

Buzzing too far?

The ideological echo of the global governance agenda on Community Based Forest Management initiatives: A case of Mafungautsi Forest in Zimbabwe.

Bram Büscher¹ and Tendayi Mutimukuru²

1. Faculty of Social Sciences and Centre for International Cooperation, Free University Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
2. CIFOR Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe and Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Paper to be presented at the 10th biannual conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property, 9-13 August 2004, Oaxaca, Mexico.

Abstract

This paper focuses on how the neo-liberal global governance agenda echoes through into local level Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) practices in Zimbabwe. The ideologically charged concepts, or ‘buzzwords’ that make up the global governance agenda, such as empowerment of the poor, community participation, good governance and the like, are alleged to subtly carve out managerial and governmental directions for a broad variety of processes, including that of the management and governance of natural resources. It is not yet clear, however, how far this influence goes and how to characterise the effects of specific global conceptual frameworks on local processes. In this paper we investigate the specific link between the global governance concepts and local forest management in Zimbabwe and see whether there is a relation and how it can be characterised. The research reported here is based on a case study approach in the Mafungautsi state forest in Zimbabwe, where a joint management pilot project was set up in 1994 by the Zimbabwe Forest Commission, in order to generate lessons for the scaling up of such initiatives to other state forests in the country. The way this forest is managed thus has direct impact on the way other forests in Zimbabwe will be managed in future. It is therefore crucial to critically analyse the (ideological) premises the forest management is based on. The preliminary results of research presented here will first focus on analysis of the theoretical and ideological roots of the concepts comprising the global governance agenda. Secondly, we will compare these with the historical and present ideological premises of policy and governance documents for forest resources in Zimbabwe and specifically the Mafungautsi Joint Management Pilot Project. The paper shows that CBFM needs to be offloaded of the discursive burden it carries, in order for communities to truly benefit from the resources they depend on.

Introduction

To start a paper with a catchy phrase on globalisation is almost impossible. What can one say about such a complex and far-reaching concept as globalisation that firstly makes sense, and secondly, is still enticing enough to convince the reader to continue reading? Of course one can mention the ever increasing pace of global movements of communication, goods and people, facilitated by technical innovations that render boundaries, distances and conventional ideas about time irrelevant (Rosenau, 1997). Another point often brought up is that globalisation is juxtaposed by its antonym of localisation, creating contradicting and conflicting forces such as the global mainstreaming of concepts, ideas and, mostly western, cultural notions and behaviour versus local tendencies towards traditions, a sense of 'ownness' and resistance to outside interference (Friedman, 2000). It is these contradicting forces of the globalisation of ideas and concepts versus localised practices and developments that we are interested in, in this paper. More specifically; we want to take several 'global governance buzzwords', such as sustainable development, empowerment of the poor, capacity building and community participation, and investigate their relation with and impact on local level Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) practices in Southern Africa.

The notion of buzzwords defined as policy catchwords or development concepts is nothing new (Nuijten et al, 2003). Policy conceptual frameworks in terms of specific wordings are of all times and form a fact of life in human societies where language is the principal mode of communication. But since all conceptual frameworks carry meaning and specific connotations, one – and especially a social scientist – has to be aware of their impact and effects. What then separates the global governance agenda with its 'buzzwords' from many other conceptual frameworks is its sheer global reach in terms of influence. It is clear from the literature that policy concepts devised and operationalised in one part of the globe can travel the whole world and influence processes and developments in other parts of the world (Peet and Watts, 1993; Reinicke, 1998; Nuijten et al, 2003), with usually the developed countries or the 'neo-liberal Washington Consensus' at the originating and developing countries at the receiving end. What is not clear, however, is how far this influence goes and how the effects of specific global conceptual frameworks on local processes can be characterised (Reinicke, 1998). In this paper we want to delve into this question, focussing specifically on the relationship between global governance concepts and community based forest management in Southern Africa.

The research reported here is based on a case study approach in the Mafungautsi state forest in Zimbabwe, where a joint management pilot project was set up in 1994 by the Zimbabwe Forest Commission in order to generate lessons for the scaling up of such initiatives to other state forests in the country. The way this forest is managed thus has direct impact on the way other forests in Zimbabwe will be managed in the future. It is therefore critical to study the (ideological) premises the management and governance are based on and compare these with global governance concepts. In order to do this, we will start with a discussion of what we mean with global governance buzzwords. What are their theoretical and ideological roots and how are they currently constructed and operationalised? Next, we outline our methodological approach and provide some contextual background information on the development of forest policy in Zimbabwe and our casestudy area. This leads us to the analyses of our research results. The paper concludes by answering the question whether neo-liberal global governance concepts are 'buzzing too far' into local level CBFM practices in Zimbabwe and outlines some recommendations for further research.

Global governance buzzwords

When we talk about ‘global governance buzzwords’, three concepts, and their interrelations, need to be discussed: ‘global’, ‘governance’, and ‘buzzwords’. In this section we will do so in such a way as to make comparison and contrast with the managerial and governmental directions of CBFM projects in Zimbabwe as logical and meaningful as possible. This implies adhering to the ultimate goals set out by these projects: to conserve forests and related biodiversity and to develop the communities depending on those forests in such a way that they are mutually beneficial. More specifically, according to Hackle (1999, p.727), this means adhering to three basic principles: “(1) allowing people living near protected lands to participate in land-use policy and management decisions; (2) giving people proprietorship or ownership over wildlife resources; and (3) giving local people economic benefit from wildlife conservation”. Even shorter: we should pay particular attention to *participation*, *ownership* and *sustainable development*. Quite illustrative already: all three are regular buzzwords used in the global governance lexicon.

We can be fairly brief about the concept ‘global’. Since it is an adjective giving the connotation of ‘encompassing the whole world’ to a noun, we can accept it as such, without much further deliberation. Of course, one can say that the adjective ‘global’ doesn’t actually say how far the connotation goes, but the whole purpose of this paper is to delve into this very question. With the next concept of (global) governance we find ourselves in more complex theoretical waters. Governance has been used and defined in so many contexts that searching for an all-encompassing definition in the short space that we have, would be futile. Rather we want to outline what we think are important theoretical connotations to the concept, which are useful for the purpose of this paper. We commence with the difference between government and governance.

According to Rosenau (2001, p.1), both government and governance “consist of rule systems, of steering mechanisms through which authority is exercised in order to enable the governed to preserve their coherence and move towards desired goals”. However, governance is a much broader concept than government, and distinguishes itself by its emphasis on “any collectivity – private or public – that employs *informal as well as formal* steering mechanisms to make demands, frame goals, issue directives, pursue policies and generate compliance” (idem, 1, emphasis added). Government thus focuses more on *formal* systems of rule or steering mechanisms, usually at either local, regional, national or international levels. From the literature, it is evident that as a result of forces of globalisation and localisation a shift can be discerned from formal state-centred government to more informal governance, encompassing a wide range of actors, with differing levels of power in constantly changing alliances (Rosenau 1990, 1997, 2001; Falkner, 2003; Nuijten et al, 2003). As this shift is global in nature, its effects can be seen in Africa as well (Callaghy et al, 2001).

The fact that more and more actors are involved in constructing, influencing and implementing (environmental) policy renders power in the policy-process exceedingly diffuse and no longer a primacy of the state or bound to a specific locale (Biermann and Dingwerth, 2004). An interesting observation in this respect by Dietz in relation to the topic of this paper is that “the activities of external intervening agents can deeply influence the relationship of local communities with the natural resources” (1996, p.44). Global actors more and more entitle themselves the right to intervene in and influence events at the local level, wherever this ‘local’ may be. In Southern Africa, this can for instance be seen happening through the buying up of park lands by wealthy Western wildlife patrons, who then govern these parks on the basis of preservationist or protectionist principles (Büscher et al, forthcoming)¹. Naturally,

¹ Preservationism or protectionism are generally regarded as the strictest forms of conservation whereby use of natural resources is not allowed and humans should refrain as much as possible from intervening in natural processes and landscapes. See also: Sarkar, 1999.

these are sensitive developments in a region beset by conflicts over land and resources, where a continuously expanding number of actors are already grappling with ‘hot’ governance issues, such as decentralisation of authority, changes in tenure and incentive structures and the link between conservation and development of poor and disadvantaged people (Boyd, 2001).

Another feature of modern (global) governance is that structures are opaque and simultaneously consist of fragmentative and integrative forces (Rosenau, 1997)². With so many different actors on the scene, all with their own different agendas, backgrounds, visions and capabilities, contradictions are bound to be plentiful and one-dimensional frameworks hard to pursue. Still, this is not to say that structures do not exist at all. They are just not very tangible, often inconsistent and indubitably very complex. One identifiable form of structure lies in the construction of discursive configurations, together forming macro-ideological frameworks, and here is where we are getting to our last of the three concepts to be discussed: the global governance buzzwords.

Unlike governance, the term ‘buzzword’ has not been defined that often. Here we describe it as a language unit that is produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices, which is widely used and accepted in many different contexts and through which meaning is transferred³. Global governance buzzwords thus denote language units with strong ideological and interpretative connotations, which are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and used and accepted in many different global rule systems and steering mechanism contexts. Together, these buzzwords make up a substantive part of the so called global governance agenda. We have already mentioned a few, but a more extensive, albeit not exhaustive list could include: sustainable development, empowerment (of the poor), (community) participation, capacity or institution building, (strengthening of) civil society, public-private partnerships and good governance. It is important to note here that buzzwords differ from discourses. While discourses are ensembles of particular words or phrases denoting a specific ideological meaning, buzzwords are individual language units that can be used without necessary reference to other words or phrases comprising a discourse. As such they might seem more disconnected of meaning, but we argue that this is not the case. All the above mentioned global governance buzzwords stand, like discourses (Arts and van Tatehove, 2002), for ‘interpretative schemes’ by which meaning is portrayed.

It is not hard to argue that the ideological content of the global governance agenda and the concepts it comprises is derived from and operationalised by actors from Western, developed countries, simply because this is where 94 percent of all indexed scientific knowledge originates and where capacity to promote this knowledge is available (Karlsson, 2002). This incredible domination of discursive power is also shown by the fact that often these buzzwords do not even get translated anymore when introduced into a (non-English) domestic language (Ergun and Cali, 2002). While this statement may seem trivial, the consequences may be not so trivial, but quite far-reaching. Buzzwords, like discourses, operationalised in one place and context may not necessarily be suitable in any other place or context. From the literature, we have discerned three, partially overlapping ways how this could work out: 1) the ideological operationalisation of the buzzword; 2) contradicting conceptions within the buzzword and 3) loss of meaning through the usage of buzzwords for political legitimation.

The first, widely known and accepted, argument why one has to be careful using global governance buzzwords on a global scale is because the ideological operationalisation of the concept may not suit just any place or context, with its own specific culture, history and (political-) ideological settings. Many writers specifically refer to the neo-liberal discourse, with its emphasis on economic and financial logic, privatisation, liberalisation and

² Rosenau has coined the term *framgregation* to capture these contradictive forces in global governance.

³ Adapted from Hajer’s definition of policy discourse. See Hajer (1997, 44).

stabilisation, as the basis on which influential global players, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions, the UN, the US and the EU, devise and operationalise the global governance agenda (Peet and Watts, 1993; Adejumobi, 2000; Tsheola, 2002; Rosenau, 2003; Humphreys, 2003; Falkner, 2003; Støvring 2003). Rosenau, for instance, states that “sustainable development “now (...) connotes (...) with the emphasis on sustaining economies rather than nature, a semantic shift that has enabled a vast array of diverse actors to crowd under the umbrella of sustainability and to press their goals in the context of what they regard as unquestionable sets of values” (2003, p.16). Global governance buzzwords in this sense thus directly denote neo-liberal values, which are portrayed as being unquestionable and universally applicable. That this assertion itself is very questionable or at least heavily contested can for example be demonstrated by the overwhelming critique on the former structural adjustment policies of the IMF and World Bank (Stein, 1992; Schatz, 1994).

The second argument why global governance buzzwords should be treated with care besides their pre-positioned ideological connotation, is that they are often contradictory in nature or to other buzzwords. Weiss for example explains that the World Bank's position on good governance is ‘preoccupied with public sector management, the reduction of transactions costs and contract enforcement’ and as such contrasts with governance approaches that support local participation and empowerment (2000, p.804). Clearly, the latter two buzzwords are crucial within the theory and practice of CBC. Another example was recently given by Professor Jan Pronk, the former Dutch minister for Development Cooperation (Pronk, 2004). Building on his three decades of vast international experience, Pronk also argued that buzzwords like Good Governance are operationalised on the basis of western notions of development or progress⁴, which contain contradictory elements that could be harmful or even outright negative for the development of the African continent. According to Pronk, Good Governance is latently used in a (neo-liberal) context of stability. Development, however, implies change, leading to a different allocation of resources and capital, which by definition involves a restructuring of the status quo. In Africa in particular, changes in the status quo often involve conflict or even violence, and thus call for policies aimed at conflict *solution*. In contrast, the static conception of Good Governance in a context of stability focuses more on conflict *control* and as such does neither contribute to the dynamic process of development nor to ownership over Africa's development by Africans themselves.

These two arguments feed into the last argument put forward here that buzzwords are often included into all sorts of managerial, policy or governance documents for the single purpose of pleasing donors in order to get financial support. Many actors depending on donor support feel they have to speak the donor language and subsequently feel obliged to incorporate *ownership*, *sustainable development*, *participation* and the like into their texts. While we have already argued that this might be unwanted for reasons of predetermined or contradictory content, it might also be precarious for the reason of lack of content altogether. Clearly, when using a (foreign) word to explain or describe an issue, one not only tags along (‘foreign’) meaning, but also loses the option of developing a concept or word that states what is actually meant or wanted in the domestic language (Ergun and Cali, 2002). Hence, loss of meaning occurs, while it is essential in local development that local actors can describe or explain development in such a way that it has local meaning. After all, this is (or should be) what the popular buzzword of *ownership* is based on.

Concluding this section, it has to be noted that the issue of global governance buzzwords is not something that has arisen in a historical vacuum. On the contrary; global governance buzzwords anno 2004 are arguably the latest episode in a long historical context of Western

⁴ Professor Pronk even specifically mentioned the term ‘cultural arrogance’ to describe this Western discursive dominance.

domination over Africa (Cooper, 2001). Hence, one needs to be very sensitive to, and even critical of the discursive side of development processes. We now turn to a specific corner within the broader development debate; that of community based forest management in Zimbabwe in order to analyse its discursive relation with the global governance concepts in the context of the above discussion of the three arguments why one needs to be sensitive of them.

Methodology and research process

With the theoretical framework in mind, we outlined a working methodology based on three pillars. Firstly, we did a desk review of forest policy in Zimbabwe and its evolution. In this literature review, we focussed on answering the following questions: How did the forestry policy in Zimbabwe develop over time; How has the policy formulation process changed over time – which actors were involved and at what stages; and when and how do the global governance buzzwords come into play? Secondly, we looked at the management and governance documents of the Mafungautsi Forest Pilot Project to basically ask ourselves the same questions. Lastly, we did a desk study of the data that has been collected by the Center for International Forestry Research⁵ in Mafungautsi to find out what transpired after the introduction of the resource sharing project in Mafungautsi. A synthesis was later made to try and answer the main question of how far global governance buzzwords have influenced community based forest management in Zimbabwe.

The Development of Forestry Policies in Zimbabwe: What were the key drivers?

The forestry policy-making process in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) has been highly influenced and informed by policies used by the British Empire (now called the Commonwealth) Forestry Association. According to Matose, the ‘Association forms the knowledge centre through which peripheral places like the Rhodesia Forestry Commission had access to forest conservation arguments which influenced policy framing in order to command and control forests in their own boundaries and territories’ (2002, p.53). Because of limited staff, the officials from the Rhodesia Forestry Commission depended on information and knowledge from institutions such as the Oxford Forestry Commission in order to formulate forestry policies, and it is only around the 1990s that results from local indigenous forest research began to filter into the policy making process (Pearce, 1993). However, the arguments that subsequently influenced the policy-making process were still centred around older concepts such as biodiversity and watershed conservation and sustainable yield management.

The biodiversity and watershed conservation debates that dominated earlier in the century were centred around scientific arguments on the relationships between climate, deforestation and hydrology. According to Matose, ‘hydrology and climate were highly topical within the empire debates up to the 1940s, but their significance in policy framing has diminished since then’ (2001, p.70). However, ideas on the role of forests in watershed conservation have continued to persist in forest policy formulation, even in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Concerning the fragile ecosystem, debates during the commonwealth forestry conferences were centred on the belief that indigenous forests in most countries lie on Kalahari sands that are fragile and susceptible to erosion and therefore need protection. This belief also influenced forest formulation in Rhodesia, resulting in the demarcation of most forests as state forests to be entirely managed in a top-down fashion by the Forestry Department. Also, because some of the forests in the commonwealth countries were rich in

⁵ Ms. T. Mutimukuru, the co-author of this paper, has been part of the CIFOR team that was involved in the data collection process in Mafungautsi.

commercial timber species, there were also debates earlier in the century on how best production from these forests could be maintained and sustained in the commonwealth countries. According to Matose, ‘the sustained yield agenda was set in motion with the resolution on the forest technique at the Commonwealth Forestry conference of 1923 that spelt out the need for sound management. This entailed working plans for regulating yield, spelt-out objectives, the calculation and regulation of the yield to be obtained from each forest, and a spread of age classes of trees for future harvest’ (2001, p.61). At this conference, all governments were urged to come up with management plans that would ensure sustained yields of forest products.

As can be seen from the above discussion, the policies that were crafted in the early years of the century were protectionist in nature. However, because of the other international debates on failure of the protectionist way of managing the indigenous forest in the 90s, ideas on people centred approaches began to filter in the policy making process in Zimbabwe. The Forestry Act began to allow experiments with such approaches, and this resulted in the initiation of the pilot resource-sharing project in Mafungautsi state forest, where the Forestry Commission (FC) decided to bring communities on board to help in the management of the state forest. In the resource sharing project, communities were now allowed to legally harvest products such as broom and thatch grasses, fruits and mushrooms, only to mention a few, but they still are not allowed to harvest the high value commercial timber species. To some extent, the project went beyond the provisions of the Forestry Act, as this was illegal before the project started.

History and background of the Mafungautsi Forest, Zimbabwe

Mafungautsi State Forest is located in Gokwe South District in Midlands Province, Zimbabwe (See figure 1). The forest has a total area of 82,100 hectares, which makes up 17% of the district. Communal areas in the district cover a total of 73%, while the remaining 10% is covered by national parks and small-scale commercial farms.

Vegetation in Mafungautsi is predominantly Miombo woodland and the dominant tree species are *Brachystaegia* and *Julbernardia* (Vermeulen, 2000). The dominant soils in Mafungautsi forest are the Kalahari sands and only a few patches can be found with sodic and heavy clay soils. The forest is a catchment area for four major rivers in Zimbabwe, namely; Sengwa, Mbumbusi, Ngondoma and Lutope. Conservation of the watershed was one of the main reasons why it was protected as a state forest in 1954. Mafungautsi forest is a source of several resources including pastures for grazing animals, thatching grass, broom grass, medicinal plants, honey, mushrooms, firewood, construction timber, game meat, Mopane worms⁶ indigenous fruits and herbs.

⁶ Mopane worms (*imbrasia belina*) are edible and used as a relish when dried.

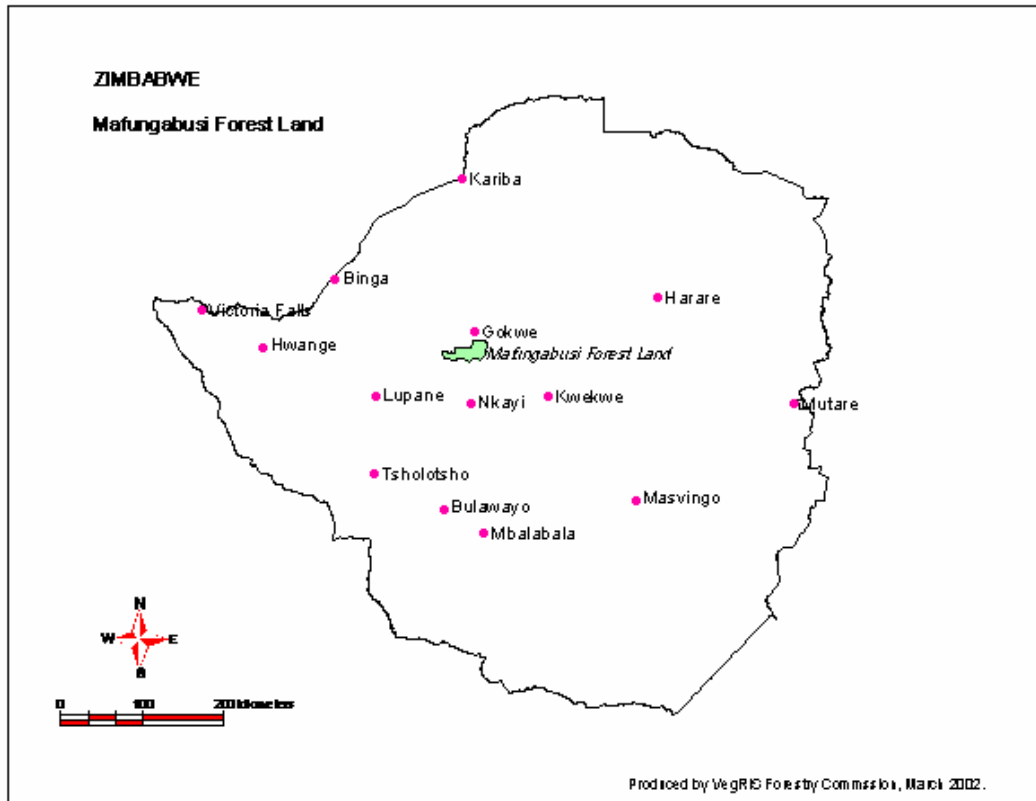


Figure 1: Map of Zimbabwe showing the location of the Mafungautsi Forest

The initiation of a resource-sharing project in 1994 brought some changes in forest management in Mafungautsi forest. The main aim of the project was to enable surrounding communities to take an active role in the management of the forest resources. Fifteen Resource Management Committees (RMCs) were set up in various communities surrounding the forest and their main role was to monitor and control harvesting of the resources, to which communities were now allowed access. The majority of stakeholders around Mafungautsi belong to two ethnic groups: Ndebele and Shona. A minority belong to the following ethnic groups: Tonga, Kalanga, Chewa (immigrants from Malawi) and Shangwe. Except for the Shangwe, the rest of the ethnic groups are immigrants to the area.

Translating policy into practice

This section presents a critical analysis of what transpired after the launch of the resource sharing project. This will be done on the basis of the global governance buzzwords used in the project and how they work out in practice. The following concepts were introduced with the start of the project: Ownership through the setting up of resource management committees, good governance through conflict resolution, capacity building and participation. These are presented separately below.

1. Ownership or the creation of Resource Management Committees, how representative were these?

After the launch of the resource-sharing project, the FC went on to on create resource management committees (RMCs), in the communities surrounding the forest. RMCs were

supposed to act as a link between the FC and the communities. Their main roles involved administering permits for resource users to harvest the minor forest products, monitoring the harvesting process, opening and keeping a community bank account where the moneys raised through the permit system were to be kept and finally advising the community on how the funds could be spent. All of this had to ensure a sense of ownership with the communities.

The creation of these new committees, however, brought more conflicts than they solved at the ground level. This was because, they were created from the FC's initiative – communities were never consulted and it was not clear how the new committee would fit in the already complex existing institutional landscape (see also: Mapedza and Mandondo, 2002). Communities were not clear on what the role of the RMCs was and hence most communities saw these RMCs as an extended arm of the FC. This later brought in a lot of tensions. The committees themselves were accountable only to the FC and they did not pay due respect to the already existing traditional leadership structures. This later resulted in conflicts arising between traditional authorities and RMC members. For instance, when RMCs organised meetings, some village heads and their community members never came. Also, the way the committees were formed was mostly top-down. In some cases, the FC officer just send word that seven people from an RMC should come and see her. The people who came were then elected as the RMC committee. By now, it is generally accepted that the FC was not very genuine in its attempt to involve local people in the management of the forest, but merely wanted to recruit cheap labour from a number of community people to increase their forest guards.

The RMCs were also told by the FC to open a bank account in order to deposit the money raised through the issuing of permits to resource harvesters in the forest. The FC officer was a signatory to this account and yet it was said to belong to the communities. The communities would not withdraw the money without approval from the FC, showing the extended patrimonial spirit by the FC. Both the setting up of the RMCs and the bank account were, according to FC rhetoric, meant to empower the local people to manage and really make them the owners of the resources but in practice, this was never the case. The FC remained reluctant to hand-over power to the locals to make their own decisions about what basically was their own money.

2. Good Governance or the conflicts that arose before and after the Resource sharing project were ignored.

The prime means through which good governance in the project was to be achieved was through conflict control. However, the several conflicts that continued to plague the project were never seriously addressed (Mutimukuru, 2004 forthcoming), whereby it seems that the FC judged the situation on the ground to be more stable than it actually was. No mechanisms were set up to really resolve the conflicts after the introduction of the resource sharing project. The good governance 'mode' of the FC was, similar to Pronk's (2004) example, directed too much at conflict control, while a change in the institutional landscape, such as that of the introduction of the RMCs which aggravated the already existing conflicts tensions, called for conflict solution, instead of mere control. As a result, the chaotic relationship that existed between the two major stakeholders never improved during the resource-sharing project, and the conditions of the forest continued to deteriorate as communities continued to access the resources outside the resource-sharing project.

3. Capacity building or the lack of training to change the government officials' perceptions on communities and their approaches in the resource sharing project.

Even though the policy was flexible to allow for the resource sharing project to take place as an experiment, events in practice did not portray this. The FC did not trust that communities

could also effectively participate in the project, but since the donors were funding this project, buzzwords such as capacity building, participation and community empowerment dominated most discussions about the resource sharing project even though there was incomplete understanding of what exactly these words meant. For example, capacity building of communities, in order for them to effectively participate in the project, had been high on the agenda, but never really materialised. Government and FC officials' perceptions on what needed to be done in order to 'build capacity', differed greatly from what is generally understood by the term: to increase the competence (intellectual, financial, economic, etc.) of the communities in order for them to become better equipped partners in the project. The FC continued to operate as they used to do before the project, with policing being their main approach for governance and management, leading to an increase in the arrest of community members and subsequent worsening of the relations. Hence, the introduction of a buzzword like capacity building of communities never really had any effect in the project as the actors that had to do this capacity building saw the concept as void of any meaning, other than its use of political legitimation. Capacity building thus works both ways and it would have been better if the government and FC officials' had had training in order to change their own perceptions.

In the end, it took a third party to break the impasse. In 1999, when the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR's) Adaptive Collaborative Research (ACM) was initiated in the resource sharing project, the ACM researchers could not go to the field in a FC vehicle as any association with the FC would result in non-cooperation from the communities. The researchers had to secretly meet with the two stakeholders independently at first to identify the type of conflicts and problems that existed. It took about a year for the relations among these stakeholders to improve. Nowadays, the relations have become better, after the conflict solution mechanisms employed by the team, and the communities do not mind anymore even if the researchers go to the field in a FC vehicle.

4. Participation or the failure to level the playing field for communities to effectively engage in the project.

After the introduction of the resource-sharing project, communities were required to actively participate in the management of the forest and yet they were ill equipped to do so. Because of their past history, communities had the belief that the government forest officials knew everything and they did not know anything. Even during the initial stages of the ACM research project, communities refused to answer any questions and told the researchers that they did not know anything. However, as the ACM research progressed, and the communities were taken through an empowerment training, called Training for Transformation, they began to more effectively participate in the management of the forest. At one time, after discovering that digging as a harvesting method for broom grass was unsustainable to the resource, and that the market still continued to demand dug brooms - the resource users came up with new innovative and decorative bundling methods for cut brooms (cutting was said to be a more sustainable harvesting method for the brooms), and a workshop was organised (the FC officer was also present at this workshop) were local women who were knowledgeable on this new bundling method were taught the rest of the resources users how they could bundle their cut brooms in the new proposed way. In this case, we can see that local potential was unlocked as only locals were involved in the training process, and there was no outside help sought.

Concluding thoughts and recommendations

Donor money that funds projects in developing countries often comes with conditions. In the Mafungautsi case, the FC had to adopt the resource sharing approach which was directly

influenced by the global governance agenda where people had to move from top-down approaches to people oriented approaches through enforced buzzwords such as ‘participation’, ‘ownership’ and ‘empowerment’ of local people. Coming back to the three ways of how buzzwords can work out from our theoretical section, the most important conclusion for the case of Mafungautsi State Forest is that the buzzwords were not clearly defined at that level and stayed just buzzwords with no local meaning and were mainly used by the Zimbabwean institutions to acquire donor funds.

Another conclusion of this paper is that the various global governance buzzwords work out differently in different situations. The Mafungautsi case showed for example that the term capacity building was mostly used for purposes of political legitimation, while the adhering to good governance in the project showed internal contradictions in the way conflicts had ought to be managed. Above all though, the buzzwords lacked meaning at the local level and subsequently made implementation at the local level complicated. The resource-sharing project was immediately implemented by the FC without much consideration of other factors that were crucial and needed to be carefully thought about if the project was to be successful in enhancing real effective participation of local people. Such factors could include, levelling the playing field and besides only building capacity for local communities, also capacity building for the government workers on people oriented approaches and training in order to change their perceptions of capabilities of local people and executing real good governance through conflict resolution mechanisms. At the moment, this is very hard to achieve, as CBFM in Zimbabwe still carries a discursive burden, which first needs to be offloaded in order for the communities to truly benefit from the resources they depend on.

Whether the Mafungautsi case under consideration in this paper is representative for other community based forest or natural resources management initiatives in Southern Africa is yet to be seen. Further research would be of great use to better understand the influence of global governance buzzwords on natural resources management in Southern Africa.

References

- Adejumobi, S. (2000). *Africa and the Challenges of Democracy and Good Governance in the 21st Century*. In: Proceedings of the Second DPMF Annual Conference on Democracy, Civil Society and Governance in Africa II, held in United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 7-10 December 1998.
- Biermann, F. and K. Dingwerth (2004). Global Environmental Change and the Nation State. In: *Global Environmental Politics* 4, 1: 1-22.
- Boyd, C. with contributions from B.T.B. Jones, S. Anstey, S. Shackleton and C. Fabricius (2001). Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa: Institutions, Governance and Policy Processes. *SLSA Working Paper 5, Wild resources Theme Paper*. IDS, University of Sussex, Sussex.
- Büscher, B.E., T. Dietz and M. Saruchera (2004, forthcoming). Linking Conservation and Development in Southern Africa: a Governance and Power Analysis. Article submitted for a special issue of the *Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies*, Roskilde University.
- Callaghy, T.M., R. Kassimir and R. Latham (eds.) (2001). *Intervention and Transnationalism in Africa. Global-Local Networks of Power*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- Cooper, F. (2001). What is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historian's Perspective. In: *African Affairs*, 100: 189-213.
- Ergun, A. and C. Cali (2002). *Global Governance and Domestic Politics: Fragmented Visions*. Paper presented at the CPOGG workshop at Amerang, 1-3 November 2002.
- Falkner, R. (2003). Private Environmental Governance and International Relations: Exploring the Links. In: *Global Environmental Politics*, 3, 2: 72-87.
- Friedman, T.L. (2000). *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Anchor Books, New York.
- Hackle, J.D. (1999). Community Conservation and the Future of Africa's Wildlife. In: *Conservation Biology*, vol. 13, 4: 726-734.
- Hajer, M.A. (1997). *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Humphreys, D. (2003). *Life Protective or Carcinogenic Challenge? Global Forests Governance under Advanced Capitalism*. In: *Global Environmental Politics* 3, 2: 40-55.
- Karlsson, S. (2002). The North-South Knowledge Divide: Consequences for Global Environmental Governance. In: Esty, D.C. and M.H. Ivanova (2002). *Global Environmental Governance. Options and Opportunities*. Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, New Haven.
- Mapedza, E. and A. Mandondo (2002). *Co-management in the Mafungautsi State Forest Area of Zimbabwe – What stake for Local Communities?* Working Paper 5, Working Paper Series on Environmental Governance in Africa, World Resources Institute, Washington D.C.
- Matose F. (2001). *Local people and reserved forests in Zimbabwe: What prospects for co-management?* PhD in Development Studies, University of Sussex, Sussex.
- Mutimukuru T. (2004, forthcoming). *Managing conflicts for sustainable forest management. A case of Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe*. Paper to be presented at the IASCP 2004 conference, august 9-13, 2004 in Oaxaca, Mexico.
- Nuijten, M., G. Anders, J. van Gastel, G. van der Haar, c. van Nijnatten and J. Warner (2003). *Governance in Action*. Article for the CERES pathways project. CERES, Utrecht.
- Pearce, G.D. and D. Gumbo (1993). Natural regeneration of indigenous trees: The key to their successful management. In: Pearce, G. D. and Gumbo D. J. (eds.) (1993). *The ecology and management of indigenous forests in Southern Africa*. Proceedings of an international Symposium of the Forestry Commission and SAREC., Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, 27-29 July 1992. Harare: 109-123.
- Peet, R., and M. Watts (1993). Introduction: Development Theory and Environment in an Age of Market Triumphalism. In: *Economic Geography*, 69, 3: Environment and Development, part 1: 227-253.

- Sarkar, S. (1999). Wilderness Preservation and Biodiversity Conservation – Keeping Divergent Goals Distinct. In: *BioScience*, 49, 5: 405-412.
- Schatz, S. P. (1994). Structural Adjustment in Africa: A Failing Grade So Far. In: *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 32, 4: 679-692.
- Stein, H. (1992). Deindustrialization Adjustment, the World Bank and the IMF in Africa. In: *World Development*, 20, 1: 83-95.
- Støvring, J. (2004). The Washington Consensus' in relation to the telecommunication sector in African developing countries. In: *Telematics and Informatics*, 21, 1: 11-24.
- Reinicke, W.H. (1998). *Global Public Policy. Governing without Government?* Brookings Institution Press, Washington D.C.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1990). *Turbulence in world politics: a theory of change and continuity.* Harvester Wheatsheaf, London.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1997). *Along the domestic-foreign frontier. Exploring governance in a turbulent world*, Cambridge studies in international relations 53. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Rosenau, J. N. (2001). *Strong Demand, Huge Supply: Governance in an Emergent Epoch.* Paper presented at Multi-Level Governance: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, June 28-30 2001, Sheffield, United Kingdom.
- Rosenau, J. N. (2003). Bleak Prospects for Sustainability. In: *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, vol. 3:11-29.
- Tsheola, J. (2002). South Africa's form of Globalisation: a Continental Posture Paradox for Insertion and Dependence. In: *Political Geography* 21: 789-811.
- Vermeulen S. J. (2000). *Setting the context of the Mafungautsi Forest (Zimbabwe) Project in a criteria and indicators framework.* ACM programme, CIFOR, Harare.
- Weiss, T.G. (2000). Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: conceptual and actual Challenges. In: *Third World Quarterly*, 21, 5: 795-814.

Lectures

- Pronk, J.P. (2004). Public lecture on Good Governance at the 'Africa Day' of the Evert Vermeer Stichting on 3 April 2004 in Utrecht, The Netherlands.