Property Association (CPA) and has been hailed as a successful community conservation model. The Makuleke community’s ownership was re-established in 1998 through South Africa’s land restitution process. The settlement agreement, which creates a joint management system between the community and the South African National Parks (SANParks), the management authority of Kruger National Park, gave the community sustainable offtake rights, including hunting, as well as any other commercial rights. The noble idea of the designers of the model, which was endorsed by Nelson Mandela at the time, was that the land would remain within the KNP but would generate benefits for the community in the three villages they were forcibly removed to in 1969.

It was assumed that with the expected benefits, the community would support conservation efforts, improve their lives and eventually take over management of the land. It is seen as a good example of “benefits beyond boundaries.” However, it has not been easy going and the community leadership has faced numerous challenges but also delivered some clear successes. It is now nearly 20 years since the land transfer and contractual park was put in place. This paper attempts to set out some of the lessons and highlights some of the key issues other community conservation projects will face. Community conservation areas are a critical component to South Africa’s efforts to reconcile historical land injustices, secure its biodiversity, and engage South Africans in conservation. Learning from past experiences is key to ensuring the long-term viability of community based conservancy models.

Background

The Makuleke community currently lives in three villages north of Giyani and east of Thuyandou, just outside the KNP’s Punda Maria gate in the north eastern corner of South Africa. The three villages Makahlule, Mabiligwe, and Makuleke were established in 1969 when approximately 3,000 people were forcibly removed from the Pafuri area of the Kruger National Park (KNP) by the apartheid government. The government wanted to consolidate the Tsonga-Shangane speaking communities into the Gazankulu homeland “for community

development” and secondly that they wanted to extend the KNP to the Zimbabwe border. Some community members and their supporters believe it had more to do with the Government needing to secure South Africa’s national borders against infiltration by anti-apartheid fighters based in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Whatever the real reason, the residents were forced to set fire to their huts, loaded on trucks and moved to the three villages where they now live. The 22,000 hectares

of communal land they left behind was formally incorporated into KNP.

In 1994 with democracy in South Africa the Makuleke community, now numbering about 20,000 people, used the new land laws to reclaim ownership and use of the land in KNP. Four years later they successfully obtained ownership of their ancestral land in the KNP as well a further 5,000 hectares which had never been fenced into the Park. The community agreed to keep their land within the Kruger and to add the “outside” land for a period of 50 years. They did this in the hope that they would be able to use the land to improve their lives through conservation-related economic activity such as hunting and ecotourism which were seen as sustainable land uses. This is the only area of the KNP which has permitted commercial hunting. The game offtake though commercial hunting has to be agreed with SANParks before being put out to tender.

The state gave the land, now called the Makuleke Region of the KNP, “contract park” status under the conservation law at the time. The community formed the Makuleke Communal Property Association (CPA) which holds the title of the land and represents the community’s interest in the future development of the land.

The 1998 Settlement Agreement was signed by The Chief representing the Makuleke Community, the CEO of SANParks, the Ministers of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Public Works, Land Affairs, Minerals and Energy, Agriculture, Defence and the Provincial MEC for Agriculture, Land and Environment, Northern Province. However, despite the number of original parties to the Settlement Agreement - it fell to the Makuleke CPA and SANParks to implement it.



**Location of the Makuleke conservation land inside the KNP
(Source: Makuleke Conservation and Development Framework 2012)**

Conditional Ownership

The Settlement Agreement gave conditional ownership to the Makuleke CPA who should they wish to sell the land in future, must first offer it to the State. The CPA gained title of the land with the condition that they only use the land for conservation-based activities. Mining, settlement and agriculture were forbidden. This conditional ownership limits development to ecotourism and hunting as a way to raise finance and create jobs for the community.

Commercial Rights

The Settlement Agreement gave Makuleke CPA the exclusive right to commercially develop their land within a conservation framework that does not conflict with the Kruger's management plan. Clause 31 of the Agreement states that "the CPA shall have the right to conduct all commercial activities on the land." These commercial activities are limited by a range of environmental factors and the CPA needs to use an open tender system to identify possible partners in their commercial developments. Commercial opportunities can only take place if they are permitted by a Conservation and Development Plan; the guiding document for the Joint Management Board that was revised in 2011. The original plan was completed in 2000 and suggested that the tourism carrying capacity for the area is about 200 pax. Since 2000 the Makuleke have partnered with four tourism concessionaires and developed a total of 134 beds. Commercial trophy hunting was also permitted from 1999 to 2001 which earned the CPA around US\$200,000.

Land Reform in South Africa

The Land Reform process was expected to conclude by 2014. However, due to the complexity and large amount of claims that were not settled by the 2014 deadline the 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act was amended. The most significant amendment to the Act relates to the deadline for lodging a land claim, where the initial cut-off time of 31 December 1998 was changed to the deadline of 30 June 2019.

Many of the unsettled claims are on protected areas and private conservation-based game farms. While initially, the Makuleke case was seen as a possible model to follow, it was clear by 2008 that SANParks

had changed their minds and convinced Government that co-management empowering communities was not way forward. This was evidenced by the Government Cabinet decision on 3 December 2008 that all other land claims in KNP would not be settled like that of the Makuleke; in future all claimants would be paid out with cash or given alternate land. This is referred to as 'equitable redress' and previously was mostly used in urban areas where development prevented reoccupation.

This change of heart has resulted in confusion and conflict, and has not solved the problem of rural communities living outside the KNP fence wanting access and ownership of their ancestral land inside the fence. What could have proved to be a less costly and easier way to provide millions of rural community members with a link to valuable conservation land, has been lost. The recent upsurge in rhino poaching, while not linked directly to this decision, found fertile ground for recruiting community members who do not see benefits from conservation. The unilateral decision to use equitable redress rather than land ownership as a settlement tool, has been challenged by some land claimants, so there is a possibility it could be reversed.



Photo: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Managing the land together with SANParks through the Joint Management Board

The title deed for the land is in the name of the Makuleke CPA, which has the power and obligation to develop and use the land for the benefit of the members of the community. The only option available to the CPA to raise money for community projects and create jobs was in conservation-related economic activity such as land management, hunting and ecotourism. These economic activities had to take place according to a Development and

Management Plan created by the Joint Management Board (JMB), the main land and conservation management structure. The JMB comprises three representatives of the CPA and three from SANParks with a rotating chair-person who has the casting vote where required. The JMB has had a challenging time trying to implement the agreement while reconciling the different views and demands of the two parties as well as the private concessionaires once they began operating. Initially, the community did not have the skills and experience to actively participate in the JMB and used the services of external advisors called the "Friends of Makuleke", who built the capacity of the CPA executive and advised them on conservation and tourism issues.

The bold vision contained in the JMB's 2000 Master plan is for the JMB to:

'Maintain a world-class, legally designated, fully operational and sustainable contract park.' Sustainable in this instance refers to both conservation and maintenance of the natural environment, as well as to the financial sustainability of the proposed tourist-based infrastructure. Environmental sustainability refers to the long-term conservation of the biodiversity, water and scenic resources, and the natural environment, with provision for non-consumptive ecotourism use, together with appropriate, sustainable consumptive uses at levels that are compatible in all respects with the characteristics of the natural environment.

While in most aspects it is clear that this vision has been attained and this is the reason why the Makuleke case has become a well-known success, the biggest challenges seem to be the economic sustainability of the tourist assets that have been developed, and the generation of tangible benefits. The relationship between the community and the conservation officials has mostly been one of conflict where the conservation officials oppose all kinds of development under a philosophy of "no development is good for conservation;" not seeing that development is needed to generate benefits.

The JMB is supposed to take all major decisions about anti-poaching, road and fence maintenance, wildlife management and other issues related to conservation of the area's biodiversity. The

Makuleke representatives on the JMB have to deal with technical and scientific issues and initially had the support of advisers who have mostly ceased to support the CPA due to other commitments. The debates in the JMB were frequently heated but generally they were resolved in a mature display of conflict resolution. Key issues of contention have been:

SANParks and Government at first attempted to prevent the Makuleke CPA from conducting trophy hunts on their land. After intense protest and negotiation the CPA was allowed to continue on the grounds that trophy hunting would generate short-term benefits for local residents; it was environmentally sustainable, and was allowed by the Settlement Agreement. It was also noted that other private landowners in South Africa were allowed to conduct trophy hunts and to prevent the Makuleke CPA from doing so could have been seen to be unfair discrimination. The money earned from the hunt was used by the community to fund social projects including improving the traditional authority household. No money from the hunt went to SANParks or to the KNP.

SANParks planned a commercial development adjacent to the Makuleke Region of the Park without consulting the JMB. This followed a commercialization program in the rest of the KNP that was conducted without liaison with the JMB and led to some potential investors moving away from the Makuleke region to bid for sites in the south of the park. SANParks agreed to withdraw its proposed lodge in favour of allowing the Makuleke and Wilderness Safaris tourism development to proceed.

There are frequent complaints from the Makuleke delegates to the JMB that SANParks is not abiding by its obligations, in terms of the settlement agreement, which states they must maintain infrastructure, fences and roads in the Makuleke Region, in return for receiving all gate fees for entrance into this part of the park. Unfortunately, this remains an issue where there is disagreement.

Generating Benefits for the Community

The Makuleke comprise around 15,000 adults most of whom live close to or below the poverty line and rely on Government grants to survive. When their

land was returned to them via a new institution - the CPA, there was a lot of excitement and many more expectations that their lives would improve. However the reality after 18 years of land ownership shows that their expectations have not been met in ways they thought they would. Most expected a real, tangible impact on their daily income and on the CPA which was funding many, community driven development, however, this did not materialize, and rather what has happened is that the few residents employed in the lodges or for the CPA earned money. Nonetheless, if we look closer and understand the impact of having a functioning CBO such as the CPA executive there are a host of intangible benefits that the Makuleke community did derive from their land ownership, that they do not recognize.

Tangible Monetary Benefits

The first income the CPA earned was through a restitution grant given by the government to all land claimants. Most communities use the money to develop the land they plan to move back onto, but in the case of the Makuleke this could not happen, so the money was used for putting in electricity into two of the villages who did not have access to power, and on improving the high school in the village that already had power.

In 1999 after the management plan was drawn up, they earned income from trophy hunting for three consecutive years. In each case the quota and types of animals to be hunted was discussed with SANParks at the JMB, before a professional hunter was contracted. This earned the community around US\$200,000 over three years but did not create long-term or substantial employment. (N.B. an exchange rate of US\$1 = SA Rand 15 has been used. However, the South African Rand was not always this weak, and this means that the US\$ earned in the earlier years up to 2010 are below the real US\$ earned). In 2002 the first lease fees and employment income became a reality with The Outpost opening; a high end tourism facility with 24 beds.. The CPA had a lease arrangement with the private sector operators that gave the CPA 10% of the gross turnover from the ecotourism operations plus a traversing fee per game drive vehicle. The table below shows income earned through the lease fees

as well as estimated income earned by individuals who worked at the lodges. Employment always has been the principal source of income but it is paid to individuals and not the community as a whole, through the CPA executive which uses the lease income to fund its own operations as well as community projects.

- Some of the anomalies / variation in the figures can be explained by the following:
- 2005 – Wilderness Safaris began operations, wage income quadrupled but hunting was halted and occupancies/turnover was initially low.
- 2005 – 2010 wages increased as numbers and inflation increases took effect. The number of people had not increased.
- 2012 – A flood destroyed the Wilderness lodge impacting on wages in 2012 and income received in 2013. The lodge was not in operation for approximately 3 years.
- 2015 – Return Africa began operations after taking over Wilderness Safari's concession; cleaning up the mess left behind and rebuilding the Pafuri Lodge.

After the floods in February 2012, which devastated the Wilderness Safari's Pafuri Lodge, the CPA learnt a lesson and revised the contracts to include a minimum guaranteed lease amount. This means that even in the event of a catastrophic event such as a flood, a minimum of US\$60,000 will be collected regardless of turnover. The CPA organized public works funding for the removal of alien vegetation on its conservation land, which added to the employment income from the ecotourism operations. In addition, from July 2005 to August 2007 Makuleke staff working in the Wilderness Safaris and GIZ funded anti-poaching outfit earned SA Rand 3.3 Million. In the same time period, staff at the Pafuri Lodge earned SA Rand 3.6 million, including during the period of the lodge's construction. All of this shows that substantial income has been earned by individuals since the land was given back.

Income earned from all ecotourism operations															
Year	2001	.02	.03	.04	.05	.06	.07	.08	.09	.10	.11	.12	.13	.14	2015
Wages \$'000	36	36	36	36	140	153	193	220	220	223	226	133	100	100	100
Lease fee \$'000	26	23	27	33	6	24	57	99	70	69	77	12	30	67	96

The costs of running a functioning community-based land owning organization.

For any community, earnings of US\$100,000 a year for social spending would be a blessing, but this income comes at the cost of running the CPA. Most of the income from the land is being used by the organization to fund its internal activities including full-time staff, honorariums to the elected members, and contributing to 50% of the Park Manager's salary. In 2015 the operating budget for one year came to US\$97,000 which is more than what was earned in lease fees. The CPA also had to fund the activities and some salaries for the traditional authority as it was not a recognized chieftainship in South Africa. The CPA built the chief a house, bought him a car, funded his son's university fees and continues to make a monthly contribution to his income. This means that the CPA has struggled to earn enough money to cover its costs as well as social development projects. Most of the social development projects funded by the CPA were carried out between 1998 and 2003 using the Government's restitution grant, poverty alleviation funding, and US\$200,000 earned from trophy hunting.

Intangible Benefits

There are a host of "intangible benefits" which the community and those critical of the model often do not take into account when evaluating whether the land has generated benefits. A lot of these are being achieved through the offices of the CPA, who in the absence of a functioning, government rural development program, or a legally recognized traditional authority - have become the community's elected development organization.

Job creation on the conservation land is a major achievement

The lodges are obliged in the contracts to employ Makuleke residents and they currently employ over 70 people who might not have jobs if it were not for

the hard work of the CPA and its partners in keeping the businesses functioning. It is estimated that each employed person supports another five people, meaning that the project is directly, positively impacting on approximately 350 Makuleke residents. Given the scourge of unemployment in the region these jobs are invaluable and put about US\$170,000 a year into the Makuleke community.

Training

Community members have attended numerous externally-funded training courses such as hospitality training, ranger skills, journalism, and small business training etc. Most of these were funded by donors who could engage with the CPA and identify candidates for courses. Many of the graduates are employed on the Makuleke land and elsewhere.

Facilitation of village based development

Whilst not having a direct mandate or ownership of land in the villages, the CPA has been able to facilitate broader development such as the successful establishment and operation of a 38 hectare pivot farming business that supplies Lays Chips with beans and maize. It employs over 100 people and pays the community land owners that had rights to farm the land. It was started after the ecotourism operations began and they learnt how to engage outside partners as a method of making the projects successful.

They contracted with experienced farmers and give them 20% of the turnover as a fee payment for managing the whole operation. The CPA is now about to embark on developing more village land for agriculture. They see this as the long-term route to create local jobs and wealth. They also facilitated the building and running of a community cultural center and Bed & Breakfast which can sleep 12 guests. It is used by the community for meetings and celebrating their culture.

Pride and self esteem

The Makuleke have lots of reasons to be proud. They own a valuable piece of land, high in biodiversity, that is sustainably employing community members. Their land is one of the few wholly community owned Ramsar wetlands of international importance. Their success story is well known throughout the conservation and environment world, for example: the Makuleke model forms part of geography courses for high school students in Germany, as well as in South Africa. Every year around 30 conservation professionals from across Southern Africa come to the village as part of the Southern African Wildlife College's CBNRM course. This attention has boosted the self-esteem and pride of individual community members, who are both confident and capable. With community self-esteem also comes the social cohesion required to develop a community. The Makuleke take pride in their culture and traditional authority, and the wider process has cemented the very idea of a Makuleke Tribe that is organized and prosperous.

Education is the best long-term investment in social infrastructure

Today, in 2016 the Makuleke villages are prosperous, when compared to their neighbors. While they remain close to the poverty line, they have begun to improve their houses and rural lives. One of the reasons for this is that teachers have always been part of the CPA leadership model. They helped improve the school buildings and facilities. It was beyond the mandate and capacity to change the functioning of a largely dysfunctional rural education system, but many of the graduates of the improved schools are now part of a prosperous middle class where they work in the urban areas and send money and resources back to the village. Some work on the conservation land, but ultimately it will never be able to employ lots of people. The economic growth and development taking place in the villages is tied into the urban professional economy. Giving young people a good school education gives them the ability to leave the village and earn a salary. The urban professionals still see themselves very much as part of the rural village and are investing in better houses and better schooling for their own children who are likely to be living

with them in the cities. These children are likely to stay in the cities but will always have a linkage to the village and to the conservation land.

Conclusion

Partnerships between state, community and private sector - often referred to as Public Private and Community Partnerships (PPCP) - are key to making these kinds of projects a success, but each of the stakeholders needs to play their part. For success, one needs an honest and philanthropic private sector operator, a flexible conservation authority committed to getting the community sustainable benefits, and an organized and accountable community-based organisation. NGOs can play a facilitating role, and mediating role, between these partners. Realistic expectations amongst the community must be set at the start and run throughout the process, but it is imperative to be clear about the non-tangible benefits as well as the cash benefits. It is also important to be clear about the time it takes to get a large scale ecotourism and conservation project to maturity and sustainability.

If it possible for a protected area to sustain both hunting and ecotourism, then it is likely that the community in question would raise substantial cash for development projects and benefit from a diversified income stream which helps provide an essential buffer, should one of the streams decline. Currently, the Makuleke community does have the right to hunt but is not exercising this right, even though it feels not enough income is being made from the land - the Makuleke see the point of view of their private ecotourism partners who view hunting as a threat to their business.

Community Based Organisations cost money to run and to function. If the role of this CPA executive could be carried out by another institution, such as a functioning and accountable local government department, savings could be made. However, this would mean less direct engagement in making land use decisions in the Park and less contact with the reclaimed land. Besides there is no alternate land in the case of the Makuleke and their CPA is playing the role of a development organization.

So whilst it is true that the Makuleke community should have earned more tangible benefits from the land, it is clear that in many ways the model is a

success. The conservation area has improved management; and there is ongoing employment linked to the land and numerous projects at a community level, facilitated by the CPA. However, this has not been an easy road for a rural community without prior experience in conservation and ecotourism, and they would not have achieved as much without the ongoing support of NGOs and funding partners. By virtue of the fact that they have been successful, they remain an inspiration to other conservation land claiming communities who may be entitled to ownership of valuable biodiversity land outside the Kruger Park.

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A note about the author: Steve Collins, Executive Director of the African Safari Foundation. Steve completed his BA honours degree in Economic History at the University of KwaZulu Natal in 1990. After being a political violence conflict mediator and human rights activists for IDASA from 1990 to 1994 he was asked to mediate the St Lucia mining and conservation conflict. After successfully doing this and kick starting the creation of the St Lucia Wetland Authority in 1995, he became full time involved in indigenous community and conservation issues. He recently has become more involved in helping rural communities become more resilient to climate change impacts while continuing to structure beneficial agreements between communities and private sector investments in ecotourism and renewable energy in Southern Africa.



COMMUNAL LANDS NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN ZIMBABWE

L. Goredema

Abstract

This paper focuses on the community based natural resource management (CBNRM) programs in Zimbabwe. It takes the case study of the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) from a wildlife-based and non-wildlife based perspective focusing on two communities involved in the program (Mutoko and Masoka). The evolution of CAMPFIRE initiatives in Zimbabwe shows the positive and negative aspects as well as gaps within the policy environment for community natural resource management (NRM) programs. Economic viability of community NRM as experienced in Zimbabwe with and without donor support will be highlighted.

The article will also address the question of whether community based natural resource enterprises ever become financially self-sustaining. The question of whether community based conservation initiatives enhance the ecological viability will be assessed, and under which conditions. The social and political environment in which the initiative operates has bearing on its economic and ecological viability. CBNRM as a competitive land use option compared to other current or possible land uses will also be an aspect for consideration. Governance of natural resources is a complex aspect at multiple scales and has a bearing on the success of any community based conservation initiative. Within the Zimbabwean context, this is an issue which still needs a defined and agreed upon framework. These two aspects will be reviewed for the case study communities.

In conclusion the successes and failures of the Zimbabwean CBNRM programme as obtaining at local and national level will be identified. The critical factors for success and sustainability of community conservation initiatives will be drawn out from the lessons learnt. Given the extent of the Zimbabwean community land natural resources management programs, the article will take a case study approach to highlight the issues outlined above.

Introduction

In Zimbabwe communal lands Natural Resource Management (NRM) is provided for under different sectoral policies and legislation, which is one of the key challenges in ensuring sustainable use of biodiversity within the country. CAMPFIRE was conceptualized as a program for the management of wildlife, forests, grazing and water resources within the communal areas.⁸⁰ Communities in CAMPFIRE areas have set aside land as wildlife management areas and have a local governance structure, defined

membership and have the rights to manage and distribute benefits. This description shows that the CAMPFIRE communities are operating as community conservancies.

The focus was on wildlife because of its ability to produce direct and immediate tangible benefits for communities through trophy hunting, which brings in significant income⁸¹. With time, CAMPFIRE diversified to include utilization of other natural

⁸⁰ Martin, R.B. (1986) Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Revised Version. Department of National Parks & Wild Life Management, Harare.

⁸¹ Taylor, R.D. 2006. Case Studies on successful Southern African NRM Initiatives and their impact on poverty and governance case study: CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources), Zimbabwe. USAID-Frame Project, IRG, Washington, USA.

resources in communal lands for the generation of economic benefits to the communities. Some of these activities include; non-consumptive tourism (such as photographic safaris), timber harvesting, honey and fruit production, as well as sand extraction for construction.

This article focuses on communal lands NRM within the CAMPFIRE framework by considering wildlife utilization and honey production. The decision to review two different natural resources within the communal lands addresses the common criticism that CAMPFIRE is wholly wildlife based as a communal initiative.

Masoka Wildlife Community Case Study

Masoka in Kanyurira Ward is a wildlife-rich area in the western mid-Zambezi valley which falls under the Mbire Rural District Council (RDC). It was the first community to accept the concept of CAMPFIRE when the RDC was granted Appropriate Authority (AA) status in 1988 by DNPWLM, becoming the first of two CAMPFIRE districts in the country.

Masoka experiences low and variable rainfall with high temperatures. At the beginning of CAMPFIRE there were 60 households and a population 482 people (Murphree and Taylor, 2006). Current community records indicate that there are now 428 households and a population of 2339 (Masoka Councillor's records). The area set aside for wildlife by the community was initially 382 square kilometres.

There was minimal infrastructural development in Masoka before 1988, including a borehole, a grinding mill and a store that was not reliable. There was no school or clinic. The nearest primary school and clinic were 42km away, and the nearest hospital was some 70km away at Chitsungo Mission Hospital. Similarly, to access government services such as obtaining birth and national registration certificates, people had to travel over 100km to Guruve centre. The cost of living with wildlife for the Masoka community was high before CAMPFIRE. Incidents of crop damage reported for the 1987-1988 season were 224, of which 74% involved maize and 15% cotton, damage. The key animals involved were buffalo and elephants who were responsible for 32.6% and 28.1% of the reported incidents respectively (Cutshall, 1989). Other problem animals included wild pigs, baboons and monkeys. The community however, viewed buffalo and elephants as the principal source of the problems. This was exacerbated by the danger to human life that these larger species cause; with 14 incidents of injury or death being reported within the community between 1986-1988 (Cutshall, 1989).

As one of the more richly endowed wildlife areas in CAMPFIRE, Masoka receives substantial revenues. Given its small human population, the benefits can be significant. The first dividend from CAMPFIRE in 1989 was used to initiate the building of a teachers' house and classroom block as well as household cash payouts. Thereafter, the community focused on development projects, and to date the following projects or equipment have been implemented or purchased with CAMPFIRE revenues: a clinic, primary and secondary schools, grinding mill, tractor, lorry, road construction and maintenance. Local employment has been increased with the Ward Wildlife Committee of game guards, a boat operator, tractor and lorry drivers, CAMPFIRE and school clerk - bringing the total to 19 people, and thus strengthening the local economy.

Masoka revenues

Revenue earned by the Masoka programme steadily increased from US\$31,620 in 1990 to nearly US\$109,000 in 2000 before dipping sharply, notably during the three years 2003-2005 - to an all-time low of US\$11,437 in 2004. This was followed by a dramatic increase to US\$132,522 in 2006.

Governance

The community participates in the program through local management structures entitled the Ward Wildlife Committee (WWC) that manages the natural resources and resultant benefits. Traditional leaders (headman) and the councillor are ex officio members of the WWC. Project specific committees are also formed to manage these initiatives, such as the Clinic Committee.

Case studies will be based on Masoka Community in the Zambezi Valley and the Mutoko Beekeepers Association, and the data used for the case studies is based on a survey of the two CAMPFIRE communities conducted in 2013. The policy environment, economic feasibility, and governance framework affecting these two resource uses will also be discussed.

Policy Environment for Communal Natural Resource Management

In the context of this paper, policies related to wildlife and honey production within the communal areas will be reviewed.

Wildlife based communal land natural resource management

Community based wildlife management in Zimbabwe has its genesis in the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 which made provisions for private land owners (commercial farmers) to manage, and commercially exploit wildlife on their land. The premise for this was the diminishing marginal returns for livestock farmers who opted to move into wildlife ranching.

With the advent of independence, there was a realization that communities living with wildlife needed to benefit from it to incentivize good management. Given the success of the appropriate authority conferred on commercial land owners, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM), designed CAMPFIRE in the mid-1980s (Martin, 1986). The overarching principle of the program was to confer rights to communal landowners to manage, use, dispose of, and benefit from, natural resources within a jurisdiction. Communal land in Zimbabwe is State land and the Rural District Councils (RDCs) hold and manage the land in trust for communal residents through the Rural District Council Act [Chapter 29:13]. The amendment of the Parks and Wildlife Act in 1982, gave Appropriate Authority to RDCs. Therefore, the Councils were in a position to manage, sell and benefit from wildlife on the land that they administer on behalf of the local communities. In its design, CAMPFIRE envisaged the local level as either the village or the ward. Since

Mutoko Beekeepers Association Case Study

Mutoko Rural District Council (RDC) has Appropriate Authority under the CAMPFIRE Programme in Zimbabwe. It has limited opportunities for wildlife based CBNRM as it does not have a significant wildlife area or population. It falls within the agro-ecological region four which has periodic seasonal droughts and experiences severe dry spells during the rainy season (Chagonda, 2010). The Mutoko Beekeepers Association (MBA) was formed in 1998 when 269 subsistence farmers came together in response to increased deforestation due to indiscriminate tree felling and uncontrolled veldt fires that were destroying grazing areas, communal, and individual forested areas. The farmers identified beekeeping as a potential strategy to manage forests through the benefits from honey production. The Association would provide opportunities for processing, marketing and training.

In 2002, the Mutoko Rural District Council linked the Mutoko Beekeepers Association to CAMPFIRE as a Community Based Enterprise within CBNRM. The Association received support for awareness raising, training and supplying of beehives to members from the CAMPFIRE Development Fund (funded through the National Natural Resources Management Programme supported by USAID). The Association membership increased and now currently stands at 2000, with 750 women and 1250 men in an area of approximately 3,964 square kilometres. The Association has a democratic governance structure which consists of a management committee for the Association, a District Executive Committee and Group Committees for 50 honey producers. It has a Gender Policy which ensures that at least three committee members of each producer group are women.

The Association members produce between 6-10 tonnes of raw honey per year and 80% of this is brought to the Association for processing. The Association sells the honey to individuals and other enterprises on behalf of the members. MBA buys unprocessed honey from its members at US\$2 per kilogram and sells processed honey at US\$4-6 per kilogram. By-products from beeswax such as candles, soap, floor polish, ointment and cattle feed are made by the Association through part time employment of members. This earns extra income for the Association. The value addition process is however, not fully exploited by the Association for maximum returns. A second payment is made to members on profits after all Association expenses have been covered.

1982 the amendment has conferred appropriate authority to a local authority - the RDC, and not a local community, this has affected the progression of CAMPFIRE over the years, which shall be described below. Though Appropriate Authority is

conferred through the Parks and Wildlife Act, other sectors have provisions for use of natural resources by local communities as shown below.

Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in Zimbabwe are affected by the forestry legislation. The two major pieces of legislation governing the use and management of forests and forestry products in Zimbabwe are: the Communal Lands Forest Produce Act [Chapter 19:04] of 1987, and the Forestry Act [Chapter 19:05]. The Forest Commission developed regulations to control the movement of timber and NTFPs (Statutory Instrument 116 of 2012). This tries to curtail deforestation especially in the newly resettled areas.

Within CAMPFIRE NTFPs are considered as some of the natural resources from which communities as the primary producers should be benefiting. Although there is no legislation which provides access to NTFPs to communities, local bye-laws by RDCs with Appropriate Authority and the by-laws by CAMPFIRE communities have included the management, use and harvesting of these forest products. Several NGOs have supported the utilization of NTFPs within CAMPFIRE and non-CAMPFIRE communities as an approach based on the premise that if local communities can commercially utilize selected NTFPs for their benefit, this will create an incentive to manage natural resources sustainably⁸². Some of the NTFPs which have been utilized commercially include baobab, marula, masau, mopane worms and honey.

Honey Production

Beekeeping or Apiculture provides a sustainable source of income, and livelihoods, for community households in marginal areas. It requires minimal start-up capital which does not compete for space with other farming activities and provides incentives for communities to manage forests as they realize the benefits from beekeeping⁸³. In Zimbabwe, there

is no regulatory framework in existence that governs the marketing and distribution of honey as a commodity. The Bees Act [Chapter 19:02] is under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Ministry and the Ministry of Environment under the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA). Discussions are underway for an Apiculture Policy in Zimbabwe.

The forestry sector is regulated by the Forest Act of 1949 [Chapter 19:05] and the Communal Land Forest Produce Act of 1987 (CLFPA) [Chapter 19:04]. To commercially exploit forest produce, communities require various permits and licenses from the Minister which may not be a straightforward process for communal areas inhabitants. The Forest Commission developed regulations to control the movement of timber and non-timber forest products (SI 116 of 2012), to reduce deforestation especially in the newly resettled areas. With support from FAO the National Forest Programme with the ultimate aim of revising the forest legislation which has become outdated is being implemented. Honey production in state and community forests provides a benefit to local communities, which encourages sustainable management of these forests.

Some approaches to increase community benefits from CBNRM in Zimbabwe

In an attempt to address the so-called 'aborted devolution' through the provisions of the amendment to the Parks and Wildlife Act which devolved authority to manage, use and benefit from wildlife to RDCs rather than communities, the CAMPFIRE Association (which is an association of RDCs with appropriate authority and community trusts involved in CAMPFIRE), together with other CBNRM stakeholders, initiated the implementation of several enabling provisions for further devolution to rural communities living with wildlife. These are outlined in the following sections:

⁸² Mazambani D, and Dembetembe, 2010. Community Based Natural Resource Management. Stock taking Assessment: Zimbabwe Profile. USAID, USA

⁸³ Nyatsande S, Chitesa A, Shayamano I. 2014. Beekeeping in Zimbabwe. Paper presented at the APIEXPO Africa 2014 held in Harare 6-11th October, 2014

Tripartite Agreement

The CAMPFIRE Association initiated the development and adoption of the Tripartite Agreement in 2005 to address increasing dissatisfaction felt by CAMPFIRE communities about the delayed release of wildlife revenues⁸⁴ to benefitting communities by the RDCs, as well as the decrease in the percentage of revenue going to participating communities. Under the Agreement, the private tour operator operating in a CAMPFIRE area transfers the share of revenues directly to the three benefiting parties; the community, the RDC and the CAMPFIRE Association. The Agreement itself is based on the revised CAMPFIRE Revenue Guidelines of 2002 agreed by the RDCs, PWMA and CAMPFIRE Association (see Table 1). (Previously, the private tour operator would pay revenues into the RDC account, and the RDC would then distribute to participating communities and pay the CAMPFIRE Association levy.)

The Tripartite Agreement resulted in significant changes for communities. There was an increase in the amount of CAMPFIRE revenue going to communities as shown in the graph below.

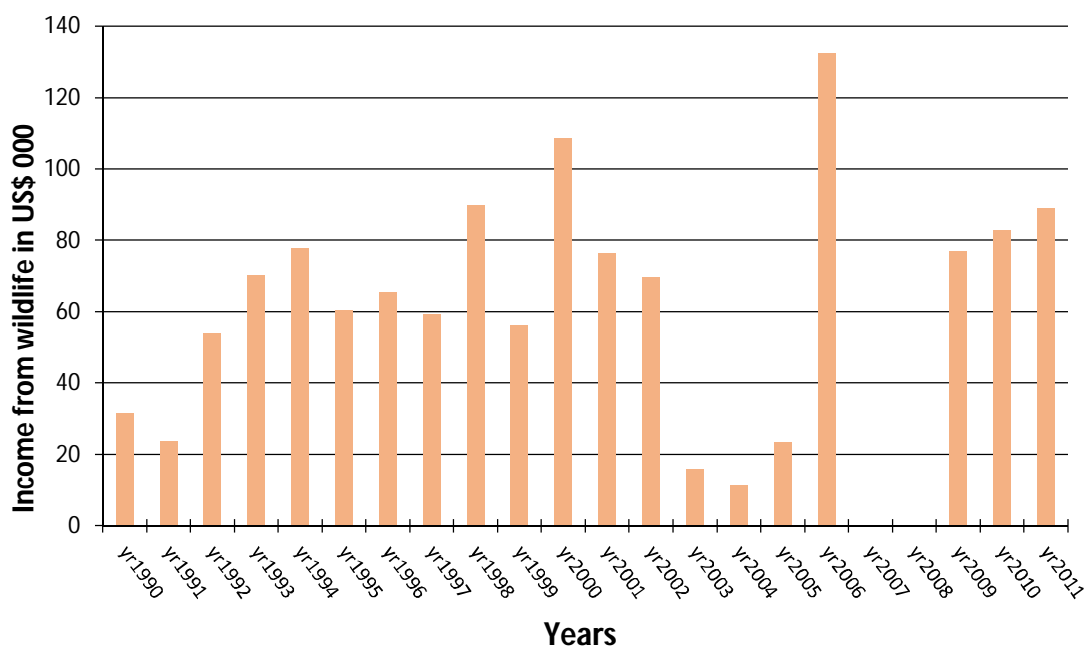
Indeed, the particularly significant increase in 2006 in Masoka community revenues was as a direct result of the implementation of the Agreement. Timely disbursements of revenues allowed communities to undertake their projects in time. Inflows to CAMPFIRE Association also increased, enabling the Association to carry out its mandate of service provision to its members.

CAMPFIRE Revenue Guidelines 2002	
	% of gross revenue
Producer communities:	Not less than 55%
Management activities (RDC):	Maximum of 26%
RDC Levy:	Maximum of 15%
CAMPFIRE Association:	4%



⁸⁴ CAMPFIRE Association

⁸⁴ Taylor, R. D. AND Murphree M.W, 2007. Case studies on successful southern African NRM initiatives and their impact on poverty and governance: Masoka and Gairesi case studies Zimbabwe. IUCN/USAID FRAME.



Example of changes in revenues accruing to communities as the result of the Tripartite Agreement from 2006: Case of Masoka Community in Mbire RDC, Zambezi Valley

Community Trusts

Although significant revenues are now received on time by the community, through the Tripartite Agreement, the arrangement does not devolve any management decisions to communities so that they also participate in the management of hunting operations to improve performance and reduce conflict. To address this shortfall in further devolution, the CAMPFIRE Association initiated a pilot project for a new model based on the provisions of Section 10 (1) of the Communal Land Act [Chapter 20:04]. The Act provides that the Minister may set aside land contained within Communal Land for any purpose whatsoever, which is considered in the interests of inhabitants of the area concerned or in the public interest or which is considered to promote the development of Communal Land generally or of the area concerned. The model seeks to support and strengthen control of natural resources by communities through a Community Trust that can enter into legally binding contracts on all investments; thus, decentralizing management. The community is expected to be granted a permit by the RDC which delegates its rights and obligations for Appropriate Authority to the community. To ensure sustainability and accountability by the community, the local authority

remains accountable to the PWMA, and retains the power to cancel the permit in the event of any non-compliance or transgression of the terms and conditions of Appropriate Authority by the Community Trust.

Environmental Management Act as a devolution model

The provision for the establishment of environmental sub committees under the Environmental Management Act [Chapter 20:27] and incorporated in the Rural District Councils Act as an amendment in 2008, provides a legal framework for communities to be recognized legal entities responsible for and benefiting from management of natural resources in their jurisdiction. Overlaps with existing structures still need to be addressed, as the majority of natural resource related committees at sub district level are sector specific with wildlife committees, forest resource management committees and water catchment committees for wildlife, forest and water, respectively. The difference regarding the community trusts above, is that the environmental sub committees would have jurisdiction over all natural resources, and not just sector specific ones.

Wildlife Based Land Reform Policy

The Wildlife Based Land Reform Policy (WBLRP) was drafted as part of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) to address wildlife related aspects of the land reform. This policy was drafted in 2004 to address key issues of indigenization and the potential for large commercial enterprise. It provides for the implementation of wildlife conservation as a viable land use option which can be practiced by the resettled farmers in areas that are suited for wildlife. Objectives in the WBLRP are meant to address the issues of equity, land use, proprietorship, tenure arrangements, and administration. The positive provisions of the WBLRP which incorporated indigenization and community participation through the Corporate Model, have not been implemented. The Corporate Model in the WBLRP provides options for partnerships between existing owners and prospective new participants and PWMA.

The new constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) has a Bill of Rights including Environmental Rights in Section 73 which provide for the right to environment protection which ensure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting economic and social development. This is a fundamental provision for CBNRM conservation as environmental rights are enshrined in the constitution which gives credence to the sector. It also provides a constitutional basis for enforcement of these rights⁸⁵.

Land Tenure

The Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement (MLRR) has the functions and powers for land acquisition, rural resettlement, the provision of security of tenure, land information systems, and commissioning and maintaining international boundaries. It derives its terms of reference from 14 pieces of legislation including the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 20:10). Provisions and opportunities exist for sustainable NRM through the Ministry of Lands in the form of secure land tenure, optimal land use options for each region, implementation of the

WBLRP, and Forest Based land Reform Policy (FBLRP), as well as ensuring compliance on the conditions for environment management in the leases and offer letters for resettled farmers. However, there seems to be little or no coordination between the Ministry of Lands, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate, and their associated agencies. The uncertainty in land tenure within the newly resettled areas is a major underlying cause of unsustainable natural resource utilization.

Policies with negative effects

The Mines and Minerals Act [Chapter 21:05] has negative effects on CBNRM as it is considered to supersede all legislation within the country. Protected areas such as the Parks Estate, Gazetted Forests and Community Protected areas are state and communal land which are open to prospecting and can be mined. According to the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development there are over 2000 artisanal miners per RDC throughout the country⁸⁶, while estimates nationwide place the number at over one million small scale miners⁸⁷. These numbers have implications in terms of CBNRM.

Levels of Elephant Poaching reported by ZPWMA

Species	2009	2010	2011	2012	Cumulative Loss (No.)
Elephant	145	77	223	212	657

About 70% of the population in Zimbabwe lives in rural areas and derives its livelihood from agriculture. The threats to wildlife management from the agricultural sector include; habitat loss, and soil erosion caused by overgrazing, overstocking, deforestation, overutilization of arable land, brick moulding for farm buildings, illegal sand extraction, illegal gold panning (as alternative income sources).

Major causes of land use change are due to conversion to agriculture. Between 1990 and 2009 land under agriculture increased from 3 million to 4.3 million hectares, which is an increase of 43%⁸⁸. The FTLRP resulted in significant land use changes

⁸⁵ Goredema, L. 2013. A Study On The Advances In Sectoral Mainstreaming Of Biodiversity In Zimbabwe: Economic valuation, Ecosystem Based Adaptation and Resilience and Biodiversity Mainstreaming as inputs to the revision of the Zimbabwe National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate.

⁸⁶ (Goredema, 2013).

⁸⁷ Feresu S.B. (ed) (2010). Zimbabwe Environmental Outlook. Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management

⁸⁸ (FAOSTAT, 2012, Feresu, 2010)

as the settlement of new farmers converted land previously under game ranching, plantations and forests to arable land. In some cases, these settlements and fields have been located in traditional migratory routes of wild animals resulting in increased human wildlife conflict. The use of indigenous trees by newly settled farmers for use in the growing tobacco industry, is a major cause for concern where replanting is not taking place.

Poaching of wildlife is a major cause of concern in the country.

This is both for commercial purposes and for local level consumption as a protein source. Commercial poaching has escalated to become a national concern as shown by the increase in number of elephants poached between 2009 and 2012 in Table 2⁸⁹. The loss of over one hundred elephants in Hwange National Park due to cyanide poisoning in 2014, demonstrates the scale to which commercial poaching has escalated. Hunting wildlife for resale continues across the country's protected areas, private conservancies and resettled areas. The change in land use, increased human population and the associated economic challenges have resulted in increased poaching levels, even for threatened species, with an estimated loss of 40 percent⁹⁰. In the CAMPFIRE areas the decline in actual and perceived benefits from the program has also triggered an increase in the poaching levels at the local level.

Gaps in policies/laws

Land in communal areas is state owned with farmers having user rights, and in the case of resettled farmers this takes the form of either an offer letter (settlement permits), or a lease of 99 years. Security of tenure remains a contentious issue within the country, especially in communal and resettlement areas in which the communities have rights to use of the land. Thus, even for communities involved in CAMPFIRE, this gap prevents total devolution, where the RDC remains as the legal land holder.

The existence of many sub district level structures in rural development and conservation under different legislative provisions while some do not have any legal basis for their existence has resulted in

fragmented and conflicting approaches to the management of natural resources as well as not fully utilizing the opportunities for conservation at local level. The Environmental sub committees provided for under the Environment Management Act are a vehicle that could be used by all sector government ministries and agencies involved in environment management at sub national level to carry out their mandate.

Annual income distribution from sport hunting for a Safari Company operating in the Zambezi Valley in Zimbabwe for 2011

<i>Expenditure</i>	USD	% of Net
Outside Marketing	27,644.00	
Host Country Costs		
Government Taxes	29,345.40	
Office Running Costs	61,224.29	
Staff Costs	138,233.12	
Field Operations	145,678.17	
Vehicle Costs	19,969.56	
Capital Costs	28,241.16	
Total Expenditure	450,335.70	
Income		
Trophy Fees	392,500.00	
Daily Rates	733,210.00	
Total Income	1,125,710.00	
Net to Company	675,374.30	
RDC & Community Benefits/payment	392,500.00	58.12

Does Zimbabwe need a conservancy policy?

Zimbabwe has been practicing CBNRM for over twenty years without a CBNRM policy or conservancy policy. Given the challenges facing the conservation sector in Zimbabwe and the recognized need for community involvement in conservation, a policy to guide the conservation agencies and sectors on CBNRM would provide much needed guidance on community conservation approaches and implementation.

⁸⁹ Madzara, A. 2013. Monetary Quantification of the Ecosystem Products and Services in Protected Areas: Economic valuation, Ecosystem Based Adaptation and Resilience and Biodiversity Mainstreaming as inputs to the revision of the Zimbabwe National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate

⁹⁰ (UNDP, 2003 in Feresu 2010)

Economic Viability

Wildlife based Natural Resource Management

Early research in the 1980s indicated that the economic returns per hectare from wildlife utilization were higher than from livestock production (Jansen et al, 1992) in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country. Revenue generation is based on wildlife endowment of the area and the population density (Taylor, 2006). In areas of rich wildlife endowment and low population densities the returns and benefits to the community are higher. This is the case for Masoka which has an area of 400 hectares and 428 households with a population of 2339 (Masoka Councillor's records, 2013). Generally speaking, at national level, hunting contributes 90% of the CAMPFIRE annual revenue and photographic tourism contributes about 1.8% of the annual CAMPFIRE revenue (Taylor, 2006)⁹¹. At national level, income from sport hunting is US\$4 million per annum, and US\$0.4million is from other sources (non-hunting tourism, timber, crafts, fisheries and beekeeping.) CAMPFIRE has generated over US\$40 million from 1990 to date. A comprehensive overview of income associated with a CAMPFIRE operation as a business entity, a breakdown of costs and income for a hunting outfit in the Zambezi Valley (Mbire RDC) is shown in Table below⁹².

Start up and operational costs for a safari hunting enterprise are high and may be difficult for communities to undertake such enterprises on their own but in partnership with an established hunting operator. Safari hunting has been shown to be a robust industry. In Zimbabwe during the economic downturn from 2003 to 2010, the safari hunting industry continued to thrive although ecotourism and/or photographic safaris were affected. Increases in poaching, declining wildlife numbers in some of the CAMPFIRE safari hunting areas, demonstrate that the macroeconomic and political environment in which CBNRM and conservancies operate, influences their economic viability. The fact that the Zimbabwe hunting industry in communal areas survived the worst economic and political crisis that the country had ever experienced shows the resilience of CAMPFIRE as a CBNRM approach.



Non Timber Forest Products – Honey

One beehive produces an average of 15kg of honey, approximately 12kg once processed. If placed into 450-500g bottles this produces 24 bottles, sold at a market price of US\$4 a bottle and realizing an income of US\$96 from one, individual beehive (Environment Africa, 2011). The input costs are relatively low, being less than 50% of the income generated, making beekeeping a thriving business that can contribute invaluable to a household income. From the case study of the Mutoko Beekeepers, the costs of acquiring beehives range from zero to US\$251 - depending on the number and type of hive that used. Costs for caring for the hives, harvesting the honey, packaging and transport to market, range from nothing to US\$21 for members. Income from honey production at the household level for Mutoko Beekeepers, ranges from below US\$50 to above US\$450 per year. Honey is sold locally to individuals, food outlets and to the Zimbabwe farmers development trust. The Association still needs to develop sustainable market linkages.

Dependence on donor support

CAMPFIRE was initiated by the DNPWLM through initial government funding from the Public Sector Investment Program (Taylor, 2006). The CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG) provided the technical and other support in the earlier years through their resources. Major donors to the program have been

⁹¹ Taylor, R.D.2006

⁹² SACF, 2012: CBNRM and pro poor growth. Regional CBNRM Project, WWF Regional Office Africa, C/o WWF Zambia

USAID from 1990 -2002 (over US\$20million), NORAD from 1994 -2003 (US\$2.2million to WWF), US Fish and Wildlife Services, DANIDA, and GTZ for forestry community involvement. SAFIRE, a local NGO focussing on commercialization of community based forestry products including honey enterprise development, has received funding from a range of donors including HIVOS, EU, CAFOD, DFID, GEP/SGP⁹³. Environment Africa, also supports community based forest conservation through honey production. The result has been the development of the honey market chain for the communities involved - through improved quality, packaging and access to markets, such as supermarket chains, and for export.

What can be done to improve economic viability of CBNRM initiatives?

For wildlife based enterprises, economic viability can be improved by joint ventures between the community and the private sector. This is the case in most wildlife based CBNRM initiatives in Zimbabwe including the Masoka community, which has a contract with safari operators through the Mbire RDC. In the NTFP sector, NGOs can provide support for communities to set up community based enterprises by acting as brokers and providing linkages with the market. In the case of beekeeping in Zimbabwe and other NTFPs, the local NGO SAFIRE provides technical support on an ongoing basis including product development and marketing through a private entity dealing in NTFPs that it supported to be established called Speciality Foods of Africa.

Community empowerment through capacity building in financial management, business and project management skills also assists in economic viability as communities acquire skills to better appreciate the economic aspects of natural resource management.

Financial viability of competing land uses

Agriculture is the major competing land use with community based conservation. Communal agriculture in Zimbabwe goes through phases of incentive based (market prices) of cash crops such as cotton and tobacco. With the decrease experienced in cotton prices most communal farmers shifted to tobacco growing. Given that returns from agriculture are per household, while benefits from wildlife are mostly at community level through infrastructure and other projects, the communal farmer will consider cash crop farming as more financially beneficial. Small scale farmers can achieve returns of between 1,200kg to 2,500kg returns per hectare from tobacco farming, which can translate to a gross income of between US\$4,320 to US\$9,000, at an average price of US\$3.60/kg⁹⁴. This is annual income per household.

In the last breakdown undertaken by Khumalo (2003)⁹⁵ the income per household from CAMPFIRE revenue was US\$18.82 for 2000. According to Bond (2001) the financial benefit per household (the ward dividend divided by the number of households) between 1989 and 2001 is low⁹⁶. In real terms, the median benefit per household declined from US\$19.60 in 1989 to US \$3.87 in 2001. In terms of financial viability, honey requires the least input in start-up capital, labour requirements and marketing compared to tobacco farming and wildlife utilization. There are other factors that have to be considered in tandem with the figures given above. These include the agro-ecological region in which the enterprise is being undertaken. Most wildlife producing communities are in the very low rainfall areas in which arable agriculture is not a viable option except for cotton which did very well in the marginal areas of the Zambezi Valley.

⁹³ Mazambani and Dembetembe, (2010)

⁹⁴ (Financial Gazette, 14 Jan, 2014) <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/more-farmers-switch-to-tobacco-production/>

⁹⁵ WWF SARPO .2003. CAMPFIRE Monitoring and Evaluation Data 2001. Unpublished report compiled by MA Khumalo. WWF SARPO, Harare

⁹⁶ Bond, I. 2001. CAMPFIRE and the incentives for institutional change. In: African wildlife and livelihoods: The promise and performance of community conservation. (Eds. D Hulme and M Murphree). James Currey

Ecological Viability

Bee-keeping has positive ecological consequences. Bees play an important role in the pollination of many flowering plants and crops. Bees account for approximately 80% of insect pollination.

Studies have shown an increase in forest conservation as a result of farmers carrying out beekeeping. The Mutoko Beekeepers Association has created a local, natural resource management structure by bringing together 2,000 farmers in an area of approximately 3,964 square kilometers, which has provided its members with an opportunity to participate in the management of natural resources in their immediate vicinity.

Studies conducted between 1989 and 2003 for the Masoka community demonstrate that at the onset of CAMPFIRE there was an increase in wildlife populations⁹⁷. However, with the continued appropriation of CAMPFIRE revenues by RDCs through delays in revenue distribution, and reduced amounts allocated to wards as well as the capture of revenues by community leadership (traditional leaders and wildlife committees) – elite capture has led to an increase in local level poaching as incentives for communities to conserve wildlife decrease.

Current trends in Zimbabwe highlight a general decrease in wildlife populations, especially the huntable ages (trophy animals). Factors attributable to the decrease in wildlife populations include:

poaching, fires, over exploitation, climate change, and land conversion which results in habitat loss. Statistics from PWMA and CAMPFIRE underline a sharp increase in poaching levels over the last five years as reflected in the number of cases reported every year, and the number of animals killed. Table below illustrates the magnitude of this threat to protected areas⁹⁸.



Levels of poaching reported in PWMA annual reports.

Species	2009	2010	2011	2012	Cumulative Loss (Numbers)
Elephant	145	77	223	212	657
Buffalo	91	88	68	46	293
Impala	73	-		106	179
Kudu	56	63	58	74	251
Zebra	42	20	48	36	146
Rhino	27	22	33	8	90
Loss (US\$)	11,648,000	7,499,500	16,011,000	12,373,000	-

⁹⁷ Taylor, 2006

⁹⁸ Madzara, 2013

Social and Political Viability

Communities are involved in CAMPFIRE through democratically elected ward wildlife management committees. Each ward consists of several villages, and the village development committee chairpersons and/or secretaries represent the villagers at the ward level. Other community leaders such as the chief or headman are co-opted as *ex officio* members of the wildlife committees. The Ward Councillor also sits on the ward wildlife committee. In some areas, the councillor is the chairperson of the committee. Other committees within the community can also have representation on the wildlife management committee. In areas where the community is implementing various projects, committees are set up to run each of these projects, such as the clinic committee, and tractor committee. This is to ensure transparency and avoid a scenario where the wildlife committee monopolizes the administration of projects. In some cases this is also to spread the benefits as members receive a sitting allowance for attending a committee meeting.

In the case of Masoka community, benefits are distributed through projects on which the community agrees. The ward wildlife committee drafts a budget based on expected revenue, which is presented to the community at a general meeting. The community makes comments, suggests changes and approves the projects and budget allocations. In some long-running community projects such as the school, clinic, and grinding mill, the respective project committees are given the opportunity to further explain the figures within the budget for their projects. The Masoka community has tried to be innovative in maintaining a sense of continued community benefits from CAMPFIRE revenues. Some of the innovations include the setting up of a community revolving Fund, from which members of the community can withdraw funds to start their own enterprises. This has resulted in a number of individual entrepreneurs such as tuck shop owners, carpenter and professional training (teachers, professional hunter, tour guide) benefiting, who have continued to operate from the community. Teacher training has ensured that there are local people qualified to teach at the primary and secondary schools, as staff retention has been a problem. One individual had also established good relationships with the local safari camp and visiting hunting operators, to supply fresh vegetables.

In times of natural catastrophes such as droughts, floods, the ward committee can call for a meeting to reallocate funds for drought relief, if this has not been allocated at the initial budget approval meeting.

Other benefits from CAMPFIRE are the employment of local people by the CAMPFIRE structures such as the ward game scouts, CAMPFIRE clerk, and tractor, boat and grinding mill operators. Being on the ward wildlife committee is considered a benefit as these members receive allowances, travel outside the ward to attend meetings and interact with visitors to the ward. The ward constitution stipulates that the ward wildlife committee should be in office for two years. Similarly, the game wardens and other workers are changed after two years to ensure that other community members get the opportunity to be employed. Casual employment for seasonal work that the Ward wildlife committee undertakes, such as road clearing and bridge repairs, is also available.

Tour operators within the Masoka area employ local people for positions as wildlife trackers, skimmers, cooks and waiters. This is also a benefit to the community. From a pro poor perspective, the money ejected into the local economy through the employment of these few people has a multiplier effect. Table 6 shows the number of people employed as a result of the CAMPFIRE activities in Masoka Ward.

Approximately US\$12,900 is paid to 59 individuals from the Ward annually. This does not take into account the cash inflows from those in full time employment in the private sector and government service. This creates significant spill over effects in terms of support to extended families and the availability of cash within the local economy. Those in full time employment tend to employ casual labor to assist with some of their household labor requirements such as weeding. Some of the individual entrepreneurs realized the opportunity through increased employment and started the tuck shops.

Exposure to local and national politics and impacts and how these have been/can be mitigated

Local politics in Masoka can create tension between the various governing institutions such as the headman, the councillor and the Ward wildlife committee. The greatest impact has been in terms of

elite capture by the local leadership through misappropriation of CAMPFIRE revenues and equipment, such as the lorry. Due to the high respect in which the traditional authority is held, the community will typically complain about the misuse of funds and equipment, but take no action.

Although remotely located, the Masoka CAMPFIRE community is impacted by national politics. In 2007, there was an influx of new safari operators trying to negotiate with the community to win the new contract for the concession, and this created tensions with the RDC.

Lessons Learnt - Success and Failures

- While the key argument that decentralization does not fully empower communities holds true, the Masoka Wildlife case study in Zimbabwe illustrates that decentralization to the local authority with natural resources providing the financial resources to do so, has in effect benefited more local people through: ensuring that critical social services such as clinics and schools are located in the vicinity; acquiring national identification cards; and other decentralized government services are also more closely located to the remote community.
- From the Mutoko Beekeeping Association, locally initiated CBNRM programmes/activities tend to require less input in terms of awareness, capacity building and other externally funded inputs. Scaling up such CBNRM initiatives does not necessarily require extensive external awareness campaigns, but relies on testimonials from those involved. Nevertheless, externally funded CBNRM initiatives have brought in more benefits to the communities and it is therefore important that such initiatives to fully empower communities should have a sustainable funding mechanism in place.
- Beekeeping as a forest and rangeland management strategy at community level has great potential to be sustainable as benefits accrue directly to households if market linkages are developed and sustained.
- Communities have maintained relevance of their CBNRM initiatives by creating innovative approaches to benefit sharing that are aligned to the current needs and aspirations of the community categories such as revolving funds,

scholarships and incentives for professionals to remain and work in remote areas. CBNRM initiatives have the potential to be a source of financial capital to change the economic landscape of remote rural communities through strategies like revolving funds for community based small scale entrepreneurs.

- Failure by the private sector to fulfil its role and maintain good relations with communities can affect livelihoods and conservation of the resource base. Direct collaboration between the private sector and communities through joint venture partnerships, if well negotiated with neutral facilitators, increases benefits to communities.
- Increase in human populations, especially for wildlife based CBNRM, can adversely affect benefits to the household. The enabling macro and micro environment that the government at national and local level provides, is critical to ensuring that the poor benefit from CBNRM initiative. Zimbabwe's conflicting governance environment prevents progress.

Critical Factors for Success and Sustainability

Provision of linkages with the local economy: Private sector involvement in CBNRM initiatives is a critical factor especially for wildlife and photographic safaris. The private sector can increase the benefit streams from its involvement by developing and encouraging local communities; especially the poor, such as women, widows and young people, to set up ancillary industries which can benefit from private sector initiatives. These can include horticultural projects which provide vegetables to the private sector lodges; cultural and traditional dancing groups that perform for tourists to the private sector lodges; and, other home-based industries such as women sewing traditional clothing which is sold locally and internationally by the private sector. Other linkages can include contracting local craftspeople for carpentry, thatching, artwork and carvings that are used in the various camps and lodges. This provides opportunities for direct individual and household income.

Local employment with skills development: Most CBNRM initiatives involving a private sector partner

make provisions in the contractual agreements for recruitment of local labour with a clause for skills development for tour guides, camp managers, cooks or professional hunters. The extent to which skills development is carried out depends on how robust the clause is in the contract, and also on follow up by communities. This aspect has the potential to enhance the actual and perceived incentives from communal land natural resource management by the communities, as it enhances the human capital of the local communities.

Timely payments of revenues: Depending on the revenue sharing mechanisms in the CBNRM initiative, timely disbursements of revenues from the private sector to the community (if via direct payment) or to the legal entity, is important in ensuring good relations. Where the private sector delays in paying communities or individual resource harvesters, this has produced a great disincentive for continued involvement in sustainable natural resource management. Where possible the private sector should negotiate for direct payment to the beneficiary group to avoid delays in disbursements beyond their control, even after they have made the payments on time.

Product and market development: For Non-Timber Forest products such as honey, and to increase the benefits to the community and households, product development as well as a marketing strategy are both required. Formation of an Association to bulk harvest honey for processing and marketing is one such strategy. The processing of by-products from honey such as wax, soaps, lotions and candles is part of the product development that increases incentives for communal farmers to venture into honey production. Support from external agencies in marketing which includes quality and packaging is a critical aspect for higher value marketing.

Transparency and accountability in leadership: Strong functional and effective local CBNRM institutions are critical for sustainable CBNRM initiatives. Leadership has to be accountable to the local communities and have mechanisms to ensure transparency in place.

With changing generational aspirations and needs, the community, and in particular, the leadership, has to diversify utilization of the CBNRM community revenues through innovative approaches. One of the challenges which affects most CBNRM initiatives has been the failure to shift from the original needs of the communities at the beginning of the programs to the current aspirations. Communities need to identify and address the needs of the young people who form the largest percentage of the communal population, and are very assertive in ensuring their voice is heard.

Civil society provides ongoing extension services to CBNRM through its field based staff. CBNRM just like any other rural development and conservation sector requires on-going extension services. This has been a limiting factor in the implementation of CBNRM as the programme was considered to be able to continue on its own once initial support was stopped. They also provide input in enhancing institutional capacity, knowledge and skills training, information dissemination to all CBNRM stakeholders.

Government's role is to ensure an enabling macro level environment for CBNRM delivery. This involves creating a legislative and policy environment which is conducive for the proliferation of CBNRM as a conservation, and ultimately, as a development vehicle. At the micro level, the government plays a critical role (through RDCs/local government), of ensuring that local people receive capacity in CBNRM issues through CBNRM extension services from field based personnel, and mediation between the community and private sector, which enhances access to CBNRM areas for further investment in CBNRM enterprises such as tourism. Most CBNRM initiatives require long term investment to become sustainable. Therefore, funding for CBNRM initiatives should ideally be long term and not project time-bound.

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ECOLOGICAL VIABILITY OF CONSERVANCIES: A STUDY OF OL KINYEI CONSERVANCY, MAASAI MARA KENYA

L. Doughty & I. Amoke

Since their initial creation, there have been major concerns among researchers, conservation managers and governing bodies on the ecological viability of wildlife conservancies. There has been limited understanding of how tracts of land incorporated into conservancies would recover as a result of the change of land use/management. The primary concern was that the condition of the grasslands in these areas had become degraded beyond repair as a consequence of decades of exposure to intensive livestock grazing, so much so that the proposed re-wilding of the designated areas would not be achievable.

Within the Greater Mara Ecosystem (GME), wildlife conservancies are being promoted as a potential mechanism for both increasing the overall amount of land available for wildlife conservation, and for reducing human-wildlife conflict/competition with domestic livestock. This is achieved by creating a protected area buffer on privately owned land around the gazetted boundary of a designated area - in this case, the Maasai Mara National Reserve. As a newly emerging wildlife management initiative, it is imperative that the ecological viability of conservancies be demonstrated and that that empirical evidence emerging from existing wildlife conservancies is applied to future conservancy initiatives.

Research carried out over a three year period in the Mara's Ol Kinyei Conservancy demonstrates that high, wild ungulate densities and distributions have been maintained and enhanced in an existing part of conservancy, with similar levels of success mirrored in a newly designated addition to the conservancy. Over the study period, results revealed that for seven ungulate species (Thomson's gazelles, wildebeest, zebra, topi, impala, Grant's gazelles and giraffe) a positive response in terms of recruitment and distribution has been experienced as a consequence of conservancy creation. Population estimates for the species indicate substantial population increases –

impala and zebra doubled in number, while wildebeest more than trebled. Increases in habitat heterogeneity and productivity (from remotely sensed data), and analyses of the herbaceous layer, further confirmed that regeneration of vegetation was occurring as a result of the new management regime.

This research provides an accumulation of evidence in support of wildlife conservancies as ecological refuges, presenting them as a management tool that has the potential to promote rapid recovery from degradation and consequently support substantial numbers of wildlife. It has been demonstrated that grasslands in the GME respond positively (increases in species composition and reduction of bare ground) to conservancy creation and that habitat heterogeneity increases with conservancy maturity. This in turn attracts significant number of wild ungulates to the area, which are integral to the natural function of savannah ecosystems.

Ol Kinyei conservancy is managed under a strict no livestock grazing policy. As demonstrated in this study, this management model is highly successful from the wildlife conservation perspective. However, wildlife conservancies currently cover a substantial proportion of the GME (Fig 1). Should all wildlife conservancies follow this livestock grazing model, their overall impact on the GME could be seen as negative as a result of reducing the total amount of land available to the community as livestock grazing land. This contraction of grazing land available to livestock would inevitably result in further degradation of the areas outside protected areas. Among the network of wildlife conservancies in the GME, see map below, several different grazing agreements have been reached between conservancy manager and land owners. However, there has been no research to date that examines the effect of different grazing arrangements on wildlife density, vegetation recovery or community satisfaction.

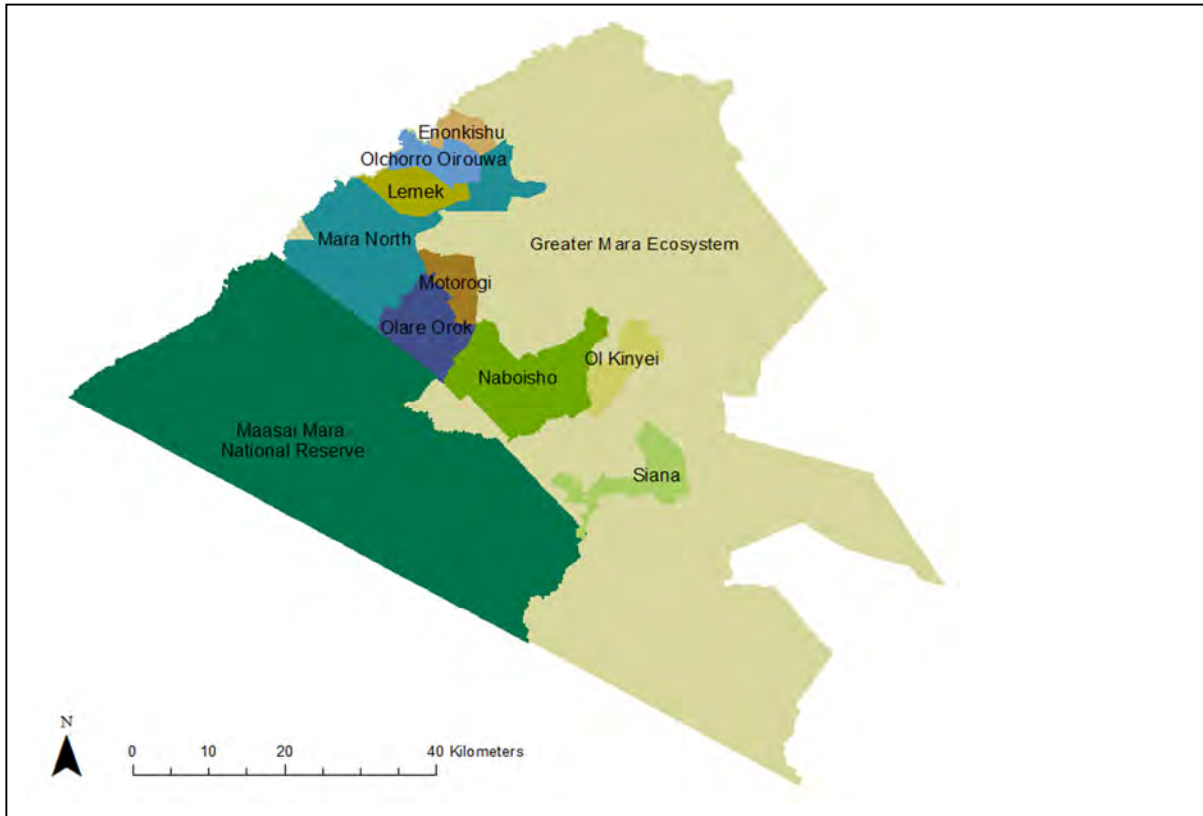


Figure 1. Maasai Mara National Reserve (MMNR) and established conservancies in the Mara ecosystem, Kenya



Over the next two years, research on the demographics of key wild ungulate species within the different conservancies will be carried out to assess the impacts of different controlled grazing plans upon the vegetation and wildlife. This research

will enable us to identify changes that occur in response to these varying management strategies and therefore produce outputs that can assist in the successful management of the GME and its conservation areas. It will also allow for the

development of integrated grazing plans that will benefit both wildlife and livestock to reduce grazing pressure on areas outside protected areas in the GME.

The development of bespoke grazing plans would also allow for the careful calculation of wildlife and livestock carrying capacities in and outside conservancy areas. This will provide essential baseline information for policy makers, educators, and wildlife managers and develop a more widespread appreciation of conservancy conservation utility.

Overall, the three year study demonstrated that a short time for re-wilding and landscape recovery can be expected and that under the conservancy model,

significant increases in both numbers and distribution of ungulates can be achieved. It ultimately authenticates wildlife conservancies as a sustainable wildlife conservation model that has the potential to contribute significantly to reversing the declines in wildlife populations experienced in the GME over the last 40 years, particularly if the conservancy network were to be extended and careful consideration given to where new conservancies are to be situated. The study however recognizes that additional research needs to be undertaken to identify the best conservancy model that will incorporate livestock grazing allowances and promote ecosystem recovery.



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REVIEW OF THE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN BOTSWANA

S.K.K. Kaunda

Abstract

The Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) has been at the forefront of Community-based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) activities in Botswana since its formation in 1982. KCS intensified its reach more profusely during the 1990s, and has consolidated its community involvement since 2007 when it became the Secretariat of the National CBNRM Forum. KCS has facilitated and coordinated a series of CBNRM consultative fora with stakeholders across Botswana and the Southern African sub-region, culminating in various national and regional CBNRM outputs. The process resulted in a consolidation of CBNRM experiences, successes, and challenges that would help mould CBNRM best practices well into the future of community-mediated conservation within Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), which in Botswana serve the purpose of conservancies. The paper discusses four thematic areas of (i) capacity and governance, (ii) policy and legislation, (iii) institutional frameworks, and (iv) generating and managing benefits, which have been nominated by the National CBNRM Forum for specific attention to reposition and deliver Botswana's CBNRM into the future. Furthermore, the roles played by WMAs as nominated hotspots of CBNRM activities, while providing migratory and dispersal respites for wildlife and buffering protected areas from adverse anthropogenic activities - are further explored and discussed.

Introduction

Striving for access to limited essential resources underlies almost all wildlife (Doncaster, 2001) and human (FitzGibbon, 1998) interactions. The broader environment provides four key essential resources for biotic sustenance and perpetuation; space (land), food, water, and reproductive opportunities (Doncaster, 2001). All forms of human and wildlife conflict revolve around calibrating relative access to any, or a combination, of these essential natural resources (Mace, 2000; Macdonald & Johnson, 2015). For rural human communities, providing resource user rights and ownership is central to resolving much of these natural resource access and extraction conflicts. For wildlife, providing connectivity to key seasonal resources is critical for sustainable conservation (Williamson, 2002; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010). This essentially calls for a careful weighting and reconciliation of the relative requirements of people and wildlife for mutual benefit, conflict mitigation, or even conflict avoidance.

In Botswana, land and natural resources are managed and administered by the State. Although Botswana public policy claims State ownership of all

wildlife (Martin, 2008), the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act of 1992 and subsequent amendments, are ominously silent on ownership of wild animals, but quite prescriptive on land ownership (MEWT, 1992). Under Roman-Dutch law, to which Botswana subscribes, the legal status of wildlife is similar to that in other southern African countries, in that free-ranging wildlife has the legal status of *res nullius*, i.e. it is owned by nobody (Van der Merwe & Rabie, 1976; Cirelli, 2002; Martin, 2008). This includes wildlife in the National Parks and Game Reserves, as well as protected species. This ambiguous system of wildlife ownership in Botswana and some other countries in the region (Cirelli, 2002; Martin, 2008) is a colonial artefact that potentially contributed to some reported declines in wildlife population sizes in and outside protected areas in the past (Crowe, 1995; Williamson, 2002) and probably less so of recent (Chase, 2011; DWNP, 2012; 2014), wherever it has been applied (Van der Merwe & Rabie, 1976; Cirelli, 2002; Martin, 2008). Some proportion of the reported wildlife population declines could be attributed to Government attempting to exercise sole ownership of wildlife resources, a situation which

has been touted by some experts to run contrary to natural justice (Parker, 1993; Martin, 2008). Without fully meeting the overhead costs of maintaining protected areas, and by simultaneously removing significant community incentives for landholders to conserve wildlife, it is conceivable that precursors for further wildlife declines had technically been laid out. The frantic response of the State machinery to strongly enforce its ownership and husbandry of wildlife outside protected areas is a clear example of the adage that good policy, legislation, and management must be well-informed and workable (Kaunda, 2000; Kaunda, 2015). Taking into account the experience gained from elsewhere in the region (Jones, 2007), Botswana needs to usher in increasing recognition to communal land users who significantly bear the brunt of living with, or being adjacent to, wildlife populations (Mordi, 1991; Mbaiwa, 2011). Botswana's resource ownership system should facilitate community ownership and adaptive co-management of wildlife which supports natural wildlife genetics, behaviour, demographics (Kaunda, 2009a), habitat heterogeneity, and ecosystem connectivity and functionality (Doncaster, 2001; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010). It was therefore strategically incisive that Government, through community-based natural resources management (CBNRM) initiatives, undertook to facilitate attempts for landholder communities to assume some semblance of resource ownership and derive benefits from their ancestral lands (MEWT, 2007).



Photo: Stephen Ham

CBNRM is a complementary and participatory approach to sustainable biodiversity conservation, according communal landholders access rights to their corresponding land and its various natural resources, notably wildlife and veldt resources

(SASUSG, 1996; Arntzen *et al.* 2003; Mbaiwa, 2011). CBNRM has been practised in one form or another in Botswana for over two decades (Barnes, 2001; Mbaiwa, 2015). While Botswana does not have a form of land use referred to as conservancies, its elaborate CBNRM program outlay through designated Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) adjoining protected areas, and respective Community Based Organisations (CBO's; Figure 1), satisfies the role that conservancies play in other countries. CBNRM enables communities to conserve natural resources and derive benefits from them. Although the contribution of CBNRM towards providing solutions to some development challenges at community level and beyond are widely recognized in Botswana (Barnes, 2001; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2011; 2015) and elsewhere (Jones, 2004; 2007), concerns have been raised by stakeholders and observers about CBNRM implementation in Botswana. The program, initiated primarily as a community benefit scheme coupled to deliver natural resource conservation in the rural landscape (SASUSG, 1996; Barnes, 2001; MEWT, 2007), has experienced numerous implementation challenges, especially with respect to administration and governance of the CBO's that manage the resources in trust for the community and Government. This is more so because the dynamics of power and personal relationships are features of human nature which are unlikely to alter simply as a default outcome of a formal policy variation (Kaunda, 2015). Community conservation is no panacea for resolving intra-communal differentiation or conflict (Martin, 2008). We should be mindful that raising economic stakes or creating new modes of access to resources, may at times exacerbate such tensions. The same can be said of virtually all other forms of local economic development and benefit initiatives. Similar to conservancies elsewhere (Jones, 2004; 2007), CBNRM in Botswana faces challenges pertaining to capacity, governance, and economic sustainability that require moderation and repackaging (Mbaiwa, 2013). Given that CBNRM in Botswana is at the crossroads attributed to the announcement (SOTNA, 2010) and execution of the hunting ban in 2014 (Mbaiwa, 2015b), strategic institutional and adaptive management decisions have to be undertaken for CBNRM initiatives to survive under a non-consumptive tourism environment.

To help drive CBNRM transformation and its attendant future reach, the Botswana CBNRM Forum instituted a review of Botswana's CBNRM Policy of 2007. The process was initiated with the express objective of identifying critical gaps and inefficiencies of CBNRM in Botswana. The exercise then informed a comprehensive review of the policy, specifically to (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012); a) identify, through a facilitated process, the key issues that if not resolved, would jeopardize the success of CBNRM in Botswana, and, b) provide direct and decisive recommendations to address CBNRM Policy implementation issues in Botswana, and pave the way for a more effective CBNRM program. The present paper represents the landscape of issues discussed in the consultative workshops and outlines the recommended actions needed to allow CBNRM in Botswana to recover, flourish, benefit resident communities, and subsequently engender wildlife and broader biodiversity conservation.

Overview of CBNRM in Botswana

CBNRM is an incentive-based approach to conservation that rests on the recognition that local communities must actively participate in the management of natural resources and derive improved livelihoods from them in order to value and conserve them (SASUSG, 1996; Barnes, 2001; MEWT, 2007; Mbaiwa, 2015a, b); it involves community mobilization and organization, institutional development, comprehensive training, enterprise development, and monitoring of the natural resource base. CBNRM is based on three foundational concepts (Mbaiwa, 2013; 2015b):

- a. **Economic value:** a resource such as wildlife must have a specific value that can be tapped by the community or land owner;
- b. **Devolution:** it is necessary to devolve management decisions from the government to local communities and land users to create positive conditions for sustainable wildlife management; and
- c. **Collective proprietorship:** a group of people who hold joint user rights over resources are able to manage the resources according to their own rules and strategies.

CBNRM was first introduced in Botswana to address and promote wildlife conservation (MEWT, 2007; Mbaiwa, 2011; MEWT, 2013; Mbaiwa, 2015b). It

emerged as a realization that Central Government faced challenges of declining wildlife population sizes around the country (Crowe, 1995; Williamson, 2002), coupled with increasingly adverse human perceptions against 'State owned' wildlife (Mordi, 1991; Mbaiwa, 2011). To curb these declines and address negative public attitudes towards wildlife (Mordi, 1991), a nationwide land use planning exercise was embarked upon in the mid-1970's, which resulted in the designation of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's; MEWT, 1986; MEWT, 1992) reserved for wildlife dispersal and migration, and to further act as "buffer zones" around protected areas. Realizing the important role communities play in wildlife conservation, some of the WMA's were assigned to respective communities to manage on behalf of the government. Furthermore, some land outside protected areas was also demarcated into Controlled Hunting Area (CHAs), with specific hunting quotas allocated to respective landholder communities (Mbaiwa, 2011).

The implementation of CBNRM in Botswana was driven initially by the USAID-funded Natural Resources Management Programme (NRMP; Jones 2007). The program helped develop some of the policy approaches and CBNRM guidelines, and was instrumental in developing management plans for the community-managed WMAs, and piloted CBNRM activities with local communities (Rozemeijer, 2003). The NRMP, executed during 1989-1999, and based in the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), tended to dominate CBNRM in Botswana, partly because there were few local NGOs with the resources and capacity to assist local communities (Artzen *et. al.*, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2013). From this, the first formal CBNRM trust or CBO was formed in 1993 in Chobe, Northern Botswana, affording landholder communities the opportunities to sustainably utilize extant natural resources within their immediate environment to generate funds and other positive benefits. While some implementation hurdles were experienced, these formative community trusts provided testimony of how the CBNRM programme could be successful (Mbaiwa, 2011, 2013). In subsequent years, the number of organizations involved in CBNRM increased (Mbaiwa, 2013) and the National CBNRM Forum provided coordination and direction (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2010; 2012a, b. The Botswana Community Based Organisation Network

(BOCOBONET) provided an umbrella body for community organizations involved in CBNRM (Arntzen *et al.* 2003).

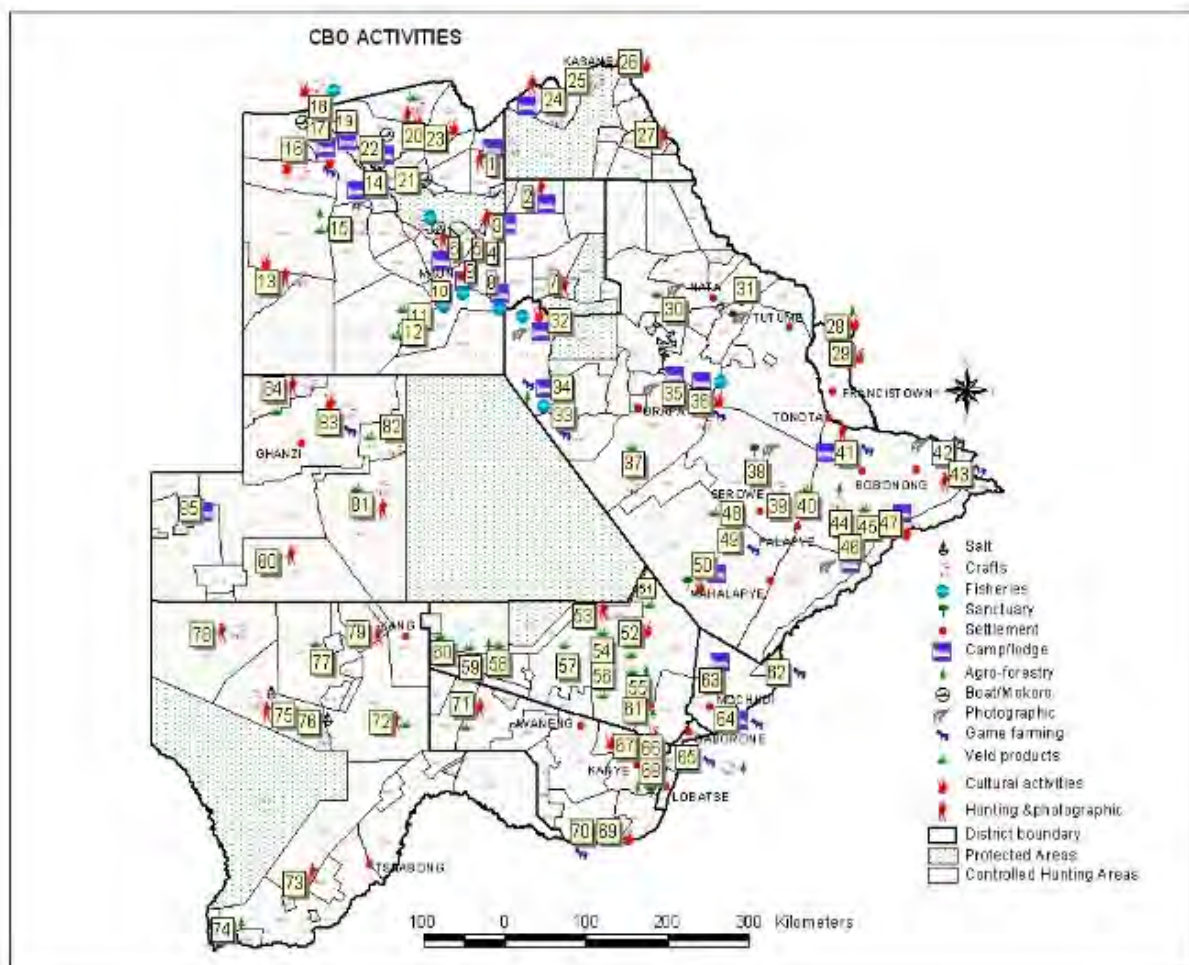
However, in the past few years, donor support for Botswana has decreased considerably (Mbaiwa, 2013), local NGOs do not have strong funding bases, and government has not adequately filled the gap created by donors (Rozemeijer, 2003). As a result, the institutional support base for CBNRM is relatively weak, yet field experience in Botswana has shown that in order for communities to develop strong and effective resource management institutions, they need considerable support and facilitation over an extended period of time (Rozemeijer & Van der Jagt, 2000a, b; Rozenmeijer, 2003).

Diversity and spatial spread of CBO activities in Botswana (KCS & National CBNRM Forum, 2012)

Implementation has previously tended to focus on mobilizing local communities to form trusts so that they could gain quotas from DWNP and enter into Joint-Venture Partnerships (JVPs) for trophy hunting

or photographic tourism with the private sector (Mbaiwa, 2015b). Once the Trust was formed, most external support focused on assisting the Trust to secure a joint venture agreement. Only KCS, IUCN, WWF, and a few other NGOs had the capacity to provide longer-term facilitation that supports broad-based community capacity development and institution building (Mbaiwa, 2011; KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012a, b. Arntzen *et al.* (2003) reported that the withdrawal of external donor-funded support from trusts that were not yet mature enough to sustain themselves caused considerable problems in these trusts. Although the main focus of CBNRM implementation was originally on wildlife, a number of trusts subsequently emerged to exploit alternative natural resources such as veld products.

After almost ten years of support to CBNRM in Botswana from donors such as USAID during the 1990s (Artzen *et al.* 2003; Mbaiwa, 2015b), the Government of Botswana finally passed the CBNRM Policy in 2007 to formalize and support the CBNRM programme in the country. The policy was developed with input from the National CBNRM Forum and



other stakeholders. Through the CBNRM Policy, Botswana has taken a firm stand to devolve the management and use of natural resources to local communities (MEWT, 2007), and through issuance of hunting quotas, the policy considerably raised the value of WMAs in the past decade, mainly through rentals to private sector companies for consumptive and non-consumptive tourism (Mbaiwa, 2011). The Policy also facilitated stronger natural resources governance at the community level, with over 105 registered CBOs (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2011; 2013; Figure 1.)

While there have been strides from CBNRM as a beneficial and viable model for natural resource conservation and community development (Barnes, 2001; Mbaiwa, 2011), almost ten years after Parliament passed the CBNRM Policy, CBNRM in Botswana still faces several key challenges that threaten the success of the program (KCS & CBNRM forum, 2012a, b; Mbaiwa, 2013; 2015b). Some of the main challenges and potential remedies are presented and discussed hereunder for consideration by other African wildlife conservation stakeholders.



Key Challenges in CBNRM

The Government of Botswana has made great strides in the development and implementation of various policies and legislation aimed at developing and regulating the use of its natural resources (MEWT 1986; 1992; 2007; 2013; Martin, 2008; Mbaiwa, 2011). These legal instruments ensure that there is sustainable use of natural resources, protection of the environment, and guarantees the well-being of communities (Barnes 2001). However, challenges exist which hinder the efficient and effective implementation of such legislation and policies to fully achieve the intended objectives. There are deficiencies in the existing legislative and policy framework with regards to resource use,

environmental management, and biodiversity conservation:

- a. There is non-harmonization of the provisions of the various pieces of legislation and policies. Several legislative and policy provisions often overlap, and in some cases there are divergences in policy objectives and/or provisions dealing with the same sector. Consequently, confusion arises in the enforcement of such legislation and policies.
- b. There is inadequate or deficient human capital in the departments vested with administering the various policies and legislation; and
- c. There is a multiplicity of departments with responsibilities for administering the various policies and legislation, with very minimal coordination of their different activities and efforts. There is need for an appropriate institutional framework with adequate coordination mechanisms to ensure that the CBNRM programme is managed properly and sustainably.

Botswana's CBNRM programme could significantly support rural development strategies, help protect wildlife dispersal areas and link isolated protected areas. It has the potential to contribute collectively to poverty eradication, community development, sustainable natural resource management, and local-scale governance. Four thematic areas have been identified by the National CBNRM Forum for immediate attention, if CBNRM is to succeed (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012a, b): a) Capacity and Governance, b) Policy and Legislation, c) Institutional Framework, and d) Generating and Managing Benefits.

It is expected that addressing these issues would provide an enabling environment in which CBNRM could succeed and flourish. However, if no action is taken timeously, the ensuing damage would reverse the gains so far realised through CBNRM.

Capacity Building and Governance

Capacity development has been identified as a central problem facing CBNRM in Botswana, with two main components influencing the current situation (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012a, b):

- a. Members of community trusts have limited capacity to manage the resources entrusted to them, resulting in poor administration, misuse of funds generated, and poor resource management; and
 - b. The broader community lacks understanding and capacity that would enable them to actively engage the trust leadership over the (mis)management of funds and natural resources.
 - c. Often, it is expected that community members would be able to manage the community trusts and administer access to resources they have been entrusted with, based on a set of guidelines and procedures (Barnes, 2001; Arntzen *et al.*, 2003; MEWT, 2007). This expectation has been found wanting during the formative stages of CBNRM in Botswana, and actually prompted the USAID NRMP to support communities with significant resources for building capacity, and realized significant CBNRM outcomes (Arntzen *et al.*, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2013). Subsequent projects lacking in capacity enhancement have faced major challenges in administration of the trusts and the funds generated thereby (Mbaiwa, 2011; 2015b). It was with this realization that a deliberate commitment was designed to support and improve the governance and management capacity of communities for the future development and sustainability of CBNRM in Botswana in the following key areas (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012):
 - I. **Information and awareness:** Communities lack a clear understanding of the potential benefits that can be derived from CBNRM and consequently lost interest in the program, leaving the CBOs to their own machinations. Efforts need to be made to significantly increase awareness amongst communities that have been provided with access rights to land and natural resources. Awareness-raising activities need to inform communities of the benefits that could be accrued from local resources, explain the responsibilities associated with the program and the procedures that need to be followed, to enable well-governed and sustainable trusts that benefit the entire community.
 - II. **Responsibilities and authority:** Communities engaged in CBNRM need to be provided with a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and power and authority dynamics associated with the establishment and management of a community trust. Such understanding would be supported through stakeholder analyses within each community so that community interests can be integrated into program management.
 - III. **Business management and planning:** A key issue is the lack of basic business management acumen within many community trusts. Training is required and should include the day-to-day management of the trust as a business. Empowerment with key business skills, such as book-keeping, records management, accounting, administration, resource management, and in some cases, communication and conflict management, are critical for the successful operation of CBOs.
 - IV. **Accountability and transparency of governance:** Another weakness of existing CBOs is the lack of good governance associated with community trusts. The communities and CBOs need training on the processes of decision-making, management of funds, and community consultation. Furthermore, communities need to understand the processes of CBNRM well enough to be able to hold the custodians of the community trust funds accountable for their decisions and actions. Such accountability should be closely coupled with transparency so that community members can access relevant records and information to be able to engage the trust leadership on good governance practice. Such information may include audited financial statements, minutes of meetings, and other records that would support informed decision making.
- There is optimism within the CBNRM fraternity that addressing the foregoing weaknesses would realize improved governance and management of the CBOs and begin to restore the faith and interest of communities in CBNRM (KCS & CBNRM, 2012a, b). With these measures absent, CBOs would be left at the mercy and whims of a few self-serving individuals bent on marginalizing the rest of the community, and thus defeat the object and practical reach of CBNRM in Botswana.

Policy and Legislation

Since Botswana's CBNRM Policy was passed by Parliament in 2007, the document has not been adequately translated into action. This comes as little surprise since policy interpretation, implementation, and monitoring has been a persistent challenge even to established government departments and agencies in Botswana (Kaunda, 2000; 2015) and elsewhere (Jones, 2002). It would therefore be farfetched and ill-advised to expect rural communities to better translate government policy detail into practice without the requisite capacity-building mechanisms. The National CBNRM Forum has identified some current gaps in the institutional landscape in Botswana that are hindering the effective implementation of CBNRM across communities (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012):

- a. **Penalties:** A critical weakness of CBNRM in Botswana presently, is the lack of specific penalties that can be imposed on those that do not conform to the basic procedures and regulations, notably the misuse of funds. Without punitive recourse, maladministration will continue unchecked, with little hope of recovery or redemption. Currently, the only course of action at the disposal of Government is to withhold resource extraction quotas, but this has not always been effective, as quotas have been reissued in the past, regardless of the status of the CBO (Arntzen, *et al.*, 2003; Mbaiwa, 2011)
- b. **Need for CBNRM legislation:** To provide a mechanism for recourse if a CBO does not conform to set procedures and standards, there is need for a CBNRM Act to support the development and implementation of CBNRM in Botswana. Unlike a policy document, the CBNRM ACT would provide CBOs with a legislative framework within which to operate, while satisfying regulatory requirements and also providing clarity on standards and accountability. In addition, legislation would provide concerned communities and Government with protocols to pursue grievances, should these arise. A CBNRM Act should not necessarily be an extensive piece of legislation: it could reference related acts, such as the Wildlife and National Parks Act (MEWT, 1992) the Environmental Assessment Act (MEWT, 2011), etc. However, most importantly, it should provide standards and requirements for formation and moderated operation of CBOs. With a CBNRM Act in place, there would be clarity regarding the consequences for CBOs and individuals that do not adhere to the general rules of operation. Such an Act would provide the umbrella ministry with the means to enforce the agreement between Government and the CBO. Furthermore, it would provide clarity on when other ministries and respective legislation could be roped in.
- c. **Standardized constitution:** The Constitutions of all the CBNRM trusts in Botswana require a level of standardization to support governance, transparency and implementation of the 2007 CBNRM Policy, and by extension, the proposed CBNRM Act. These standards should be designed to support the Act by stipulating basic operational procedures and requirements such as annual financial auditing, annual general meetings, etc. In turn, the Act should include a standardized constitution (or minimum standard requirements) as prerequisites. It is important to note that a review of the constitutions of CBOs was conducted during 2010-2012 when some of the constitutions were revised.
- d. **Conditions on access rights:** Communities should not automatically be granted rights to natural resources in their areas, but access should be granted provided certain preconditions such as approval of management plans, demarcation of resource area boundaries, etc. - are met, and this should be stipulated in the Act.
- e. **Policy guidelines:** In addition to the 2007 CBNRM Policy, a set of guidelines is required to support implementation of the policy and the proposed Act. These guidelines would facilitate interpretation of the policy and ensure the development of appropriate action plans that meet the needs of communities and Government. It is also important to include a benefit distribution plan as a component of the regulations.
- f. **Regulatory requirements:** Beyond the Act, a set of regulations are needed to provide further

clarity for those CBOs which it governs. These regulations should also focus on natural resources under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism, to avoid conflicts with other line-ministries.

Since drafting and promulgation of an Act of Parliament can be a protracted process, a transitional plan has to be crafted to support CBNRM roll-out in the interim.

Institutional Framework

A critical examination of the institutions that run CBNRM in Botswana is required. By design, CBNRM management is based on a bottom-up approach, where decisions are made at community-level (Barnes, 2001; Mbaiwa, 2015b). However, there is need for guidance from a CBNRM association to support operations within a well-defined institutional framework. The Forum identified the following priority issues that require attention (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012a,b):

- a. **Formation of a community association:** A new CBNRM association should be formed that should represent the interests of CBOs and should resemble BOCOBONET in its composition, but should only serve the interests of CBNRM. This community association should be responsible for setting and ensuring that certain standards and codes of conduct are met by the participating CBOs.
- b. **Formation of Botswana Association of Civil Society Organisation:** Another association representing Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should be legally formed comprised of CSOs or NGOs that deal primarily with CBNRM-specific issues. It should be responsible, amongst other things, for any consultative studies that may be undertaken to establish the needs of communities. The membership of such an association would also need to be properly constituted. This is in particular reference to the role that Government would play in the proposed institutional framework. While there is a need for Government to focus efforts on regulatory activities, Government stakeholders have to date played a mediatory and advisory role in the CBNRM Forum. The Terms of Reference for this association would also need to be

clearly defined, specifically to avoid duplication of efforts. Paramount to the success of the working committee is that it operates from an assumption that funding will not always be available and should find alternative ways of sustaining itself. The name CBNRM Support Association for Botswana (CSABO) has been proposed for this governing entity.

The current institutional framework such as the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) barely enjoys unfettered appreciation from communities. It is therefore necessary that new 'vehicles' are used to transform and revitalise CBNRM in Botswana, leveraging the positive aspects achieved to date, and directly confronting issues that have wrought conflict and caused concern amongst communities. Furthermore, there is a need to review multi-village committees and their management structures to address ambiguities with respect to relative rights over resource use, and distribution of benefits to respective communities.

Generating and Managing Benefits

Community benefit is closely intertwined with community capacity (SASUSG, 1996; Barnes, 2001; Mbaiwa, 2011). In addition to issues of potential poor administration and governance, communities are not adequately exploiting existing resources. In response to the above concerns, the following interventions were identified to better manage and fully maximize benefits (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012):

- a. **Resource inventory:** All communities or CBOs need to inventory and monitor their resource base so that they know and understand the extant resources at their disposal and sustainably exploit them for the benefit of the community.
- b. **Benefit distribution:** Benefit distribution plans must be developed to clarify how the benefits obtained from natural resources will be distributed amongst the community members. These beneficiation plans should be reviewed at least every two years.
- c. **Market mechanisms:** Another area where problems have been experienced is the downstream end of the CBNRM Value Chain, where market mechanisms and technical details such as distribution networks and

product storage have not been adequately developed. Assistance is required to support communities to develop business plans that assess market potential and address other issues such as distribution, sales, and marketing. These issues are particularly related to product-oriented natural resource exploitation, notably, veld products.

- d. **Resource potential and community capacity assessment:** Central to the success of the CBOs is clarity in entrusted resource potential and the capacity of the community. Further opportunities may also arise that could allow for increased community participation. Resource potential and community capacity assessments could provide insights into how resources could be sustainably exploited to the benefit of the community. This includes diversification of sources of revenue beyond the common wildlife management and veld product paradigm, to sustainable exploitation of alternative resources such as river sand and other minerals. Furthermore, these assessments need to be iterative and adaptive, taking into account emergent opportunities and needs that may have developed as a result of previous natural resource development activities. For example, in eastern Botswana, Goo-Moremi Lodge has developed extended services with the community, where new services have emerged from the initial investment of lodge development. Gardening and laundry services are provided to the lodge by members of the community, adding value to the lodge, while generating jobs in the community and developing skills and entrepreneurial mind-sets.
- e. **Spatial linkages and value chain:** There is need for an assessment of the linkages between the local, national, and international level of CBNRM. Opportunities exist to exploit linkages between CBNRM activities and other rural initiatives aimed at livelihood upliftment. Attention should also be paid to linkages that transcend communities and engage with stakeholders at all levels. These include economic incentives for sustainable CBNRM including; contracts and management agreements between local groups, private sector, and government agencies. In particular,

CBNRM opportunities available within the Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) framework and other regional initiatives should be exploited to resoundingly benefit communities and biodiversity conservation.

Way Forward for CBNRM

CBNRM review in Botswana is long overdue (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012, a, b). Measures need to be taken to reconcile challenges and successes of the past, and address the inadequacies of the current CBNRM programme to yield tangible community benefit from natural resource conservation. While the proposals posited hereunder could be misinterpreted by some as overly ambitious, they are considered necessary to ensure the sustainability and growth of CBNRM in Botswana. The National CBNRM Forum proposed a two-pronged approach (KCS & CBNRM Forum 2012; Mbaiwa, 2013): a) Short Term: While the Act is being developed and promulgated, a new 'vehicle' (association) should be fuelled to deliver and develop capacity in the communities and address the management and governance issues that continue to challenge CBOs, b) Long Term: Initiate the development of a CBNRM Act to support CBNRM implementation and regulate CBOs.

Short Term Intervention: New 'Vehicle'/Association

Development of a CBNRM Act could take a significant period of time to realize. In the immediate future, the Forum proposes a program to revamp CBNRM, supported by a new 'vehicle' in the form of an over-arching CBNRM Association, tasked with the role of incubating and revitalizing CBOs across the country. The process is outlined hereunder (KCS & CBNRM Forum, 2012a, b):

- a. Successful trusts should be allowed to pursue normal operations;
- b. All other trusts should be incubated for a defined period, with the aim of establishing viable, business-oriented CBOs that have the capacity to sustainably manage the resources they have been granted access to, whilst espousing good governance acumen;
- c. The management of CBOs should be handed over to the new association, with support from

seconded staff from appropriate Government line-ministries;

- d. The association should be responsible for undertaking resource assessments in each community, developing a community capacity assessment to guide broad-based capacity development, enabling communities to participate directly in the CBO or as stakeholders, and to develop benefit distribution plans;
- e. Capacity developed should focus on business management and administration, institutional governance (accountability and transparency), fundraising, securing and representing the interests of the community in partnerships, management of natural resources at the disposal of the communities, and development planning;
- f. As skills are developed in the communities, management of the CBO should be transcribed across to the communities, based on tangible evidence of capacity transfer and absorption;
- g. During this incubation period, the roles and responsibilities of the TAC's should be reviewed to establish if the vehicle is indeed an appropriate instrument for CBO coordination;
- h. Sufficient time should be given for adequate and substantial training of the communities before reverting back to self-management. Lessons learned from the successful CBOs should be integrated into the capacity

development initiatives that support the incubation process.

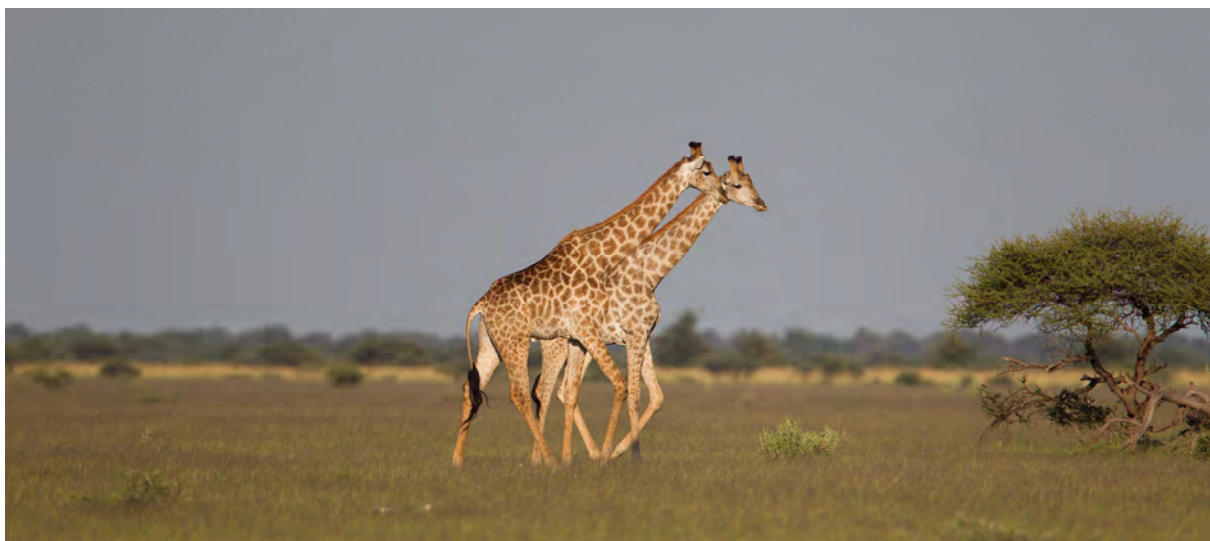
- i. Finally, while the successful CBOs should be allowed to continue operating normally, they should still be required to undertake the same adaptive assessment processes as the incubated CBOs. This would allow any latent weaknesses, leakages, and future vulnerabilities to be identified and rectified as early as possible, and allow lessons learned from successes and failures to be shared with other CBOs.

Long Term Intervention: CBNRM Act

The adoption of a CBNRM Act is seen as critical to ensuring the future relevance of the CBNRM program. It would provide legislative instruments for the Government of Botswana to regulate and administer CBOs and respective access rights in a way that would support development and build trust in communities and throughout the country. The Act should be developed in parallel with implementation guidelines, supported by a set of regulations to govern the operations of CBOs.

Wildlife management and ecosystem areas connectivity

In Botswana, WMAs (MEWT, 1992; 2013) serve the community-based natural resource management and conservation role offered by wildlife conservancies in other countries (Jones, 2004; 2007). Botswana has generously committed over 50% (NBSAP, 2009; Table 1) of its total land area for conservation



purposes, with approximately 18% (104,010 km²) of the total area reserved as areas (national parks and game reserves) protected from consumptive utilization, while approximately 33 % (130,534 km²) has been designated as WMAs (Figure 2), whose primary purpose is to accommodate natural resource based livelihood activities compatible with wildlife conservation. Within this land mass, Botswana continues to manage its wildlife under free-roaming conditions (MEWT, 1992; 2013), allowing wildlife access to a considerable proportion of the country's land areas, wherever possible. However, some habitats have been fragmented by infrastructural developments especially veterinary fences (Williamson 2002; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010) which has effectively created two disjointed wildlife systems that have come to be known as the Northern Wildlife System and the Southern Wildlife System (Crowe, 1995). WMAs form a buffer zone between national parks and game reserves on the one hand, and human settlements and related activities on the

other hand. Botswana's WMAs were also designed to provide wildlife corridors and dispersal areas that link isolated protected areas together (MEWT, 1992; 2013). WMAs are mostly located on Tribal Land, while protected areas are situated on State Land, with the exception of Moremi Game Reserve in the Okavango Delta (MEWT, 2013). However, wildlife mobility has decreased significantly due to physical and management barriers, in addition to the general expansion of anthropogenic activities (Crowe, 1995; Williamson, 2002; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010).

Given that most wildlife-based CBNRM activities in Botswana occur within WMAs adjoining national parks and game reserves as is the case for wildlife conservancies elsewhere, resource management should therefore be designed in a manner that promotes ecosystem connectivity and functionality

Table 1: Relative proportions of protected areas, WMA's and other conservation areas in Botswana (according to IUCN guidelines on protected areas; Botswana NBSAP, 2009)

Type of Area	Size (km ²)	% of Total Area	Legislative Ambit	*IUCN Level of Protection
National Parks	44, 420	8	Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act No 28 1992	Ib: No Hunting
Game Reserves	59, 590	10	Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act No 28 of 1992	Ib: No Hunting
Private Wildlife & Nature Reserves	Not known	1	No Act in place	No Hunting
Wildlife Management Areas (WMA)	75,160	24	Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act No 28 of 1992	V: Controlled Hunting
Forest Reserves	4,191	1	Forest Act 1968	II: Protection of trees
National Monuments	□100	□1	Monuments and Relics Act 2001	III: Botanical Monuments
World Heritage Sites	48 + Buffer zone 704	□1	Monuments and Relics Act 2001	World Heritage Site Listing Standards
Ramsar Sites	55,374	9.53	Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act No. 28 of 1992 Aquatic Weeds Control Act Cap:34:04	Ramsar Site Management Standards

* Key used for IUCN Level of Protection

Ia: Strict nature reserve: protected area managed mainly for science

Ib: Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

II: Ecosystem conservation and recreation (i.e. National Park)

III: Conservation of natural features (i.e. Natural Monument)

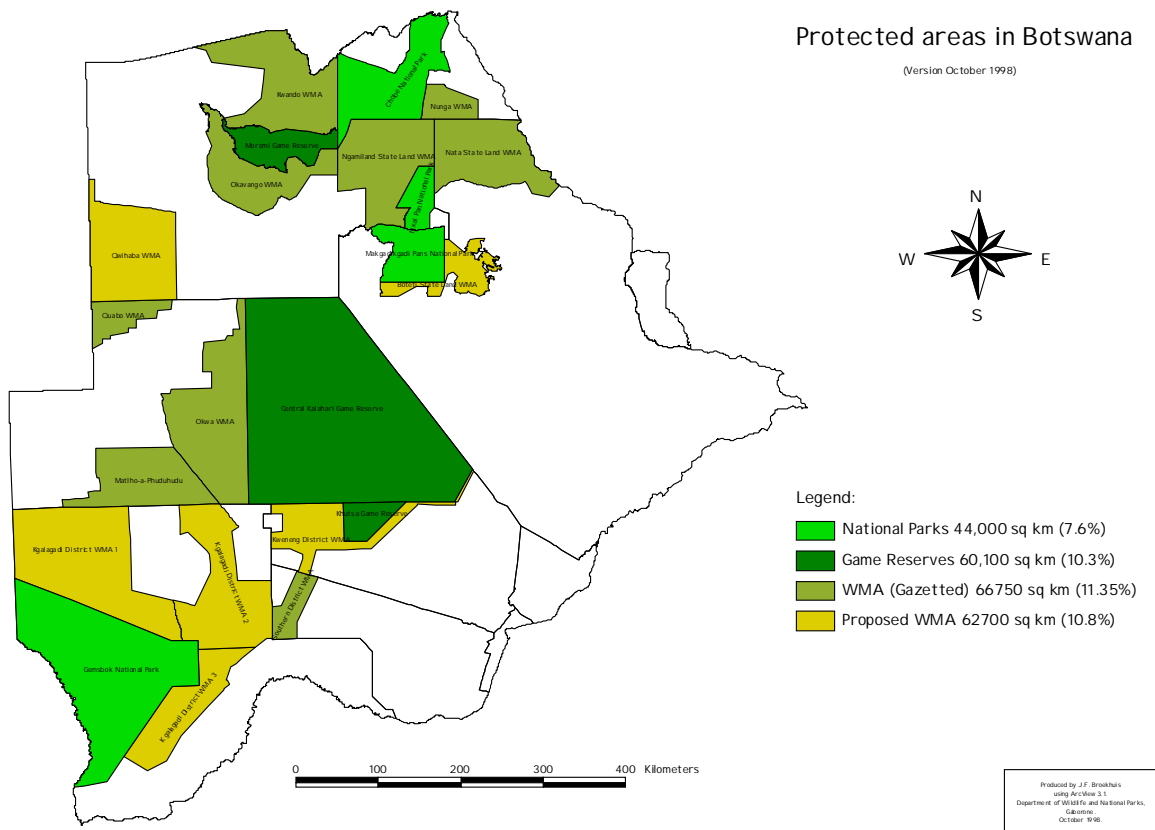
IV: Conservation through active management (i.e. Habitat/Species Management Area)

V: Landscape/seascape conservation and recreation (i.e. Protected Landscape/Seascape)

VI: Sustainable use of natural ecosystems (i.e. Managed Resource Protected Area)

Future CBNRM development in WMAs should therefore follow a path that: a) addresses the demands of local communities, b) protects, maintains and improves the biodiversity integrity of the area; c) ensures that the ecological systems are not adversely impacted by CBNRM activities; d) promotes the habitat connectivity through wildlife corridors as one of the key elements needed for broader biodiversity conservation, and e) provides for appropriate management structures that would ensure efficient and effective running of CBNRM activities within the area. Botswana is renowned as a preferred wildlife tourism destination, courtesy of its African megafauna and extensive scenic wilderness vistas (Mbaiwa, 2015a; NBSAP, 2009).

The country holds the largest population size and remaining natural range for African elephants in the world (Chase 2011; DWNP, 2012, 2014). Tourist attraction areas such as Okavango Delta, Chobe, Savute, Linyanti, Moremi, Makgadikgadi Pans, and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) feature strongly as large mammal diversity hotspots within the regional tourism portfolio (DWNP, 2012, 2014; KAZA, 2015a, b). Attempts to establish and develop migration routes and dispersal areas within Botswana, as well as TFCA's between Botswana and its neighboring states (KAZA, 2015a, b), has been a welcome and significant development for wildlife conservation and regional integration efforts.



Diversity of protected areas and WMA's of Botswana (DWNP, 1998)



Major wildlife migratory pathways between key seasonal habitats in the Northern Wildlife System and the Southern Wildlife System: CNP (Chobe National Park); MPGR (Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve; KTP (Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park); CKGR (Central Kalahari Game Reserve). Broken double headed arrows indicate disrupted migrations, while continuous double-headed arrows indicate extant migrations (Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010)

Before anthropogenic activities had increased and spread to levels where they interfered with wildlife migrations outside the conservation areas, migratory wildlife utilized its historical seasonal resources (Crowe, 1995; Williamson, 2002; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010). However, this has become increasingly difficult, and the effects of movement restrictions on wildlife abundance, behavior, and distribution, are becoming more evident (Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010). Although Botswana’s protected areas do not encompass both the functional wet and dry-season resources that wildlife historically migrated between, several wildlife migration routes and movement corridors have been suggested to facilitate interconnectedness between isolated protected areas (Crowe, 1995; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010; KAZA, 2015a, b; Figure 1 & Figure 2):

- a. Between Nxai Pan National Park and Makgadikgadi Pans National Park corridor
- b. Between Chobe and the Makgadikgadi-Nxai Pans National Park
- c. Between the Okavango Delta and Chobe National Park
- d. Between the Okavango Delta and Makgadikgadi-Nxai Pans National Park
- e. Between the Okavango Delta and CHA NG2 and CHA NG3
- f. The Western Okavango NG4 wildlife corridor
- g. The Eastern Okavango NG11 wildlife corridor
- h. The Kasane – Kazungula - Chobe River wildlife corridor

- i. Between the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR)

Botswana also shares natural resources with neighboring countries and some of the identified eco-regions, vegetation types, and habitats for wildlife extend across national boundaries (KAZA, 2015a, b; Figure 4). As such, regional collaboration and common management standards within the TFCA framework are therefore important for the long-term success of conservation programs. Botswana's network of WMAs conceived to facilitate habitat connectivity and functionality through internal wildlife migratory routes and corridors, has somewhat inspired TFCA initiatives in the region, which have received worldwide acclaim from both the conservation and tourism fraternities (NBSAP, 2009; KAZA, 2015a, b). This is largely due to a realization that conservation initiatives need not concentrate solely on species and ecosystems within protected areas at the national level, but also on the conservation and maintenance of large-scale ecological processes that extend beyond the state boundaries. By creating larger connected areas, TFCAs enable plasticity of wildlife behavioural patterns so that there is optimal utilization of the broader habitat heterogeneity in space and time (Doncaster, 2001; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010; Macdonald & Johnson, 2015). This allows wildlife to successfully respond to variable environmental insults, notably climate change induced. Between Botswana and its neighbouring states, TFCAs have been established to encompass the following critical wildlife dispersal areas (NBSAP, 2009; KAZA, 2015a, b);

a. Between Botswana and Zimbabwe:

- i. Between Kakulwane/Seloko Plains/Kazuma Forest Reserve, and Kazuma Pan National Park, Zimbabwe
- ii. Between Nxai Pan National Park through WMA's, and Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe

b. Between Botswana and Namibia:

- i. Between Okavango Delta, and Mamili National Park and Mudumu National Parks, Namibia
- ii. Between Chobe District and Salambala Conservancy, Namibia

- iii. Between Ngamiland and Khaudum National Park, Namibia.

c. Between Botswana and South Africa:

- i. Through the Botswana KTP component and South Africa's KTP component.

Large-scale natural barriers (e.g. extreme deserts, mountain ranges, extensive water bodies, etc.) and artificial barriers (e.g. sustained hunting, fences, infrastructure, etc.) contribute to habitat fragmentation and limit connectivity and can thus negatively impact wildlife abundance and distribution, threatening the long-term viability of species (Crowe, 1995; Williamson, 2002; Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010). Such barriers have been reported to compromise genetic exchange and alter behavior, population dynamics, community interactions, and ecosystem functionality (Kaunda, 2000; Kaunda, 2009a, b). For sustainable wildlife conservation, new innovative strategies are required to reconsolidate functional seasonal resources within reconfigured protected areas (Fynn & Bonyongo, 2010).

Way Forward for Wildlife Conservation and Management

Based on observations and experiences from northern Botswana and elsewhere, Fynn & Bonyongo (2010) converged on some optimistic and ambitious hypotheses for reconnecting key wildlife habitats in Southern Africa for sustainable conservation:

- i. Identify non-priority conservation areas, where there is limited possibility of restoring functionality, which could be de-proclaimed and exchanged for land in crucial corridors and dispersal areas in more functional conservation areas;
- ii. Local communities living in historical corridor areas that have not been gazetted as WMAs could be incentivized to convert their region to CBNRM areas where they would derive income from tourism and/or hunting. This has been successfully achieved in areas linking conservation areas in northern Botswana and is critical for the future of African wildlife conservation; and
- iii. Sedentary pastoralism in migratory corridors or seasonal resources should be avoided because it could have a negative impact on wildlife

populations. For example, grouping all the cattle in a region into fewer larger herds that track spatial and temporal variability of resources, as done by free-ranging migratory wildlife, could be beneficial for livestock production and rangeland condition.

Bonyongo & Fynn (2010)'s proposals notwithstanding, current and future wildlife management practice and interventions in Botswana seeking to address variable natural and anthropogenic pressures on wildlife populations and broader biodiversity, require enlightened and holistic approaches within the adaptive management framework. The fast changing landscape of wildlife management regimes in Botswana require wildlife biologists and managers to be proactive and devise research agendas and projects that capitalize on the experimentation opportunities created by Government policy variations and pronouncements. There is a litany of management intervention that lends itself to dedicated ecological investigations, notably, "before" and "after" inventory and monitoring investigations, as well as the relative impact of management interventions on biodiversity conservation. For Botswana, some of the topical and potentially controversial interventions include; a) conversion from safari hunting, through selective hunting, to blanket hunting bans; b) conversion from natural water access, through artificial water provision, to closure of artificial waterpoints; c) conversion from natural fire regimes, through active fire management, to fire suppression; c) conversion from State management, through CBNRM co-management, to tourism business; d) conversion from livestock farming, through integrated farming, to wildlife protection; e) conversion from no fences, through wildlife-friendly fencing, to wildlife-proof fencing; f) conversion from wildlife-human segregation, through co-existence, to cohabitation; g) conversion from indifference, through diplomacy, anti-poaching policing, and "shoot-to-kill policy"; h) conversion from sale of ivory stockpiles, through ivory banning, to ivory burning; and i) conversion from open season resource extraction, through restricted harvesting, to no harvesting. Individually, and collectively, these interventions can have a bearing on ecosystem connectivity, functional heterogeneity, and the persistence of wildlife species. Dedicated commitment to monitoring the relative impact of such interventions for protected areas, wildlife management areas, or conservancies,

across levels of biological organization would go a long way in subsequently aiding informed biodiversity management and conservation.

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THE CASE OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS IN TANZANIA

H. Sosovele & A.R. Kajuni

Abstract

The wildlife management areas (WMA) concept started with the promulgation of the Wildlife Policy of Tanzania (WPT 1998, revised in 2007) which, for the first time, officially adopted community participation in wildlife conservation as government policy. WMAs are village land areas set aside by communities for the purposes of engaging in wildlife management and are located close to major wildlife protected areas (PAs) as a way for communities to gain economically from managing natural resources sustainably. The establishment of WMAs follows a series of steps as provided for in the WMAs regulations starting from the initial community mobilization and sensitization, formation of a Community Based Organization (CBO) up to Authorized Association (AA) and WMA formation. The WMA process has resulted in a number of achievements, including expansive areas put under conservation; stronger conservation efforts through anti-poaching patrols by Village Game Scouts (VGS); providing additional source of local community livelihoods; and enhanced governance capacity for the AAs. Up to December 2014 twenty one (21) WMAs were gazetted adding 36,238 square kilometers of land devoted to wildlife conservation; these WMAs rely on donor funding and none can currently be considered financially self-sustaining.

Wildlife numbers, along with ecosystem health and population dynamics, are key indicators of success in WMAs. However, with few exceptions, WMAs have not systematically gathered sufficient, standardized wildlife census data, but anecdotal evidence shows an increase in the diversity of wildlife encounters/sightings. Recently WMAs have adopted a management-oriented monitoring system (MOMS) as an important management tool adapted from the Namibian system which has been used for over a decade with local community conservancies.

From 2010 to 2014 WMAs earned over US\$ 5 million through hunting concessions and photographic tourism by private sector investments; 100% of this return reached communities. We demonstrate that the tangible benefits accrued by WMAs have in turn incentivized local communities to look at wildlife and other natural resources as source of wealth. This has resulted in very active participation in resource protection through the VGS engagement in day to day patrols and in arresting some illegal utilization (poaching) of natural resources. The participation of VGSs in WMAs has created an additional layer of protection around PAs. However, issues of long term support have to be addressed if the WMA concept is to address interrelated environmental, resource use and socio-economic problems, to contribute to poverty reduction.

Introduction

The WMA concept started with the promulgation of the Wildlife Policy of Tanzania (WPT 1998 revised in 2007) where, for the first time in the history of wildlife conservation (starting with the gazettement of Selous Game Reserve in 1896), the support of community based wildlife conservation was officially adopted as government policy. Prior to 1998, community based conservation (CBC) had

been implemented as pilot programs through such projects as the Selous Conservation Program (SCP), through German Technical Cooperation; the Serengeti Regional Conservation Project (SRCP), through NORAD funding; and, Tanzania National Parks' (TANAPA) own Community Conservation Services (CCS – Ujirani Mwema). These were *ad hoc* reactions to habitat encroachment and increased

poaching of wildlife problems facing both the Wildlife Division as well as TANAPA from the late 1970s, and implemented in the absence of a comprehensive community based wildlife conservation policy.

The Wildlife Policy of Tanzania (WPT) 1998 marked an important milestone and culminated in the development of WMA Regulations in 2002, and the launch of WMA implementation in 2003 as a pilot in 16 WMAs for 44 months. This period offered an important opportunity for learning/reviews to identify problems and issues and develop home grown solutions to management problems associated with governance, conservation, financial management and rural economic development using the wildlife management platform. However, an assessment and evaluation of WMAs by the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA) of University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), established that WMAs were viable economic and conservation enterprises for wildlife resources outside of PAs but also highlighted some shortcomings of the approach including inadequate local capacity; poor governance in natural resources management; and, inadequate benefit sharing mechanisms (IRA, 2007). Results of the piloting phase helped to revise the WMA Regulations of 2002. These Regulations were revised in 2012 following the approval of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 2009.

The main objectives of the WMA approach were to:

- i. increase the participation of local communities in the management of wildlife resources;
- ii. enable local communities to derive benefits from wildlife resources; and,
- iii. enhance the conservation of wildlife resources.

Wildlife numbers, along with ecosystem health, population dynamics, and improvement of local community livelihoods – are all key indicators of success in WMAs. By December 2014, twenty one WMAs had been gazetted and granted user rights by the Director of Wildlife Division, adding 36,238 square kilometers of land devoted to wildlife conservation (AAC, 2014). Additional wildlife conservation lands, provided by WMAs, has created buffer areas protecting core protected areas from direct incursions; significantly increasing dispersal zones, and securing corridors in and around Tanzania’s protected area network. Anecdotal

evidence suggests that WMA implementation has successfully promoted community awareness of the value of conservation - resulting in increased positive attitudes towards wildlife conservation. Recently a WMA Monitoring system, ‘MOMS’, has been introduced to the WMA system. Through MOMS, local communities systematically collect, document, store, review and use quantitative and qualitative data to make informed decisions about management of WMAs. The system, which builds on Namibia’s monitoring system, is grounded in the principles of communities deciding: what/why/whom/when to monitor; owning the data and results; and, carrying out their own analyses and reporting procedures. Currently the WMA monitoring system is being piloted in seven WMAs: namely Ngarambe Tapika, Mbarang’andu, Nalika, Enduimet, Burunge, Ikona, and Makao.

Overview of WMAs Establishment Process

The WMA Regulations of 2002 were revised in 2005 and again in 2012 to comply with the new Wildlife Act # 5 of 2009. The Act provides guiding steps in the establishment of WMAs as shown in Figure 1 below:

Steps in establishing a Wildlife Management Area (MNRT Reference Manual on WMAs)	
7	The Minister declares a designated WMA, issues a certificate of Authorization and Publishes the AA in the gazette.
6	The Director of Wildlife forwards the application with recommendations to the Minister.
5	The Director of Wildlife gathers information on CBO applying to become an AA and approves or rejects the proposed WMA.
4	The CBO submits an application to the Director of Wildlife.
3	Villagers through the Village Assembly/ies form a CBO TO Manage a WMA.
2	The village council recommends to the village assembly, an area fit to be designated as a WMA.
1	Villagers sensitized on the importance and cost benefits of conserving wildlife resources, their rights and benefits. They are also informed about procedures for designating an area to be a WMA.

The CBO, in partnership with implementing partners (NGOs), develops a Resource Management Zone Plan (RMZP) for the area set aside for establishment of a WMA, based on its own by-laws and guided by the WMA Regulations. It then applies to the Director

of Wildlife Division (WD) for authorization and designation of a WMA. The Director of Wildlife (DW) reviews the application and submits it to the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) for declaration of WMA and Authorized Association (AA). After publication of a declaration order, DW grants a Wildlife Resources User Right to the AA, which allows it to manage the WMA and derive economic benefits from wildlife in the WMA. The AA may then enter into business agreements with private sector agents, such as safari hunting outfitters and wildlife viewing tourism companies, to generate revenue. The establishment process requires significant financial resources and technical capacities that are not readily available in the villages. Consequently, from program inception in 2003 to date, different donors have provided substantial funding for the realization of WMA processes. For example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), awarded grants totaling approximately US\$ 27 million specifically to support the WMA process (WWF, 2014). By the end of December 2014, twenty one WMAs were gazetted, creating an additional 36,238 square kilometers of land devoted to wildlife conservation (Figure 1).

Progress and Achievements of WMAs Policy

The evolution of the WMA approach is based on the Wildlife Policy of Tanzania (the WPT 1998 as revised in 2007) which underscores the importance of community participation in management of wildlife resources and for communities to accrue benefits from sustainable utilization of these resources. The WPT set forth the policy framework for the establishment of the WMAs on village lands to foster local community participation, and ownership and benefit-sharing in natural (wildlife) resource management. For the first time ever, rural communities (through their AAs) are allowed to enter into direct agreements with conservation business investors and profit from the sustainable use and management of wildlife and other resources on their lands. As a result of the well-devised enabling policy and legal frameworks in place, a total of twenty one WMAs have been gazetted and issued with user rights throughout the country, covering a total area of approximately 36,238km². This has been achieved through the facilitation of conservation NGOs which work with government to

act as “WMA Ombudsman.” However, to ensure sustainability this “ombudsman role” has now been transferred to the Authorized Association Consortium (AAC). The AAC is financially supported through WMA membership contributions and fundraising functions are held in addition. The AAC is a community owned civil society organization (CSO) established in 2010 and registered in 2012 as an apex body and platform that serves to articulate common positions and provide a voice for all member WMAs. The AAC functions are similar to NACSO in Namibia and NRT in Kenya, providing an umbrella organization that supports WMAs. It is through the AAC that member WMAs meet to discuss, plan and decide on matters of common interest, which are then communicated to stakeholders as well as advocacy and lobbying in favor of WMAs for any changes in policies, legislations and procedures that affect them negatively. It has now been identified in the Wildlife Regulations as an important intermediary organization to support and promote WMAs in Tanzania. In addition to providing a centralized advocacy function, an effective AAC will eventually provide a range of services to WMAs, such as helping to catalyze the development of a nationally-consistent VGS monitoring system, marketing community-based wildlife products, providing a central repository for information on WMAs, and developing synergies among WMAs. However, despite the achievements made, the approach to the establishment of the WMAs is not harmonized with other policies and legislation, such as the Land Acts, Forest Policy and Forest Act, Tourism Act, and the Local Government Act. The lack of policies and legislation harmonization has not optimized sustainable utilization of natural resources.

Economic Viability

The future for WMAs will be based on the ability to generate economic returns to rural communities above the cost of operating the WMAs and for wildlife to be a competitive economic form of land use at the local level. All these activities require financial resources to make sure that management of the WMA is based on integrating modern science with contemporary local knowledge as well as international best practices in community based wildlife management. The 21 registered WMAs comprise of 168 villages with a combined population

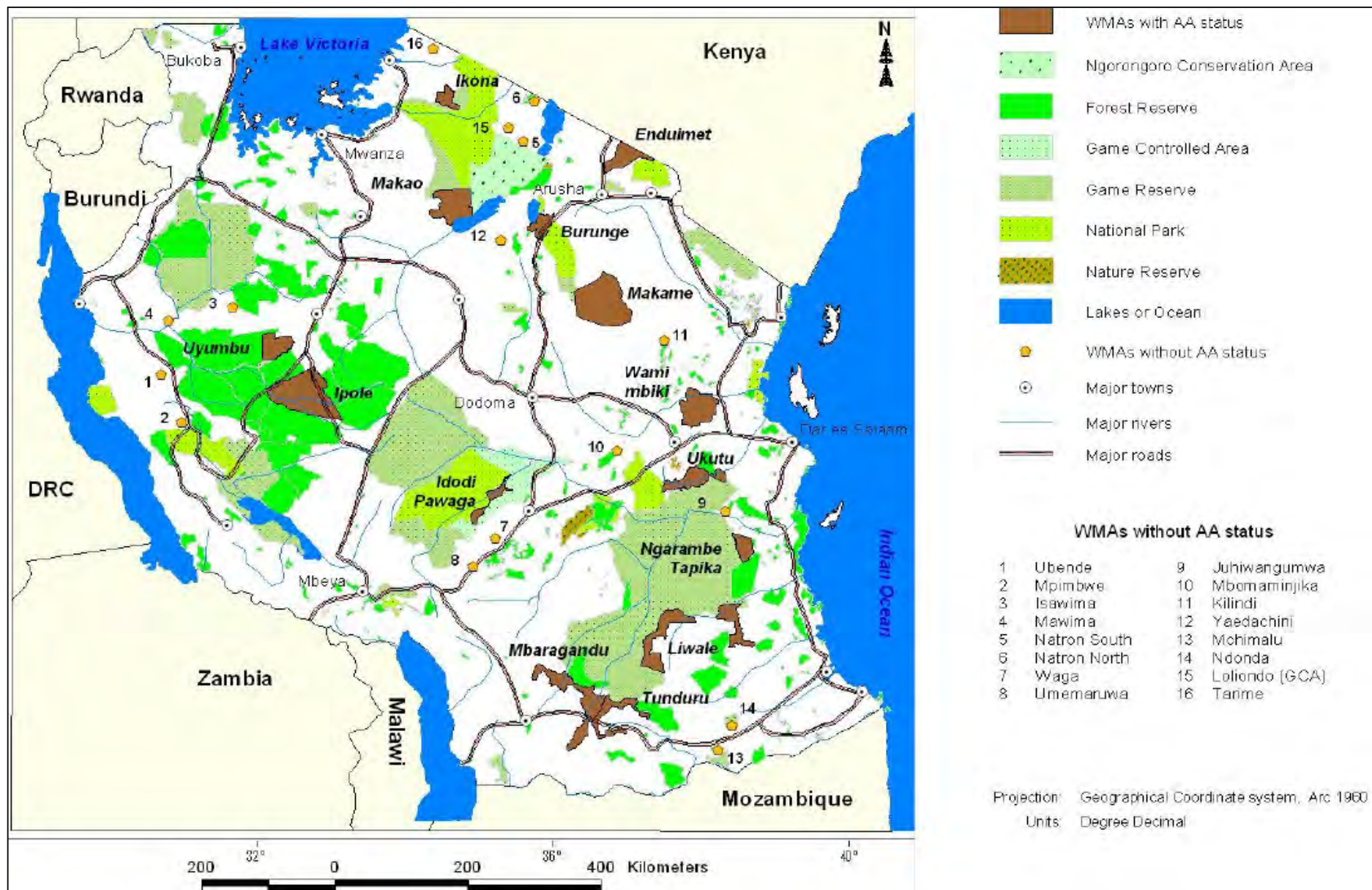


Figure 1: WMAs in Tanzania (Source: AAC, 2014)

of more than 500,000 people. The monetary benefits generated through consumptive and non-consumptive utilization of wildlife resources have been substantial over the years, and for example, from 2010 to 2014 revenue generated cumulatively reached US\$ 1,337,667.00 from hunting in hunting blocks from 12 WMAs and a total of US\$ 3,502,926.25 from photographic tourism in four WMAs only. All these amounts of money went to local communities, and the proportion that went to government is not included. Out of the total money generated 50% goes to the villages that have established the WMAs and the remaining amount is used for WMA management, including paying for anti-poaching operations by Village Game Scouts. No payments go to the Wildlife Division.

WMAs in the north and northwest are doing better than those located in the south purely due to tourism networks and infrastructure. Currently, the Government is using World Bank funding to implement an infrastructure development project to support tourism in the southern Tanzania tourism circuit. While National Parks face a similar disparity in revenue from parks located in the south and north, central ownership allows for revenue sharing across the regions and covering any localized financial shortfalls. Due to WMAs being owned by individual villagers from different districts, a similar revenue sharing model is not possible.

Despite the regional variances, the amount of money obtained over a five year period, and from just a few WMAs with functional conservation business ventures, provides an indicator to the economic viability of the WMA approach with big potential to contribute to poverty alleviation of rural communities. It is important to note that WMAs have just started to generate revenues and so any judgements regarding long-term financial viability need to take this into account. WMAs may have reduced the financial burden on district governments, since benefits distributed to WMA villages are used almost exclusively to fund social infrastructure projects that would normally be provided by district and national governments. These projects generally include: renovation or construction of classrooms; construction of teachers' houses; provision of furniture to local schools; provision of financial aid to secondary students pursuing their education outside the village; construction of health posts or dispensaries; construction of wells or water points; renovation or

construction of village administrative offices; and, occasionally payment of modest salaries to teachers or health workers.

Furthermore with the growing concerns in Tanzania around access to land and land tenure security, and increasing population growth resulting in competing land needs for both humans and wildlife, the WMA approach has emerged as the best approach currently being implemented to address competing land use conflicts, whilst simultaneously bringing increased benefits to the participating local communities. Most of the WMAs are in areas that are not competitive enough for other land uses e.g. agriculture, because they are located in wildlife migratory routes or dispersal areas and have high potential for human-wildlife conflict. In addition, income from WMAs is additional and complementary to other income sources available to communities. However, management of WMAs requires both human and financial resources to be able to sustainably achieve the twin objectives of biodiversity conservation and economic benefits to the rural poor.

WMA management requiring the adoption of participatory decision making processes, as well as other key functions of the WMAs, which include natural resources management and WMA protection by VGS - is expensive. In addition, with a greater emphasis on the role of governance, bottom-up approaches, and building the capacity of local communities in management and local institutional organizational management; the costs of such approaches are high (Figure 3). Despite the huge potential for increased revenue generation through consumptive and non-consumptive use of wildlife, long term economic viability for all WMAs to break even would be a huge task to achieve. Some WMAs such as Ikona, Burunge and Enduimet have actually broken even and are on the path to making profit but these are exceptional cases as a result of their being adjacent to some of the most visited national parks in the country like Serengeti, Lake Manyara, Tarangire and Kilimanjaro National Parks. Even national park systems with highly trained wardens and Protected Areas' Managers and other professional support staff do not always generate enough revenue to cover their operations and running costs. Out of the sixteen national parks under TANAPA only four national parks namely: Serengeti, Kilimanjaro, Lake Manyara and Tarangire break even, with the other twelve being subsidized.

For long term sustainability of WMAs there is a need to underscore the significance of absorbing the costs of establishing and running WMAs and ensuring that whichever policy and regulatory systems are developed, they provide for equitable sharing of such costs by the AAs, Villages forming WMAs, the Districts, and Central government. In all WMAs these costs are well beyond community affordability. To support operations it is necessary to harmonize sectoral policies to allow for diversified and sustainable revenue streams in the WMAs across a complete spectrum of community based natural resources management (CBNRM). While increasing entrepreneurship and marketing skills within the WMAs operations is critical for undertaking any diversification; there is a need to plug all leakages and increase efficiency and transparency in revenue

collection. WMAs should be construed as laying the foundation for creating small business opportunities at grassroots level, and eventually become the bastion of small and medium enterprise (SME) revolution, and a prelude to the anticipated industrial revolution as per the development policy, Tanzania Vision 2025. There are no current restrictions for WMAs to explore revenue diversification options and small business opportunities. WMAs are governed by general management plans (GMP) that define spatial use of land and do not provide limits to the exploration of other revenue streams as long as they are compatible with the spatial use delineations.

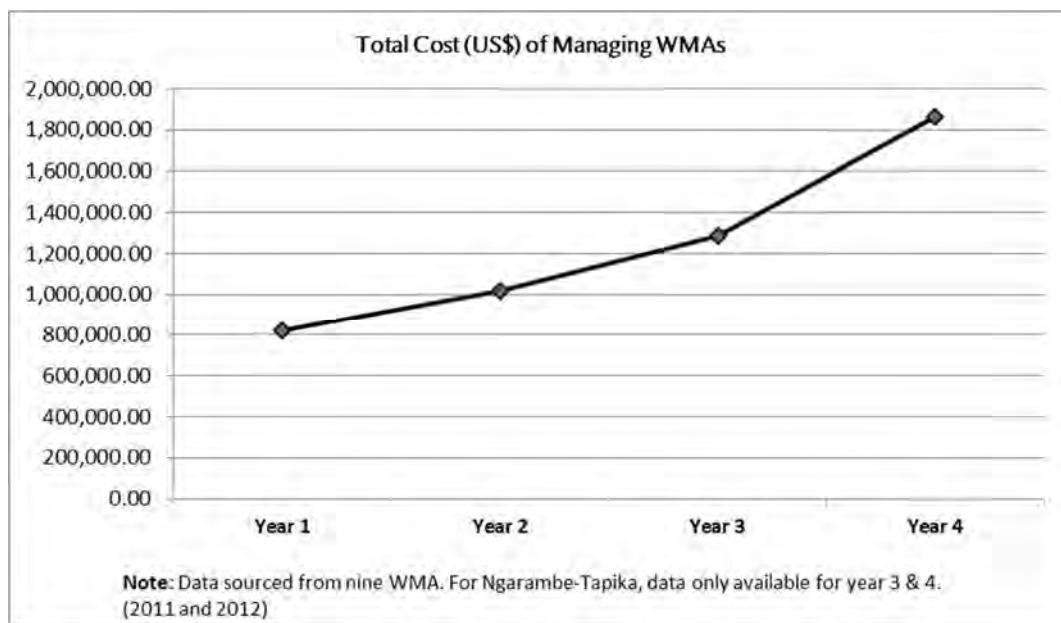


Figure 2: Four year Trend of Total Costs in US\$ of managing WMAs
(Source: WWF, 2014, unpublished report)

Ecological Viability

As noted above, up to December 2014, twenty one WMAs were gazetted and created an additional 36,238 square kilometers of land devoted to wildlife conservation (AAC, 2014). This is a positive achievement, as one of the objectives of the WMAs policy is to increase wildlife conservation areas and the maintenance of ecological integrity. When biological diversity is lost at the different levels of biological organization – populations, communities, or ecosystems - there is a decline in resilience. While quantitative data on wildlife numbers and habitat conditions are difficult to find, there is some

evidence that the creation of a WMA leads to improved biodiversity (USAID, 2013). For example, Wami Mbiki and Enduimet WMAs systematically collected data on wildlife numbers and demonstrate clear increases in numbers of different species over time. In Wami-Mbiki the AA reported that wildlife numbers such as buffaloes, elephants and small antelopes had increased from 5,000 in 1997 to 31,900 in 2010. Evidence coming from other WMAs, VGS and many villagers’ anecdotal evidence - points to increased numbers of wildlife, albeit sometimes in reference to increased human-wildlife

conflicts. Some 81% of household survey respondents felt that the WMA had increased the abundance of wildlife, and an equal percentage indicated that wildlife habitat destruction had been halted (USAID, 2013). Some VGS also reported that there had been reduced wood collection, tree cutting, and even grazing in some WMAs, such as Burunge, Mbarang'andu and Ikona WMAs; which might explain the apparent, improved vegetative cover inside WMAs compared to areas still inside village settlement areas. While increased wildlife may lead to increased village incomes for community services (schools, health services and roads) and household income, it also has negative impacts related to increased human-wildlife conflicts. When wildlife such as elephants, baboons, lions, monkeys and wild pigs increases, it destroys agricultural farms and may contribute to food insecurity and poverty at household levels. It is necessary to recognize that WMAs are important for the ecology but require long-term investments and subsidy from Government and other development partners, in order to maintain their sustainability and their long term ecological functions. In terms of conservation management at the local level, interactions between WMAs and protected area management authorities are positive and are manifested in joint anti-poaching patrols and information sharing. The Wildlife Division provides technical and policy guidance.

Competitive Against Other Land Uses

At the district level the establishment of WMAs, the land use planning that occurred during this process in particular - has, in some cases, helped districts to resolve long-standing boundary disputes between villages, reducing the number of land use conflicts. This benefit can be translated into using aspects of the WMA process in providing support to other land use category. Although it is not possible through the WMA process to assess the competitiveness of the different land use categories, it remains noteworthy that the process has highlighted the significance of community management of natural resources.

Social and Political Viability

WMAs support development projects for social services and infrastructure that are built entirely or partially from AA payments to their village councils, and are related to education, health, or water supply. In this way the WMAs have been making more direct contributions to households than previously thought, since social project funding may reduce out-of-pocket expenditures by village households for these types of development projects. This may explain some of the increase in the value of household income but is exceedingly hard to quantify. In addition, WMAs like Ikona, Burunge and Makao have remitted funds to the District Councils to support District development programs. The problem here has to do with whether district governments regard WMAs' contributions as



another source of funding for their development plans; thereby redistributing district funds away from villages with WMA benefits to those without; thus limiting overall WMA benefit to communities and instead enhancing benefits to government. It is generally accepted in the CBNRM sector that inadequate direct benefits to households in communities pose a risk of reducing incentives to conserve wildlife and their habitats by villagers. Delayed benefits to local communities as a result of lack of investors, provides a serious challenge to the WMA process and requires the government to fully embrace the community based natural resources management principles with respect to developing benefit-sharing schemes that are supportive of local communities' efforts, and provide the required incentives to community engagement in community wildlife management efforts. Communities are generally satisfied with WMAs as current and future vehicles for community development.

Governance

One of the three original objectives of establishing WMAs was that of strengthening governance; particularly at the local level. WMAs have established governance structures (constitutions, boards, leadership, etc.) and tools that are used by the AAs in the operations and running of the WMAs. Despite some AAs (e.g. in Tunduru and Liwale) being so well respected and trusted that District Councils and local communities have been contributing money to pay for their administrative costs, in others (e.g. Ukutu and Namtumbo) local communities were of the opinion that their CBOs (JUKUMU and Mbarang'andu, respectively) had distanced themselves too much from the Village Councils and hence also from the local communities (IRA, 2007). The failure of the AA to keep its village constituents informed of the CBOs' activities is implicated in a number of WMAs that are also engaged in power struggles and conflicts (e.g. in the Enduimet and Makame WMAs). In other cases, such as Ikona, tensions are emerging between the CBO/AA and the Village Councils over their respective roles in village level resource management (*as per Mr. Jumanne, Nyakitono Village Chairman, pers. comm.*) Even in more successful WMAs, potential problems are evident where, for example, the CBO/AAs' constitution calls for elections to be held every three years, but five years elapsed with no elections being held. Although

this may be justified by the fact that some of the AAs have only recently been given AA status, it nevertheless underscores the gray area of rights and responsibilities that govern CBO/AA operations and lines of accountability. In the long term, there is need for further and real devolution of power to local communities; an increase in financial transparency at all levels; accountability for all earnings; and, improved communication between, and within, AAs and Village Councils/Assemblies. Similarly, elections need to be transparent and routine.

Lessons Learned – Successes

The objective of involvement of local communities in wildlife management as articulated in the WPT 1998 (revised in 2007), has been effectively achieved. As outlined above, up to December 2014, twenty one WMAs were gazetted and creating an additional 36,238 km² of land devoted to wildlife conservation.

Another important lesson is the significance of WMAs in maintaining biological diversity at the various levels of biological organization: populations, communities, and ecosystems - thereby increasing ecosystem resilience. Environmental awareness provided through the WMA processes has been instrumental in the garnering of local community support and participation in WMA management. While quantitative data on wildlife numbers and habitat conditions are difficult to find, there is some evidence that the creation of a WMA leads to improved biodiversity.



Creation of local civil society (CSOs) institutions with clearly defined governance structures has been a positive result in building local capacity institutional organizations to address local community needs and linked to the environmental

education awareness improvement. Conservation business ventures in WMAs have played an important, direct role in supporting local community improvement of livelihoods through diversified revenue sources from consumptive and non-consumptive tourism activities.

Lessons Learned – Failures

The most important lesson learned here is the inadequacy of the benefit sharing mechanism which failed to take into account the cost of managing WMAs in determining the various proportions to be distributed to the AAs, Village Councils and Central government.

Overall

The most critical factors to ensure the successful establishment and sustainability of WMAs include:

- i. The process in becoming a WMA requires a revision to initially focus on economic (business) viability (over short to medium term) and then ecological viability as a WMA grows over time and matures;
- ii. The WMA process should recognize different categories of such WMAs:– for example those that are important for their ecology yet are located in areas that will not enable them to be economically sustainable, will require a long-term subsidy;
- iii. Some WMAs that are designed to be, or to reinforce, wildlife corridors with the objective of maintaining ecological and genetic connectivity between PAs, require regular tracking of changing land use and settlement pattern within the WMAs to ensure that these corridors continue to function over the longer term;
- iv. There is an urgent need to understand the role of, and active engagement with, disadvantaged groups – especially women and young people — to ensure the following is addressed: various social groups' interaction with, and impact on, natural resources in different ways;
- v. Support for the development and implementation of a WMA performance monitoring system capable of serving local (AA) and national level CBNRM management, needs to be able to ensure the WMAs enhance opportunities for households

to benefit directly and significantly from WMA activities;

- vi. Strengthening the capacity and performance of WMA AAs, particularly to i) support the design and implementation of a comprehensive organizational capacity development (OCD) program for WMAs that should be incorporated into the overall WMA support program; and, ii) support AAs to carry out continuous awareness and communications programs to enhance transparency and encourage villagers to hold AA leadership accountable for the performance of their WMA;
- vii. Striving towards the integration of community-based natural resources management – embracing wildlife, fisheries, water and forestry co-management.

Conclusions

WMAs are providing their ecological functions in maintaining biological diversity at the different levels of biological organization – populations, communities, or ecosystems, and therefore increasing ecosystem resilience. Environmental awareness provided through the WMA processes has been instrumental in the garnering of local community support and participation in WMA management. While quantitative data on wildlife numbers and habitat conditions is lacking, there is some evidence that the creation of a WMA leads to improved biodiversity.

The management of WMAs requires information and data on key and significant biological and other resources, their distribution in time and space and their conditions for management authorities to make informed decisions about resources protection. Despite some positive results achieved since the WMA concept was launched in pilot areas in January 2003, much more effort is needed to ensure the objectives of the WPT 1998 as revised in 2007 are fully realized. The failure of the benefit sharing scheme to take on board the costs for establishing and management of WMAs has resulted in loss of interest in some WMA member villagers; threatening to withdraw and discontinue the WMA process.

The lack of support from the necessary WMA Support Unit in the Wildlife Division of Ministry of

Natural Resources and Tourism coupled with inadequately trained manpower staff to manage WMAs are other issues that require immediate attention. The sectoral approach adopted in the utilization of natural resources is a hindrance to community engagement in more diversified conservation business enterprises or ventures, and acts as a disincentive for communities to participate fully in the co-management process and to derive benefits from the compound utilization of natural resources. Despite these shortcomings, the objective of involvement of local communities in wildlife management as articulated in the WPT 1998 (as revised in 2007), has been effectively achieved. Creation of local civil society (CSOs) institutions with clearly defined governance structures has been a positive result in building local capacity institutional organizations to address local community needs, and these are linked to the environmental education awareness improvement.

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A note about the author: Asukile R. Kajuni, Deputy Program Coordinator Ruvuma Landscape and CBNRM. Asukile has an MSc in Range Science from Texas Tech University. He has as Research Officer in Charge of West Kilimanjaro Livestock Research Center under Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRO). Joined Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) as Senior Ecologist for Serengeti under the Serengeti Ecological Monitoring Program (SEMP) and later moved to TANAPA headquarters in Arusha to establish the TANAPA Planning Unit in 1991 as the first Director. He spent some time as the Planning Coordinator for the EU/EDF/Zambia National Parks and Wildlife Services and then moved to USAID/Tanzania as Senior Environmental Specialist in the NRM/EG program. He was the lead field person and co-author of a CBNRM Stock taking exercise by USAID in 2002. He has been on assignment as Project Manager for another EU/EDF Transboundary Peace Park project for Sierra Leone and Liberia where he facilitated and took the lead in the establishment of Gola Forest National Park. He joined WWF Tanzania in 2012.



MALILANGWE: A CONSERVATION PROJECT SUPPORTED BY PHILANTHROPY

M. Saunders

Abstract

The Malilangwe Trust is a wholly Zimbabwean owned non-profit organisation that focuses on harmonising conservation activities, community development outreach programs and commercial tourism. Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve is set on 130 000 acres of pristine wilderness in south-eastern Zimbabwe, bordering Gonarezhou National Park. It is a diverse and beautiful piece of Africa, boasting geological diversity, habitat variability and a wide variety of plant and animal species. Malilangwe is home to a healthy population of endangered black and white rhinoceros, elephant and buffalo herds. Lions, cheetah, leopard, hyena and painted hunting dogs keep the herbivore population in check. This article shares the story of Malilangwe, experiences, successes and challenges, and views on the role and future of conservancies in Zimbabwe.

Conservancy policy framework

One of the most important issues in terms of Conservancy development is Government Policy. A specific focus on policies for Conservancies on a national basis would be progressive, but a rigid blueprint would be difficult to implement in Zimbabwe due to the varying size, region and make-up/ownership structures of the established and potential conservancies. Because in almost all cases, conservancies are surrounded by communities, a properly-operating conservancy has to have a positive and transparent relationship with its neighbours. For Malilangwe, having meaningful community upliftment programmes over a sustained period have, in our view, exhibited a transparent focus on the acknowledgement of community participation in some form.

The Namibians appear to have a cohesive and workable formula (although we have not had first-hand experience of the Namibian example), and the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) in Kenya is an innovative and exciting example of genuine community benefits in specific conservancies. The two models appear to contrast a government led (Namibia) model with a community based (Kenya model). For Malilangwe, a positive demonstration that our chosen land-use practise is the preferred intervention for the area in which we operate is key. Malilangwe is in natural farming Region IV of

Zimbabwe which is characterised by low and erratic rainfall and in which wildlife has generally proved to be one of the most viable land uses.

Economic viability

In terms of the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, a private 130,000 acre reserve, located in the southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe, the operation is not financially sustainable. This is due to specific conservation and community mandates, combined with the existence of a significant herd of black and white rhinos that require consistent protection and biological monitoring. The operation requires donor funding on an annual basis to continue operations.

There are several factors being explored at Malilangwe to reduce the burden on donors and ensure long term viability. Among them, a solar farm, with the intention of generating renewable energy to sell back into the National Grid through the REFIT (Renewable Energy Feed-in Tariff). Challenges with the development of this option is the signing of a robust PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) between the private operator and the appropriate Government authority. The Carbon Credit market is still relatively new, but we have, on our property, conducted a professional feasibility study to determine the financial benefit of entering into the voluntary carbon market. In the case of Malilangwe, being afforded the opportunity to

safeguard a forested area against deforestation (within our fence) qualifies us to benefit from VCS. Whilst this would provide an alternative source of revenue, the current carbon market is flooded with cheap credits, because it is non-regulatory.

Another option is on-property tourism products, and at Malilangwe we have a 24 bed high-end tourist facility, with the objective being that profits generated from tourism are channelled directly into the funding of conservation and community projects, in keeping with the overall non-profit status of our Trust Deed.

The question “is financial sustainability feasible” is an interesting one. I have not experienced a single conservancy currently operating solely on funds generated within its fence. Controlled, ethical sport hunting within a conservancy would be a very likely strategy to assist in financial sustainability, but different countries have different approaches to sport hunting, so this cannot necessarily be a global formula for successful conservancy funding.

Social and political viability

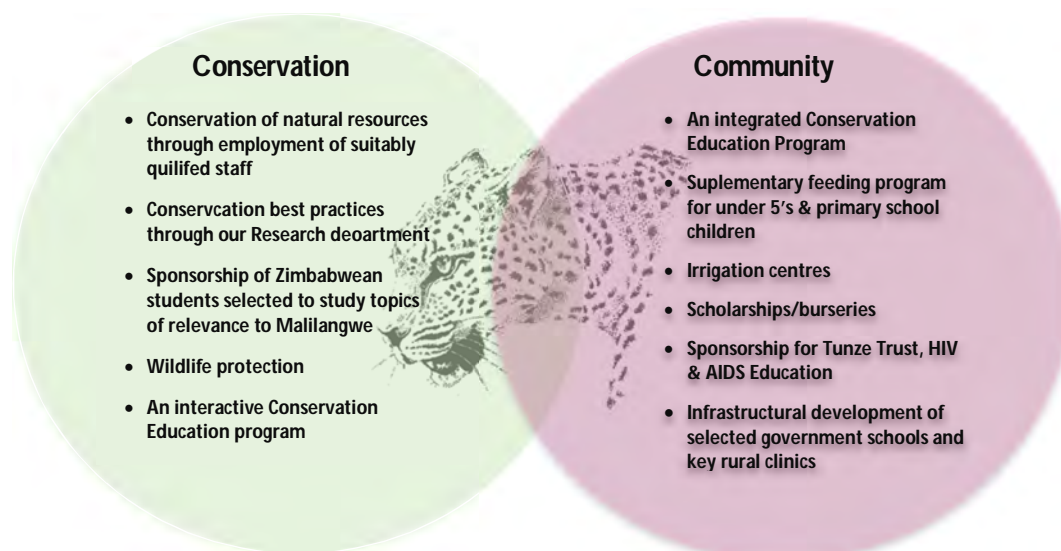
Malilangwe is surrounded by the Matibi and Sangwe communities in the immediate east and south west of the property. Our community engagement has been in place since inception of the trust in 1994. Community based projects are in existence as a

genuine mandate to assist neighbouring areas. Benefits generated for communities are based around a sound, on-property conservation education centre for both Government and Primary schools; honey projects; a chicken egg laying project; infrastructural development; a gender based annual workshop and other meaningful interventions. In addition, we run a supplementary feeding program that feeds 19,000 school children. We believe we hold a positive relationship with our surrounding communities.

Our objective is to continue to deliver meaningful, participative, capacity building projects going forward. We have 340 staff members, all Zimbabwean. Approximately 65% of employees are from Chiredzi district, our local district. A further 25% are from Masvingo Province, our local province, and the balance are from further afield.

All wildlife areas in Zimbabwe are exposed to National and local politics – in Malilangwe’s case we are a non-profit organisation with no political bias whatsoever, and work within all stipulated Government regulations.

Core Mandates of Malilangwe Trust



Ecological Viability

Despite significant outbreaks of anthrax and rabies in 2004 and 2008 respectively, free-ranging populations of most indigenous animal species have been maintained on Malilangwe since 1994. Post-outbreak recovery of the affected animal populations indicates a reasonable level of ecological viability. However, because the reserve is fenced, populations of some species (e.g., buffalo, zebra, elephant and white rhino) require regular management to prevent over-stocking. Our rationale for fencing is based primarily on the fact that Malilangwe is home to significant populations of black and white rhinos; the fence allows for better management of wildlife influx from neighbouring areas, and also affords better management of human/wildlife conflict with communities surrounding the reserve. Naturally, a challenge is the management of populations within a fence, with regard to available forage and predator numbers. Difficulty in obtaining permission from the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority to manage over abundant populations is a current threat to viability. Timeous responses to permit applications has been a significant challenge, however we are encouraged by recent directives to address this within the Authority.

How important is scale and connectivity to other wildlife areas?

Movement back and forth between Malilangwe and Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) is critically important for the maintenance of genetic diversity of predators (wild dog, lion, leopard, cheetah and hyena). Of the 121 km of 2.4 m fence, 7 km is a lower 1.2 m, allowing for predators to move across it. However, as far as elephant movements are concerned, influx of large numbers of bulls from GNP prior to a robust fence has proved unsustainable for woody vegetation at Malilangwe. This connectivity is critical to the long term sustainability of wildlife areas. The larger the wildlife areas surrounding our area the better, especially if it is well protected and managed.

Being an island means that there is pressure from 360 degrees. It will mean that there is zero flow of wildlife between adjacent areas and ultimately where there are hard edges, these zones always experience rather large numbers of human/ animal conflict. There is usually only the movement of

species outwards, with nothing returning other than disease such as TB, rabies and distemper to name a few. All these can be spread from domestic stock to wildlife. Security from poaching is another aspect that should be considered here.

Adjacent land uses and their impact on the conservancy

Malilangwe borders communal land in the south, east and north, GNP in the south, and a commercial sugarcane estate in the west. Malilangwe serves as a key linkage in a macro-level corridor linking Save Valley Conservancy to GNP and then to Kruger National Park. The main forms of land use in the communal lands are extensive pastoralism, subsistence cropping and limited commercial cropping (principally cotton). Excessive cattle numbers within communal lands have led to overgrazing and degradation of river catchments, which has in turn resulted in an accelerated rate of siltation of several dams within the reserve. Subsistence and commercial cropping has led to conflict with crop raiding elephants and quelea. Insecticides sprayed on cotton plants have been used to poison doves, which have been preyed on by raptors living within the reserve. This has caused a significant decline in populations of Tawny and Bateleur eagles. Irrigation return flows from the sugar estate have polluted several rivers in the reserve. The number of breeding pairs of white-backed vultures has declined by 50 % since 2012, due to poisoning of elephants in GNP.

Conservation impact of the conservancies in Zimbabwe and future potential

In Zimbabwe conservancies are the last strongholds of black and white rhino (these species are either absent or occur in very low numbers within the Parks Estate). This makes the conservancies particularly important conservation areas. Although founded on strong conservation principles that were originally supported by government, the initial enthusiasm has faded because of uncertainties in land tenure and the introduction of new indigenisation laws. Future potential is good, however it is fully dependant on a robust and sustainable national policy. Participation on progressive conservation-related committees is also a practice Malilangwe pursues in order to hopefully highlight key aspects as conservation. Conservancies historically played an important role

in conservation in Zimbabwe and this can be recovered, with the right policy framework, as a means to increase land under conservation and engage new and community landowners in managing land for wildlife.

Competitiveness against other land uses

Livestock production and small scale cropping are the current land uses in our surrounding/adjacent communities. From an ecological and social perspective, our projects are the best-place land use forms, because our conservation operations are derived and carried out based on research outcomes, and the communities genuinely benefit from our social activities. From an economic perspective, Malilangwe provides employment for over 300 Zimbabweans, but in terms of land use, the conservation and community initiatives are supported through donor funding.

Governance

The governance framework, in terms of the model we work with, works well. Benefits are created through the activities of the Trust, and shared in a controlled manner. Transparency is ensured through genuine programs, and auditable activities.

Successes

These are exhibited in projects that produce tangible benefits to communities. Success is achieved through buy-in to a work plan and the recruitment of committed staff to carry out our activities.

Failures

To date we have failed to secure a realistic on-property revenue stream to significantly cover the costs of running our programs. As mentioned, projects are donor funded.

Critical factors to ensuring the successful establishment and sustainability of conservancies

- Unambiguous land tenure.
- A vibrant private Zimbabwean wildlife industry.
- Ability to export game internationally.
- Easily obtainable game management and hunting permits.
- Support from government security agencies for anti-poaching activities.



Note about the author: Mark Saunders, Chief Executive Officer, Malilangwe Trust. Mark is responsible for overseeing the management of Malilangwe Ranch in the south east Lowveld of Zimbabwe. Mark grew up in the lowveld of Zimbabwe, spending much of his free time on this property, formerly known as Lone Star Ranch. He was educated at Falcon College and Rhodes University (B.Soc. Science) followed by a Diploma in Tobacco culture from the Blackfordby Institute. He then farmed tobacco for 10 years before investing in the retail business. Mark has been in the position of Executive Director of the Malilangwe Trust since 2010 and is totally motivated by the twin mandate of Conservation and Community at Malilangwe. Contact details: The Malilangwe Trust, P. Bag 7085, Chiredzi, Tel: 0772 257 392 E-mail: mark.saunders@malilangwe.org



SAVÉ VALLEY CONSERVANCY: A STORY OF SUCCESS AND SURVIVAL

A. Pole

Abstract

The Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) is a large (3442 km²) cooperatively managed wildlife area, comprising multiple properties held by mix of private ranchers, local councils, government and two communities. The conservancy is located in the semi-arid South East Lowveld of Zimbabwe, occurring at an elevation of 480–620 m, with deciduous woodland savannah, low and variable rainfall (474–540 mm per annum) and poor-quality soils. The conservancy is bordered primarily by high-density communal land (of between 11 and 82 people km²), with some commercial agriculture to the south and east. This paper provides an overview of the establishment, early development and challenges faced by the Savé Valley Conservancy in south eastern Zimbabwe

History of the Savé Valley - Pre 1992

The area that is now the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) was originally inhabited by San (Bushmen), as indicated by the presence of San rock paintings. Bantu people settled in the area in approximately AD500 and pushed the San out, though the area was generally sparsely populated because of low rainfall, lack of permanent water and the danger to people and crops from the wild animals. European hunters and explorers first passed through the area in the 1870s to 1890s, and the settlers in the 'Moodie Trek' in 1892, named the area 'Hell's Wood' in response to the heat, malaria and thick bush. Wildlife was abundant, with significant populations of buffalo, lion, spotted hyena, wild dogs and many other species. During the 1920s, the area was settled by European farmers and three large-scale private cattle ranches were developed: Devuli, Angus and Humani.

The remainder of what is now SVC was 'Crown Land.' In 1972, the Crown Land in the SVC area was sold to individuals who planned to develop cattle ranches. The then Rhodesian government supported the cattle industry with direct financial assistance via subsidies, soft loans, tax concessions and support services. Further assistance to the livestock industry was rendered in the 1970s in the Savé Valley where

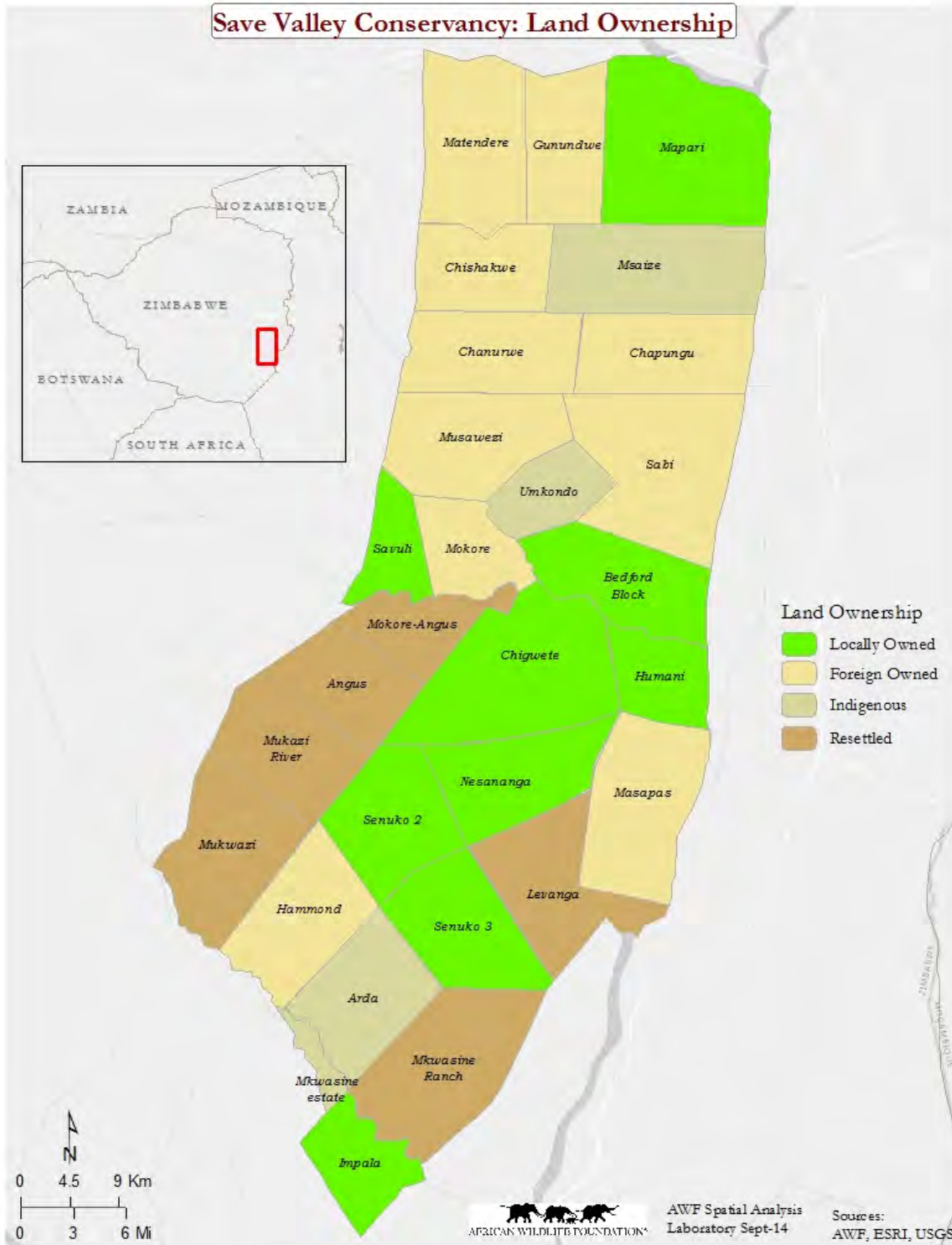
the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management (DNPWLM) eradicated buffalo and most elephant to reduce the risk of foot-and-mouth disease transmission and damage to fencing respectively.

During the 1980's the South East Lowveld experienced a prolonged period of below-average rainfall. During those years, the ecological impacts of cattle ranching became apparent – cattle ranchers in Zimbabwe had traditionally established stocking rates based on 'average' rainfall years, which did not account for variable precipitation or competition from indigenous wild herbivores (du Toit, 2004). As a result, cattle were overstocked for decades, resulting in gully erosion, soil capping, increased run-off and the development of lower productivity grass communities. Sensitive grazers such as reedbuck, Lichtenstein's hartebeest, tsessebe, roan and sable antelope disappeared from the Savé Valley area completely, while other wildlife species suffered from subsistence poaching. Predators were actively persecuted by cattle ranchers, with the effect that wild dogs were extirpated and cheetah, spotted hyaena and lion persisted only at low densities. Protectionist policies at the time prevented landowners from utilizing wild animals occurring on

their land, which effectively devalued wildlife and exacerbated population declines.

In response to declining stocks of wildlife outside the state-protected areas, the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 conferred 'appropriate authority' status on landowners for wildlife that occurred on their land, replacing the earlier protectionist policies. This law

effectively meant that ranchers could utilize wildlife consumptively for profit, such as through hunting or live capture and sale. The right to generate income from wildlife coincided with an increasing awareness by some ranchers of the ecological problems associated with livestock ranching.



Between 1986 and 1988, 20 black rhinoceros were introduced onto Humani Ranch in the Savé Valley as part of the Government of Zimbabwe's black rhinoceros conservation strategy, under a custodianship scheme whereby ownership was retained by the State. Meetings were held between Savé Valley landowners, WWF, and the DNPWLM to discuss the need for cooperative management of the reintroduced rhinoceros populations. These negotiations, along with leveraged funding, provided by the Beit Trust - an independent charitable Trust for rhinoceros conservation - led to the development of a cooperative wildlife area or conservancy. Black rhinoceros were thus the 'flagship' species that catalyzed the formation of the SVC. Shortly thereafter, a constitution for the nascent SVC was developed, which enshrined the need for cooperative management of wildlife resources whilst ensuring the sovereignty of individual ranches.

In June 1991, eighteen ranchers signed the constitution and the SVC was formed as a legal entity. The SVC constitution enshrined the right for each land owner to determine the management and business opportunities on their own land with the proviso that their actions would not have a negative impact on their neighbors. The Buby Conservancy, which was established from a number of different properties shortly after SVC - ended up, through a variety of circumstances, with a centralized ownership structure and management regime.

Shortly after the establishment of SVC as a legal entity, a further 13 black rhinoceros were introduced and with a high rate of reproduction this population grew to over 100 by 2004. The Beit Trust provided funds and technical support for the construction of the perimeter wildlife fence, on the agreement that conservancy members would remove internal wildlife fences, thus creating extensive range for the rhinoceros; and would also provide match funding for wildlife restocking within a stipulated period.

Following the formation of SVC, some ranchers decided to retain livestock, pursuing a mixed species production system. However, between 1991 and 1992, the South East Lowveld experienced the worst drought on record, forcing ranchers to sell cattle at greatly reduced prices. A major cooperative effort was made by the landowners to save grazing wildlife species by importing hay from farms on the Central

Plateau. During the drought, a strategic planning meeting was held by conservancy members and a decision was taken to completely remove cattle from SVC and develop a multi-use wildlife production system for high-quality wildlife tourism.

Growth and Development 1992 - 2000

During the 1990s, a series of steps were taken to foster increases in the diversity and abundance of wildlife within SVC. With further catalytic funding from the Beit Trust, a security system (including personnel) was established to protect the black rhinoceros and control bush meat poaching. A massive wildlife reintroduction program was initiated, perhaps the most impressive component of which was the mass translocation of elephants from Gonarezhou National Park. After initial attempts to capture elephants individually, a method was developed that enabled the capture and movement of whole family groups. This operation was the first time anywhere in Africa that whole family groups had been captured and translocated, and involved far more elephant than any other translocation operation before or since - 533 individuals were relocated to SVC.

Because the SVC then fell into the foot-and-mouth free (or 'green') zone, and because buffalo are long-term carriers of foot-and-mouth disease, a strong case was required to convince the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS) to permit their reintroduction into the conservancy. A case was presented (Price Waterhouse, 1994) that showed objectively that wildlife had a competitive edge over livestock with respect to returns per hectare, foreign currency generation and scope for the development of economic linkages between ranches and neighboring communities. The report also demonstrated the crucial importance of buffalo to the viability of wildlife operations. The DVS agreed to buffalo reintroductions under stringent conditions - ranchers were required to remove all remaining cattle within the area and to construct a double wildlife fence of set specifications. By March 1995, the twin 350km fences were completed, all internal fencing and remaining cattle were removed, and buffalo reintroductions began.

During and following the elephant reintroduction, a major restocking program of other wildlife species was also pursued. The SVC was able to secure a loan

of US\$1 million from the International Finance Corporation through the Global Environment Fund to facilitate much of the restocking. In total, 3128 individuals of 13 wildlife species were reintroduced by the conservancy members. Twenty white rhinoceros were introduced through a donor-supported arrangement whereby local communities would receive the receipts of trade in the progeny of the reintroduced animals. Wildlife populations in SVC increased steadily in abundance and diversity during the 1990s, and revenues from ecotourism and safari hunting climbed correspondingly, facilitated by political stability and the increasing international exposure of SVC as a conservation success story.

The formation and evolution of SVC depended on several catalytic and enabling factors, and teamwork among various stakeholders. Possibly the biggest catalyst for the formation of SVC was funding from the Beit Trust, via WWF, which reinforced the rhino conservation program, provided technical assistance, and created incentives for landholders to amalgamate their properties. Significantly, the Beit Trust funding was flexible and was provided for over almost a decade, ensuring the scope to adapt the support to changing circumstances. Consultants were engaged at the appropriate times in the conservancy's development to tackle emerging needs, for example, the development of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the SVC and neighboring rural district councils as a vehicle for community outreach efforts. The progressive attitude of the DVS, international recognition for the rhino breeding success and growing interest of external investors in wildlife ranching propelled the conservancy along the route towards large-scale cooperative management. Later, input from advisers helped secure the crucial IFC restocking loan.

By the end of 1999, the SVC was in a bullish position with rapidly increasing wildlife populations, international recognition for its conservation value in rehabilitating degraded former cattle ranch land, and providing a safe haven to important populations of endangered species. The business side of the conservancy was also looking very positive with many ranches being run at a profit predominantly through safari hunting, and the fledgling photographic industry showing real promise.

Land Reform and Indiginization: 2000 – Present Day

2000 saw the start of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe and SVC was not immune. Resettlement by small scale farmers (A1 resettlement) started in early 2000 and by 2004 the SVC had effectively lost about 33% of its land mass to the resettlement program. This involved an estimated 4500 households that established themselves within the SVC with more than half of this number not having official offer letters from the Government; thus, settling illegally. All the resettlement occurred in the south of the SVC with a relatively low density belt of settlement just south of the Turgwe River (separating north from south in the SVC), which threatened to cut the north off from the south — an ecological risk. Much of the perimeter fence in the south of the SVC was removed and used for fencing elsewhere and much was returned to the conservancy in the form of wire snares having a devastating impact on the wildlife populations. Ironically, many of the communities adjacent to the SVC in these areas, which had previously regarded the fence as a physical barrier, are now the greatest proponents of having it established again to reduce human wildlife conflict. Since 2004 there has not been much new settlement or new areas settled, but the majority of the settlers maintain a presence on the land occupied and the negative impact of the settlers on the wildlife populations in the south has been significant.

As the activity of the Fast Track Land Reform Program subsided in the mid 2000s, the pressure on the remaining land owners to 'indigenize' increased, as per the Indigenisation Policy. From 2004 to 2011, a variety of initiatives, purportedly representing the Government, engaged the SVC members to help them find a solution to the indigenization issue that impacted the predominantly white ranchers. All of these initiatives seem to fade away after a period of months as the national political scene remained fluid and the levels of influence of politicians ebbed and flowed.

In 2007 the Ministry of Lands handed over authority for 'wildlife conservancies' in Zimbabwe to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. By this time the constitution of Zimbabwe had been changed to ensure all land belonged to the Government. This meant that the land under conservancies and the

issue of indigenizing them was now the responsibility of the Minister for Environment. The Minister did not move quickly on this issue and the pressure on the members came and went with the various 'interventions.' A policy – The Wildlife Based Land Reform – was drafted to guide the process of indigenization on wildlife properties although it was never implemented.

For most members, they were able to maintain operations up until 2011 when the Minister issued leases for each property in the SVC to groups of indigenous politicians, military personnel and civil servants. The idea was that the recipients of the leases would become the appropriate indigenous authority for the land and the previous owners would have to negotiate with them to enter into business agreements, thereby forming indigenized entities acceptable to Government. PWMA withheld operating permits to try and force members to willingly enter into agreements with the beneficiaries which only acted to prevent the properties earning any income and putting great strain on the ability of those on the properties to maintain management functions such as anti-poaching, water provision, fire control and general monitoring.

While this initiative caused massive disruption to the operations on SVC, it was not successful as it was not backed up with clear technical input on how the businesses should be established and how the new beneficiaries would enter into the existing businesses, when in most cases they did not possess any capital to offer or experience to go it alone. During this process the SVC became a national issue and was frequently discussed at Government cabinet and politburo meetings.

During this period the SVC members became increasingly divided as they struggled for survival and focused on their own issues and the cohesive, coordinated management of the conservancy that characterized the 1990s slowly eroded, exposing it to greater interference.

A New Era with Parks and Wildlife Management Authority

In 2014 the Cabinet of Zimbabwe issued a directive that saw properties owned by international investors, whose countries held a Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement (BIPA), allowed to continue operating unhindered. The properties owned by

indigenous entities were also to be left to continue operations. All other properties (those owned by white Zimbabweans) were to be taken over by the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. PWMA did not immediately assert themselves and have not succeeded yet in finding a model for the properties that will ensure viability and long term sustainability. One of their instructions was to try and retain the knowledge and experience of the previous owners. In late 2014, four properties were auctioned as hunting concessions on five year leases and the remaining four properties remain without a solution at the time of writing. Some of these properties have been unable to generate an income since 2012 when permits were suspended and the impact of this on maintaining effective management on the ground has been severe.

Discussions are currently underway with Government through the Ministry of Environment and PWMA to try and find a long term sustainable solution to the south of the SVC. The solution should encompass long term secure tenure to facilitate the required investment. It should have a sound approach to neighboring community engagement and empowerment, and it should identify a role for Government through the PWMA. The concern is that if drastic action is not taken soon, the resource base which is being rapidly eroded, will disappear, and the southern SVC will cease to exist; destroying the potential for it to act as an agent for development within the region. This will also serve to isolate the north of the SVC from its linkage to the Greater Limpopo Trans Frontier Conservation Area.

Successes and Failures

The experience of the Savé Valley Conservancy over the last 25 years provides several indicators of success and where things could have been approached differently. The following is a brief summary of some of the main successes and lessons learned.

Key Successes

- **Ecological restoration** - The SVC proved how rapidly and effectively degraded, and over-utilized land in low rainfall areas - can be restored ecologically to harbor productive ecosystems that support viable wildlife based enterprises.

- **Scale** - The conservancy permits the effective conservation of a wider diversity of species than would be possible in smaller land units, as no single ranch encompasses the diversity of habitats found in the conservancy as a whole. The scale of SVC can enhance the resilience of the area to ecological shocks such as fires or droughts by enabling herbivores to make use of patchy primary production resulting from sporadic rainfall, and by enabling the re-establishment of functional predator-prey relationships. SVC is once again home to significant populations of wild dogs, leopard, cheetah and increasing numbers of lion and spotted hyena. Predators effectively reduce the amplitude of population fluctuations in non-migratory prey species by preventing overpopulation during high-rainfall years, which may prevent population crashes during droughts. Larger areas are more able to support viable populations of wildlife than isolated game ranches, and can host larger populations that are more resilient to stochastic events and are less likely to require augmentation or further reintroductions, and do not require management intervention to prevent inbreeding.
- **Economies of scale** - The large size of SVC permits the reintroduction of large, charismatic species such as buffalo, elephant and lion, which are key revenue drivers for tourism and trophy hunting and the pooling of land units permits the marketing of a 'wilderness' experience, which is attractive to both photographic and hunting tourism. The large size of SVC also permits economies of scale that reduce management costs. For example, less fencing and fence maintenance is required, fewer artificial water-points are needed, one annual census can be done for the whole area and the larger land area can support the expensive infrastructure required for high-end tourism.
- **Conservation** - SVC is home to sizeable wildlife populations, including several species of conservation significance. There are now nine packs of African wild dogs, occurring in one of the highest densities of the species in the world, which had previously been effectively eradicated from SVC during the cattle

production era. Given the high costs and low success rates of wild dog reintroductions in other protected areas, this is one of SVC's more important achievements. SVC also has the largest rhinoceros population in Zimbabwe. Lions recolonized the conservancy from Malilangwe in the south, and the population is increasing rapidly with the last estimate putting the population close to 200 individuals. SVC also has an important population of over 1,500 lions.

Key Lessons Learned

- **Community engagement** – Despite the establishment of the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust shortly after the establishment of the SVC as a vehicle to engage and provide benefits to the neighboring communities, it was fundamentally flawed. The 'vehicle' remained largely empty in that it provided very few meaningful financial benefits to the neighbouring communities and more importantly, it did not encourage genuine engagement from the SVC members with their neighbours. Experience has shown that while ultimately the financial benefits have to be there, the financial expectations of communities adjacent to wildlife projects can be managed. Primarily they seek engagement; to be respected, and the opportunity to feel a part of the larger project.
- **Single entity ownership and management** – If it were not for the political upheaval experienced over the last 15 years, the SVC would likely be thriving with most land owners running very successful and profitable operations providing meaningful revenue to the communities. The co-operative management model would have proven successful. However, this has not been the case and the level of politically motivated interference has exposed differences amongst the SVC members and created greater disharmony. There is little doubt that the SVC would have been much stronger during the last 15 years if it had been formed into a single entity with a centralized management. There are also a number of economic efficiencies that come with such a regime as well.

- **Governance structure** – The SVC was chaired by a very dedicated and committed chairman for the first 17 years of its development who sacrificed a lot of his time and finances to drive the SVC forwards. Since he resigned there has not been another chairman with the commitment in time or finances to deal with the demands of the position. This is not a criticism of the other chairmen as the level of personal sacrifice required to competently do the job is great. Due to the large number of international investors who bought land in the SVC prior to 2000, the majority of owners do not live on the properties and candidates for Chairman are few. While SVC does not have the finances to employ a substantive CEO, it is also probably a case of ‘can they afford not to?’ The SVC would benefit greatly from having a substantive CEO employed on a full time basis who could be the focal point of the SVC and be responsible for driving it forwards.
- **Creating a politically acceptable model** – Given the sensitivities over land and land ownership in Africa, it is important for any land project of the size of the SVC to create a model

that is politically acceptable. For conservation to work, local communities must benefit in a meaningful and reliable way. This means empowering locals at various levels of the organization and ensuring and encouraging opportunities for investment by locals and communities into the entity: in other words, not purely providing financial benefits, but also engaging communities in management and operations — engagement cannot, nor should not, be token.



Photo: Edwin Tambara

A note about the author: Alistair Pole, Director Land and Habitat Management, AWF. Alistair has been involved in various aspects of conservation in Africa for over 20 years. After completing his honors project on Black rhino in Zimbabwe he went on to do a PhD through Aberdeen University on African Wild Dogs in the Save Conservancy and Gonarezhou National Park. He then spent four years running a wildlife property in the Save Conservancy before leaving to become a wildlife management consultant, working throughout southern Africa. In his role with AWF he has been involved in projects in eight different African countries ranging through east and Southern Africa, gaining experience of working with a wide range of Governments and Government officials, communities, NGO’s and private sector players within the African Conservation arena.



THE PROSPECT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVANCIES IN UGANDA

S. Mwandha & J. Makombo

Abstract

Uganda is endowed with a variety of wildlife both within and outside protected areas (PAs). Protected areas range from national parks, wildlife reserves, and forest reserves - to community wildlife areas and wildlife sanctuaries. Despite the gazettement of areas for wildlife conservation, a substantial amount of wildlife resides either seasonally or permanently outside PAs. As economic activities, especially agriculture, expand, the wildlife outside PAs is increasingly losing its habitat, resulting in heightened human - wildlife conflict which often leads to wildlife decimation. The vision of the Uganda Wildlife Policy of 2014 is to achieve "sustainably managed and developed wildlife resources and healthy ecosystems in a transformed Ugandan society." This vision statement is drawn from several policy objectives, including "to sustainably manage wildlife populations in and outside protected areas" and "to effectively mitigate human wildlife conflicts." These objectives recognize the need to find ways to protect wildlife, create interest for landowners to manage wildlife, which is resident on their land, and avail opportunities for communities and landowners to generate benefits from these wildlife resources. The Uganda Wildlife Act also provides wildlife use rights as a means of engaging the public in the management of wildlife in the country.

The development of wildlife enterprises on privately owned land that focus on the creation of benefit and the resolution of human-wildlife conflicts, have not yet been seriously explored in Uganda. Whereas landowners seem to be more committed to agriculture and livestock production and have continued to host substantial wildlife on their land without benefit, innovative means for creating income from wildlife need to be used to engage landowners and the private sector in wildlife conservation. Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), which is mandated to manage wildlife in Uganda, is already working with the private sector in wildlife management through the development of concessions for sport hunting in some of the areas both within and outside PAs. Such efforts need to be enhanced to promote equitable benefits for the landowners and wildlife survival. While Uganda does not have conservancies, the legal framework, as outlined in this article, creates a conducive environment for establishing them. The creation of conservancies elsewhere in Africa, has proved to be one of the viable practices with which communities can engage to generate tangible benefits from wildlife on their land. Activities such as photographic safaris, wildlife sale and sport hunting can be undertaken as some of the ways conservancies can be beneficial to landowners. African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), using its experience in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and other countries, is now working with UWA to develop guidelines for conservancy development which, after approval by the UWA Board, shall guide landowners and private sector players on how to set up conservancies as a way of implementing the wildlife use rights provided for under the Uganda Wildlife Act (2000). This paper discusses the prospects of developing conservancies in Uganda, drawing lessons from our experiences in the last three years of working with ranchers neighbouring Lake Mburo National Park, the development of a land use plan for two sub counties neighbouring Kidepo Valley National Park, and initial contacts with farmers and landowners north of Murchison Falls National Park.

It is clear that the prospects for wildlife conservation are good especially in regard to conservancies forming part of the strategy to address human wildlife conflicts as spelt out in the Uganda Wildlife Policy 2014 and provide added income to the landowners.

Introduction

The Legal Framework for Wildlife Conservation

The constitution of Uganda

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda promulgated in 1995 under "National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy" paragraph XXVII on the Environment provides for the promotion of "sustainable development and public awareness of the need to manage land, air and water resources in a balanced and sustainable manner for the present and future generations." It also requires the State to take measures "to prevent or minimise damage and destruction to land, air and water resources resulting from pollution or other causes."

Specifically, subparagraph (iv) provides for the State, including local governments, to:

- "(a) create and develop parks, reserves and recreation areas and ensure the conservation of natural resources;
- (b) promote the rational use of natural resources so as to safeguard and protect the biodiversity of Uganda."

According to the provisions of the Constitution, the Government's responsibility is therefore not only to create and develop PAs, but also to promote the rational use of natural resources.

The Uganda Wildlife Act

The Uganda Wildlife Act Cap 200 of 2000 provides for the "sustainable management of wildlife; to consolidate the law relating to wildlife management; to establish a coordinating, monitoring and supervisory body for that purpose and for other matters incidental to or connected with the foregoing," [The Laws of Uganda (2000).]

The Act also provides for the issuance of wildlife use rights which is "a right granted to a person, community or organisation to make some extractive utilisation of wildlife." Six use rights have been identified in the Act i.e.

- i. hunting: class A wildlife use right;
- ii. farming: class B wildlife use right;
- iii. ranching: class C wildlife use right;

- iv. trading in wildlife and wildlife products: class D wildlife use right;
- v. using wildlife for educational or scientific purposes including medical experiments and developments: class E wildlife use right; and
- vi. general extraction: class F wildlife use right.

This provision allows a person, community, the private sector or lead agency to apply to UWA for one or more wildlife use rights to be granted to them. Under Section 3, paragraph 1 of the Uganda Wildlife Act, the ownership of wildlife existing in its wild habitat in Uganda is vested in the Government on behalf of, and for the benefit of, the people of Uganda. However paragraph 2 provides for the private ownership of wildlife if "lawfully taken" by that person or community or institution that has been granted a license to that effect.

With the legal provisions outlined above, it is clear that the Ugandan Wildlife law allows for the private management and generation of benefits from wildlife resources.

The Uganda Wildlife Policy 2014

The Uganda Wildlife Policy of 2014 outlines a number of objectives that are focused on the management of wildlife outside protected areas. Key objectives amongst these include:

- Objective 2: To sustainably manage wildlife populations in and outside protected areas
- Objective 3: To promote sustainable and equitable utilization of wildlife resources as a viable form of land use for national economic development
- Objective 4: To effectively mitigate human wildlife conflicts

Some of the strategies identified for the achievement of Objective 2 provide for the formulation of guidelines on conservation of wildlife outside protected areas and the promotion of the implementation of such guidelines. Among the relevant strategies for wildlife policy, Objective 3 is the need to "support the private sector to effectively participate in conservation related enterprise development."

There are several approaches to conserve wildlife outside PAs. The management of wildlife by land owners on their land in the form of a conservancy is just one of the approaches available. Wildlife on private land being operated as a conservancy can be utilized (owner obtains rights) through the various classes of wildlife use rights as outlined above

The Land Act and Land Policy

Uganda's Land Act Cap 227 requires a person who owns or occupies land to "manage and utilize the land in accordance with the Forests Act, the Mining Act, the National Environment Act, the Water Act, the Uganda Wildlife Act and any other law."

On the other hand, the Uganda National Land Policy of February 2013 states its Vision as "a transformed Uganda society through optimal use and management of land resources for a prosperous and industrialized economy with a developed services sector." The vision provides for centrality of the land sector, transformation of society, modernized agriculture, protection of the environment, planned human settlement and land development.

Again in both the Land Act and Policy protection of the environment and management of wildlife are key, and therefore provide opportunities to develop wildlife management enterprises that can benefit the land owners.

Conventions and agreements on wildlife/biodiversity to which government is party

According to the UWA Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018, Uganda is signatory to a number of international and regional conventions and agreements that relate to wildlife conservation and/or management. Many of the provisions of these agreements are operationalized by UWA as a government body mandated to manage wildlife on behalf of the Government. Of specific interest, are the provisions under the Convention on the Conservation of Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Migratory Species, CITES and the Lusaka Agreement on the conservation of fauna and flora that all seek to ensure the sustainable management and protection of wildlife through conservation awareness, reintroduction of extinct species where applicable, halting loss of habitats, addressing ecosystem degradation and ensuring restoration of

those that have been degraded, knowledge and science base on biodiversity, and demonstrating the economic value of ecosystems to human survival. The creation of conservancies in Uganda would help the Government achieve the objectives outlined in these various treaties.

Definition of Conservancy

The term *conservancy*, is new to Uganda. King, Buzzard, and Warigia (2015) note that conservancies originated from the concept of wildlife ranching and the privatization of wildlife on Private land in the late 1960s and 1970s in Southern Africa. Community Based Natural Resource Management programs (CBNRM) later developed in these countries in the 1980s. Community-based conservation or natural resource management models differ across Africa as does the level of devolution of wildlife user-rights to landowners, depending on national legislation.

For the purposes of this paper, the word conservancy means "land set aside by an individual landowner, body corporate, group of owners or a community for the primary purpose of wildlife conservation." Various enterprises may be embedded in the conservancy where those enterprises generate revenue from conservation-dependant activities. This form of land use is quite new to Uganda but increasingly becoming a necessity given the pace at which wild lands are disappearing as a result of agricultural expansion, urbanization, road construction, industrialization, and other infrastructure in the name of development.

The Protected Area System in Uganda

There are several categories of PAs in Uganda. They include National Parks, Wildlife Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Community Wildlife Areas and Central Forest Reserves. UWA has responsibility for the management of the first two of these and for providing technical support to the management of wildlife sanctuaries and community wildlife areas, while the National Forest Authority manages the central forest reserves. UWA is also mandated to manage all other wildlife on private property/ land outside protected areas in collaboration with the local communities and local governments. A number of concessions have been signed between UWA and the private sector to this effect. According to Mwandha, Langoya and Kasoma (2004), PAs managed by UWA and National Forest Authority

cover 32,067 km². Considering that Uganda's land area⁹⁹ is 200,523 km² (83%), with water covering 36,527km², PAs cover approximately 15% of the land area, with wildlife PAs covering almost 10%. Unfortunately, despite the sizeable area, most of this land is fragmented making wildlife conservation difficult given that wildlife needs vast areas for appropriate feeding and breeding. It is essential that additional habitats, especially those that enhance connectivity, are protected for the survival of the wildlife.

In general, the development of conservancies, as additional wildlife habitats, is increasingly becoming necessary in Uganda given the following:

- **Threatened ecosystems:** Not all ecosystems are represented in the PAs system. For example, the 1999 Uganda PA system plan identified some areas not represented in the PA system including *Piptadeniastrum-Albizia-Celtis* forests in Mpigi, Rakai and Mukono, wetlands and the Achwa river system. These ecosystems are clearly home to several wildlife species and their protection as conservancies would enhance wildlife conservation.
- **Inadequate park size:** While many parks are large, most are too small to support viable populations of species and encompass whole ecosystems. Lake Mburo National Park (LMNP) is a good example, which with its original area of about 650 km² was reduced to 370 km² leaving out some key wildlife habitats that are important for the survival of wildlife outside the protected area.
- **Incomplete ecosystems:** Park boundaries are often not in line with modern principles of PA design, leaving key areas of ecological importance unprotected. The Uganda PA system plan of 1999 clearly points this out by indicating some of the key ecosystems which were left out of the official boundaries during the gazettement of protected areas in Uganda.
- **Ecological isolation:** Many PAs are isolated and fragmented, posing serious problems for the wildlife populations therein and threatening their sustainability. Conservancies may be located to provide for migration

between such isolated protected areas or animal populations. For example a conservancy along the River Nile north of Murchison Falls National Park, provides a corridor for movement of wildlife between East Madi Wildlife Reserve and Murchison Falls National Park enabling essential exchange of genes between the two populations.

- **Rapidly declining wildlife populations outside protected areas:** In the early 1900s, Uganda was teeming with wildlife. After the creation of PAs (parks and reserves), most of the wildlife that remained outside these areas was heavily hunted both legally and illegally. Little remains in general, with most on private property neighbouring existing protected areas. The survival of such wildlife can only happen if the land owners are realizing benefit from the wildlife resident on their properties. One sustainable way of ensuring this is the creation of conservancies.

Current benefits of wildlife conservation to communities and land owners

For communities to appreciate and support UWA in the management and protection of wildlife, they need to receive benefits from wildlife and natural resources. Currently the benefits are limited to:

- **Revenue sharing from sport hunting-based tourism:** UWA has signed a number of agreements with the private sector, local governments and community associations that have provisions for benefit sharing based on the terms of the various agreements. Such agreements usually provide for a given fraction of the revenues to be paid to the communities through their associations which implement projects that benefit the wider community. They also determine how much the land owners should benefit from the collaborative management activities for wildlife harvested on their private property/ land, and that portion that goes to Local Government and UWA. **Table 1** presents an example for revenue sharing from wildlife collaborative management activities within Lake Mburo Ranches showing the various funds that have been received/ shared amongst the various

⁹⁹ Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2015

parties that have a stake to wildlife management in the area. It should be noted that the greater part of this revenue does not come to the landowners despite the fact that the wildlife lives on their land. The concept of conservancies will ensure that all the benefits accruing from hosting of wildlife is gained by the person hosting the wildlife in question.

- **Revenue sharing funds (20% of visitor entrance fees):** which are shared amongst the parishes whose boundaries border the park. These funds are generally channelled into community projects such as schools, clinics, group enterprises, provision of water sources especially for cattle and tree planting projects. With a population of over 35,000 in this area, the individual benefit is almost negligible and therefore communities have found difficulty in appreciating the financial benefit from wildlife.

However, the disadvantage is that often they get the lower skilled jobs due to limited education.

- **Access to some park resources:** Through its community conservation arrangements, UWA has devised a method of allowing communities access to selected resources within the park based on a negotiated memorandum of understanding. Such resources include poles, firewood and raw materials for crafts.
- **Market access for their goods:** Communities neighboring the parks also have access to the market for their goods, provided by the lodges and UWA staff.
- **Development programmes that come as a result of the presence of the park:** PAs are generally remote. Communities neighboring the parks are therefore generally poor.

Revenue sharing from Wildlife Sport Hunting activities in ranches around Lake Mburo

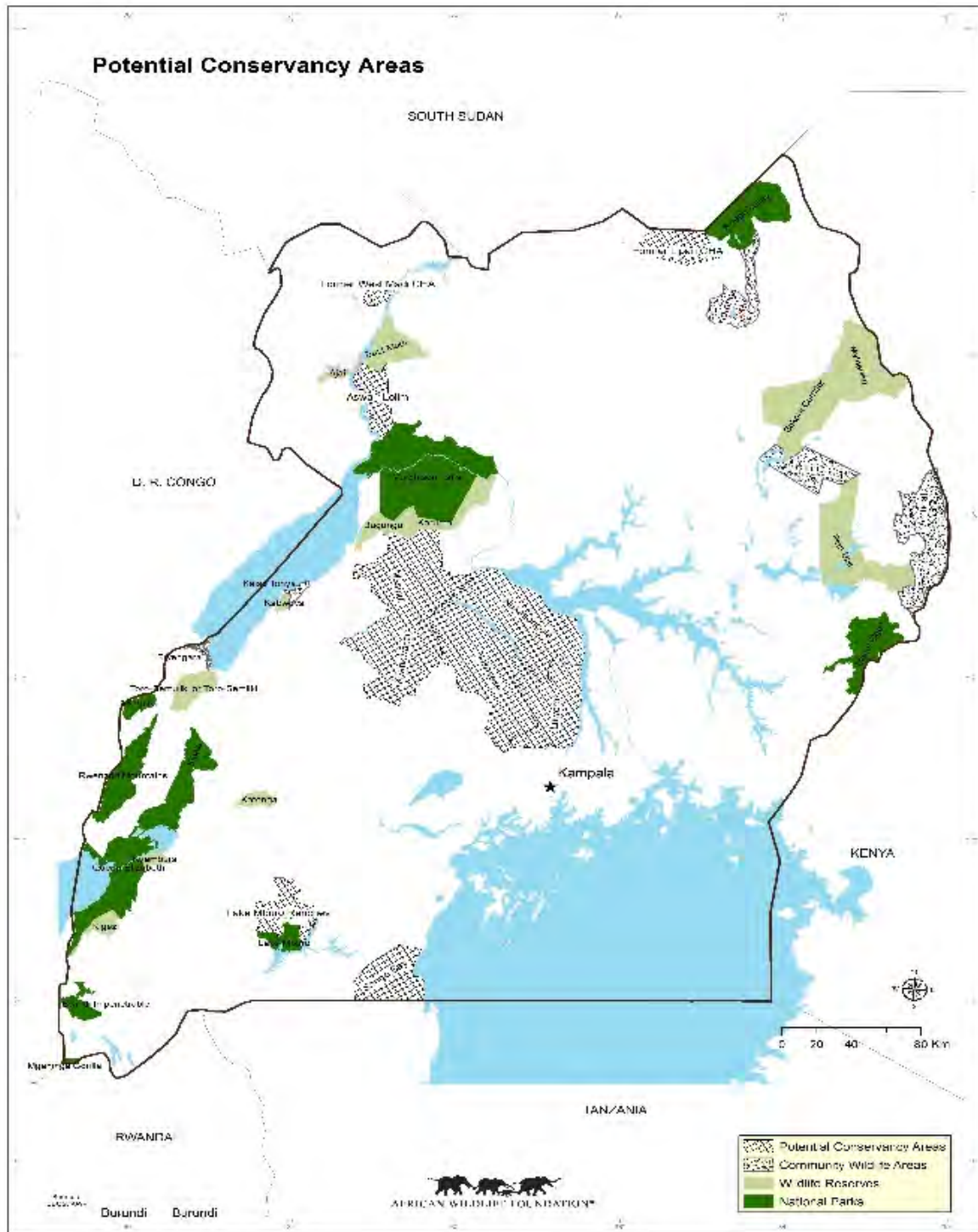
Year	Local Government (US \$)	Community Associations (US \$)	Community Protected Area Institution (US \$)	Uganda Wildlife Authority (US \$)	Land Owner (US \$)
2001	547	7,105	547	2,733	-
2002	1,118	14,528	1,118	5,588	-
2003	1,824	23,706	1,824	8,808	310
2004	1,589	20,657	1,589	4,767	9,534
2005	2,287	29,731	2,287	6,861	4,574
2006	3,072	39,930	3,072	9,215	6,143
2007	3,525	45,825	3,525	10,575	7,050
2008	5,721	51,489	5,721	17,163	18,567
2009	5,288.5	47,596.5	5,288.5	15,865.5	22,956
2010	4,033	36,293	4,033	11,993	32,260
Grand Total	19,681	232,969	19,681	93,566	101,394

- **Provision of jobs for those who qualify:** Though UWA does not give preferential treatment to communities that neighbour the parks, their proximity allows them to have an edge (more of them are aware when there is a vacancy and apply). Increasingly, various enterprises that are developed near the parks because of tourism are employing more locals for the purposes of facilitating engagement and benefiting from the existence of the PAs.

However, UWA and other partners use this for fundraising to support the communities in several development projects such as the improvement of education, construction of clinics and improved agriculture.

The Role of Conservancies

Fitzgerald, in a 2013 report for AWF, lists the five main uses of conservancies as follows



- Conservancies complement state owned and managed PAs by providing additional habitat and refuge for wildlife. Most protected area authorities worldwide have financial limitations and are challenged to manage and sustain protected areas through revenue they generate and central government support.
- Conservancies diversify the tourism economy by offering a different type of tourism product.

In Kenya, Namibia and South Africa, many visitors combine visits to protected areas with conservancies as this provides a diversified experience. For example, walking safaris, hunting and cultural interaction are often more prevalent in conservancies.

- Conservancies diversify land management providing a range of habitat types to support a broader diversity of wildlife and ecosystems.

- Conservancies enable the direct engagement and empowerment of communities *and private landowners* to take part in and benefit from conservation. As a consequence, human wildlife conflict and animosity towards wildlife decreases, and the number of people benefiting from wildlife increases, encouraging further protection of wildlife.
- Conservancy management encourages greater understanding of more ecologically sustainable land use practices within the community as community members realize that it may be possible to combine existing land uses with existing pastoral or other land uses.

Wildlife outside protected areas: Potential Conservancies

Map 1 below shows various areas in Uganda that host substantial wildlife populations outside the gazetted PAs. Each of the areas is later described in more detail to enhance understanding of wildlife conservation opportunities that are likely to be harnessed.

Lake Mburo ranches

Lake Mburo National Park (LMNP), which currently covers an area of 370 km², was previously larger (about 650 km²) before degazettement of part of it for cattle ranches. The area also includes a government ranch covering an additional 62 km² which is understocked with cattle but has substantial numbers of wildlife. Despite the degazettement of part of the Park, there is substantial wildlife in the cattle ranches especially buffalo, warthogs, eland, impala, bushbucks and zebra. The wildlife is a source of conflict between the communities and LMNP authorities. Wildlife competes with cattle for grass, water and salt.



The communities believe the wildlife spreads disease since animals are not immunized or treated. They also break fences where the ranchers have established gardens for their home use and cause damage to water sources. In addition, the communities do not feel that they benefit from the Park or wildlife. It is important to note that over 180 community members in the area have parcels of land of varying sizes that neighbor each other and are suitable for the development of a conservancy.



Photo: Kathleen Garrigan

The amalgamation of such land properties will provide an opportunity for conservation of wildlife through arrangements that will enable the land owners to benefit from the wildlife they host on their land. Map showing Areas outside Uganda's protected areas hosting substantial wildlife numbers

Three lodges are located just outside the Park's boundaries on the eastern and northern sides. They are using the community land for walking safaris and horse rides to demonstrate the interaction between cattle and wildlife, without paying a fee to the community. AWF is currently engaging the ranchers in a discussion to start a conservancy in this area to enable the ranchers to better plan the use of their land and negotiate with the lodge owners around the

possibility of entrance fees for the walking safaris and horse rides. An initial area of 30 km² is being targeted.

The engagement has so far yielded a conservancy constitution that would allow the ranchers to pool their land for the establishment of the conservancy. During the process, the land owners expressed fear that the conservancy may be a ploy by UWA to annex their land to the park. The owners with less land (less than 300 acres) were uncomfortable about the participation of owners of larger areas of land (over 1 square mile) fearing they could influence decisions and vice versa. On a related point, most of the owners with larger parcels of land often live in Kampala and are unavailable for meetings; causing decision-making to be difficult and lengthy.

Next steps include the development of a zoning scheme that would identify areas for tourism, tracks, and related infrastructure. The major challenge is related to the fact that each of the ranchers has a permanent home established within their ranch, which makes the area less of a wilderness than most tourists would expect. However, if planned appropriately, the conservancy could offer a unique experience, combining cultural tourism with wildlife tourism.

Former Aswa – Lolim Game Reserve

Previously, MFNP was connected to South Sudan through the former Kilak controlled hunting area, Aswa-Lolim game reserve¹⁰⁰ and the current East Madi Wildlife Reserve, allowing for the migration of wildlife, especially elephants. This migration followed the River Nile which provided water for the migrating animals. With the degazettement of the hunting area and game reserve, and an increasing human population, the connection and dispersal of the wildlife is literally cut off and human - wildlife conflicts have continued to soar. Wildlife numbers in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) dropped to their lowest levels in the early 1980s due to excessive poaching but have slowly and steadily increased since the early 1990s as poaching was brought under control. The increasing numbers of wildlife were coincidentally helped by the insurgency in northern Uganda during the Kony war when communities

were forced to stay in internally displaced people's camps, leaving large swathes of land for the wildlife to roam. The increasing wildlife populations coupled with the communities returning to their homes in the late 2000s has resulted in increased human-wildlife conflict. MFNP management started getting reports from neighboring communities about problem animal issues, especially regarding buffaloes and elephants. Management has had to deploy rangers to scare off the wildlife in various locations.

Despite the park being the most visited of all Uganda's National Parks, and therefore with a substantial amount of revenue sharing funds, it also has the longest boundary and therefore highest number of communities who benefit from the funds. This means individual communities do not benefit much.

Six community members, with over 3,000 acres (12 km²) of land, in the former Aswa-Lolim game reserve area, have approached AWF and requested support to establish a conservancy in their area.¹⁰¹ They have also indicated the potential to engage their neighbors to increase the total area available. This area has potential to form a wildlife corridor joining MFNP to East Madi Wildlife Reserve along the River Nile as it has a lower population than the rest of Amuru and Nwoya districts. It is necessary that this initiative is taken while the interest is still high, given the speed at which wild areas are being converted into large-scale rice and maize farms in this area. Some of the initial activities that need to be carried out include undertaking an ecological assessment and conservancy viability analysis. Whereas, preliminary analysis of literature and consultation with key stakeholders in the area has shown potential viability, a detailed analysis is necessary to confirm this and point to potential activities and locations to be considered. The result of the assessment would then inform how the conservancy would operate through development of management and business plans and a constitution.

Establishment of a conservancy in this area would be consistent with the Uganda PA system assessment of 1999 which recommended the establishment of an elephant corridor along the Albert Nile to allow

¹⁰⁰ Aswa-Lolim Game Reserve and Kilak controlled hunting area were degazetted in 1972 to give way to the establishment of ranching schemes that have not successfully taken off mainly due to previous conflicts in this area.

¹⁰¹ Aswa-Lolim Game reserve used to cover about 113 km² while Kilak controlled hunting area was 1,800 km².

migration of elephants from MFNP to East Madi Wildlife Reserve.

Karenga Community Wildlife Area (KCWA)

Measuring 956 km² and running directly southwards from Kidepo Valley National Park (KVNP), KCWA is key to dispersal of wildlife from the park. UWA has signed a concession agreement for this area with a sport hunting company. Unfortunately, as with all other related concessions, the sport hunting company in question has failed to provide technical management of the area, leaving this to UWA.

AWF, working with the communities of Karenga, Lobalangit sub counties and UWA - embarked on sensitizing the community of the need for a land use plan to guide the use of land. A ten year land use plan, including the section of KCWA falling within the two sub counties, has recently been developed and was formally approved in 2015. The land use plan provides for the various development activities such as agriculture development, livestock development, infrastructure, wildlife conservation and tourism, and forestry among others.

Given that large herds of elephants and buffalo already periodically residing in KWCA (the highest number counted in 2015 was 150 elephants in two groups), it is imperative that its conservation be urgently addressed. According to the Uganda Wildlife Act, a Community Wildlife Area (CWA) is “an area in which individuals who have property rights in land may carry out activities for the sustainable management and utilisation of wildlife if the activities do not adversely affect wildlife and in which area the State may prescribe land use measures.” UWA urgently needs to work with development partners to provide the necessary technical guidance to the communities to enable them to manage this area sustainably. The development of a conservancy is key to fulfilling this objective and there is a need to include the rest of the CWA in the land use plan.

Amudat, Iri, Rwengara and Kaiso Tonya Community Wildlife Areas¹⁰²

There is limited information on the current status of the remaining four CWAs, though it is clear there is

immense pressure to convert them into either grazing or agricultural land. An assessment of the current situation needs to be undertaken to enable a decision on the course of action either to abandon any conservation efforts or to take measures to support the communities and local government to manage them as conservancies. The officially gazetted areas for the CWAs are: Amudat 2,053 km², Iri 1,046 km², Rwengara 76 km² and Kaiso Tonya 107 km². In the case of Kaiso Tonya, the management of Kabwoya Wildlife Reserve forms part of the concession. However, despite the success in the adjacent Kabwoya where wildlife populations have recovered well, there are still issues over the overstocking of cattle in the CWA which has led to extensive degradation of the area reducing the possibility of wildlife population recovery there. This is another case of where a review is required to determine how to move forward.

Former West Madi controlled hunting area

This area is found on the western bank of the River Nile between Yumbe and Moyo. Originally, the controlled hunting area covered 749 km². There is still limited wildlife here with the 1995 assessment indicating presence of Uganda kob, sitatunga and hippo in very low numbers. The Uganda PA system plan proposed retaining only 200 km² of this area as a wildlife reserve but received opposition from the population. It is assumed the opposition was due to the lack of benefits that would accrue to the communities. Rather than create a wildlife reserve, UWA can propose to the communities and local government that a conservancy be developed in this area (the part not yet settled). The challenge here would be to increase the wildlife populations to levels that would attract tourism and/or sport hunting.

Some Islands in Lake Victoria (Kalangala district)

UWA has previously received a number of requests from individuals with land on some islands in Lake Victoria wanting to set up wildlife sanctuaries. UWA could investigate whether interest still exists and advise the interested land owners on the possibility of developing conservancies and provide the required support for their development.

¹⁰² Though declared PAs as CWAs, limited supervision by UWA renders their protection almost non-existent

Parts of Luweero, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Kyankwanzi and Masindi Districts

UWA issued licenses for wildlife sport hunting in the three districts of Nakaseke, Luweero and Nakasongola, to a single operator *circa* 2009. There is also potential for wildlife conservation along the banks of River Kafu in Kyankwanzi, Nakaseke and Masindi Districts. The Ziwa ranch in Nakasongola District, where southern white rhino are being managed, is already demonstrating the potential for wildlife recovery in this area. Strategic action is required to determine the extent to which a conservancy can be developed here.

Former Lipan Controlled Hunting Area

During the PA assessment process in the 1990s, there was insurgency (Kony war) in much of northern Uganda. Consultations could therefore not be fully held with the communities neighboring this former CHA as well as Kitgum district administration. This area remains sparsely populated. Previously measuring 865 km², Lipan CHA is separated from KVNP by the Napore-Nyagea Central Forest Reserve. This means potential for wildlife to migrate between KVNP and Lipan is still high. Reports of buffalo, greater kudu, waterbuck, oribi, ostrich and possibly roan antelope have previously been made by UWA staff. It is likely that klipspringer still survive on the mountains. Discussion with the communities neighboring the area as well as the district therefore needs to be urgently undertaken to determine the future of the wildlife here.

Sango Bay

Sango Bay on the banks of Lake Victoria is another potential area for the development of conservancies. Most of it is gazetted as a Central Forest Reserve but also has substantial amount of wildlife especially elephants, buffalo, sitatunga and other wetland animals. The elephants have frequently caused damage to people's crops and often move out to Tanzania. It is imperative that the wildlife here starts providing demonstrable benefit to the communities in order for them to appreciate their value rather than agitate for their extermination.

How Would Conservancies Operate in Uganda?

Funding (for management, equipment, infrastructure, vet services, etc.)

Learning from the way in which conservancies in other countries are operating; the establishment of a conservancy has many challenges. It requires substantial funds to provide for development costs, relevant infrastructure and for the implementation of various key activities; especially anti-poaching, - that will enhance the visitor experience. Therefore, a conservancy has to develop a business plan, assess operational costs, and determine economic viability by looking at various avenues of sourcing funds to ensure its sustainability (described further on in this article.) Where private land owners are coming together to form an amalgamated conservancy there is always 'sacrifice'/investment that is needed from the land owners. It is that level of commitment which then attracts donors and other investors. This commitment might not necessarily be financial, but input of other resources such as time commitment to implement various aspects required for developing the conservancy.

Grants

Conservancy management must look at accessing various grants especially before it starts generating its own revenue. Prioritization of activities is also key to ensuring only the priority activities are undertaken. Grants are often short term and specific but can help bridge some funding gaps. A dedicated team needs to be established by the conservancy to raise funds to pursue this, and other avenues of funding or a partnership with an institution that can help source grants.

Donations

The conservancy can also look at encouraging those who visit it, as well as those who read about it on internet, and other sources, to make a contribution. Such donations are especially important to cover costs that are not often provided for when grants have been negotiated. Donations could also be in kind such as the provision of equipment and uniforms for staff. This calls for the conservancy to have a good marketing strategy that informs the public about its activities and challenges action

through donations or volunteering. Donations are not reliable income streams.

Sales of live animals

As wildlife populations recover, one way to provide for their management is to periodically sell off a portion of the wildlife. This requires approval of wildlife use rights by UWA. Sale of live animals however, can only take place when there is evidence of recovering populations and therefore can only be possible after some years in operation. Funds from the sale of live animals can be ploughed back into the management of the conservancy. However, the sale of live animals is still low; focusing on the much smaller wildlife like tortoises, chameleons and snakes. For good returns, any conservancy would need to work towards the sale of larger species such as antelopes.

Sport hunting

This is one of the current ways in which communities around LMNP are benefiting from wildlife on their land. Other locations where sport hunting is being undertaken include several areas within Karamoja, the former Aswa-Lolim Game Reserve and Kilak controlled hunting area, East Madi Wildlife Reserve. Sport hunting however requires expansive land allowing for hunting to take place without endangering the communities or their livestock. This has proved a challenge for the communities around LMNP because of the close proximity of the different homes on the ranches. Proper quotas need to be set and based on accurate wildlife numbers. Animal fees can then be ploughed back into the management of the conservancy. However, UWA needs to focus on setting fair trophy fees as the current ones are still low compared to other sport hunting locations world over.

Tourism/photographic fees

The charging of entrance and guide fees to visitors to the conservancy, including hunters, is another form of revenue generation required to run a conservancy. However because the fees are often set low and visitor number limited; these funds are often not adequate to cover all necessary costs and other sources of income need to be identified and followed up. As the wildlife product is improved, fees could increase, correspondingly.

Government support (local/central)

Since the conservancy would be playing an important role in ensuring the survival of various wildlife species by enabling breeding and dispersal, it is imperative that government considers support to conservancies (especially at their inception), to enable them cover some of their costs. Funds could either come from the local or central government. In any case when the conservancy succeeds, it will be a source of income through taxes and sale of various products to its visitors, thus boosting the economy



Volunteers

Apart from support through provision of funds and equipment, a further key aspect of support that the conservancies need to explore is working with volunteers who can provide their expertise at no cost. This allows the conservancy to work with fewer regular employees and therefore require fewer funds than would otherwise have been necessary.

Management of conservancies

There are several ways in which conservancies in Uganda can be managed. The key determining factor regarding the form of management - is land ownership. Where land is owned by an individual, such a conservancy will be managed privately by the individual or his appointed agent. A group of individuals can also put their land together and develop a conservancy. They will need to discuss and agree on how they will manage their land through the development of a constitution. On the other hand, where land is communal, the set up of a conservancy committee to manage the conservancy on behalf of the community is an option. The committee then makes decisions on behalf of the community. Alternatively, the relevant local government (often sub county level, but it could also

be district level) could take responsibility to manage the conservancy.

However, because of the limited expertise of the individual land owners, community or local government in the management of wildlife, it is advisable that conservancies be concessioned out to a private company or NGO with the requisite expertise to manage it profitably. Best practices suggest that landowners, be it community or individuals; can hold the land and perform a governance role, while management should be undertaken by professionals wherever possible.

Potential Challenges

Human wildlife conflicts

With growing human populations and increasing agricultural activities, human wildlife conflicts are bound to increase. Although UWA and the communities continue to find innovative ways to address these conflicts, the development of conservancies often results in an increase in the number of wildlife and therefore, in increased conflicts. Additional interventions may be required to fully address this challenge. An example of this type of intervention is a fence constructed around the

properties, as can already be seen in some areas of Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. A fund could also be created to help compensate community members for the loss of their crops and property, and to attend to life-threatening situations. However, it is noted that these funds are hard to support long-term.

Costs for set up and management

As with management of wildlife PAs, there is a cost incurred in managing a conservancy. This is especially so at the outset when it is yet to bring in any money. It is important that the proponents of the conservancy consider the financial implications. An economic assessment and business plan needs to be undertaken before the conservancy is established to guide the decision making process. However, if the conservancy is being set up with the objective of protecting a specific wildlife species which would have otherwise gone extinct, no amount of cost should be considered too much and donors should provide support. Various sources of funding should be considered to support the setup of the conservancy as mentioned in above. Costs will include staffing, equipment, infrastructure, advertising, field activities. These costs are often the reason many have abandoned plans of setting up a



conservancy. Government could consider providing some incentives to individuals and communities who need to set up conservancies.

Regulations which are unclear/absent

Although the law allows for individuals and communities to manage wildlife on their land and wildlife use rights have been identified to enable this to take place, no regulations and guidelines have been developed to guide the investors in such ventures. This situation often leaves both UWA, as the regulator, and the investors, unable to proceed. Specific regulations on conservancy development need to be developed urgently to guide investment in this sector.

Limited experience and expertise

Uganda has limited experience and expertise in the management of conservancies. Even in countries like Kenya where conservancies have been established, there are still many issues where guidance is required. This limited experience has deterred those otherwise interested in wildlife management from starting conservancies, not knowing how to do it sustainably.

Land rights/ownership issues

Sometimes land ownership and use rights are unclear. This is especially the case for all community wildlife areas gazetted in 2002 where communities believe government still has interest in the land. The uncertainty also provides for opportunists a platform to grab the land making the development of conservancies more complex. Unclear tenure is also a deterrent for investors.

Limited sizes of individual land parcels

Despite there being large expanses of land suitable for conservancy development in many areas, it has been divided into rather small parcels, making it difficult to develop into conservancies. The small parcels require more time and resources for negotiations with all the individual land owners involved, before a sustainable conservancy can be developed.

Competition from other land uses

Most of Uganda's land is suitable for a variety of uses; most of them quite profitable. This means land

owners are not pressed to look at alternatives such as conservancy development, since they generally receive considerable returns from whichever enterprise they engage in. The added advantage is the potential for wildlife management as a possible complement to already existing land uses.

Conclusion

Uganda hosts great populations of wildlife outside protected areas. The potential to turn these areas into profitable wildlife centers through conservancy establishment is high, but can only be achieved if the cooperation of the parties involved is solicited and attained. The key to this anticipated achievement does not lie in the ability of conservationists to convince land owners of the benefits, but in the level of benefits they would derive vis-à-vis the current land use benefits. The greater the benefit, the greater the commitment from landowners, and the greater the conversion of more land from purely livestock management; to co-management (livestock and wildlife); and, from agriculture to wildlife management through the establishment of conservancies.

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Photo: Philip Muruthi

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