

‘Big can be beautiful’ – ensuring regional transboundary conservation supports local community resource management in the proposed Okavango/Upper Zambezi TFCA, southern Africa.
Communities as real partners in transboundary programmes

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‘The degree to which communities become real partners in, or only ‘beneficiaries’ of, transboundary natural resource management projects will be an important indicator of the long-term socio-political sustainability and strength of TBNRMA programmes. Informal transboundary activities already exist between communities that could be nurtured further rather than be overwhelmed by increased political diplomacy, government bureaucracy, conservation advocacy, self-promoting publicity, and tourist market forces’. Metcalfe (1999).

ABSTRACT

There is global recognition that political boundaries can hinder conservation objectives, particularly in areas where wildlife is highly migratory, as these boundaries often split river basins, watersheds and other ecosystems between countries, as well as dividing human populations. Transboundary conservation initiatives are being heralded as an opportunity to promote biodiversity conservation, bring local socio-economic development and facilitate peace and co-operation. In southern Africa, potential transboundary conservation areas are being given increasing support from a wide range of stakeholders including governments, non government organisations and donors. The Okavango/Upper Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (OUZTFCA) is one such area that encompasses parts of five countries (Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and is of global conservation significance as being, amongst other things, the home to the largest remaining concentration of free-ranging elephants.

However, risks associated with the present practice of transboundary conservation include top-down approaches aimed at securing wildlife habitat, lack of co-ordination of activities, and a negotiation scale that is mainly government-to-government or regional. These risks can prohibit meaningful and lasting local community participation. The challenge to successful transboundary conservation is to ensure that successful local conservation initiatives play a key role.

By reflecting on the development of two Namibian community conservation areas on the Chobe Floodplain within the OUZTFCA, the paper documents the way a field-based NGO

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has used the opportunity to shape the delivery of transboundary conservation interventions to suit the needs of existing local community based natural resource management. Activities to achieve this included: focusing international, transboundary funding at a community-scale and ensuring strong local participation in wildlife management and tourism planning. By doing this, the risks associated with international resource management and planning will hopefully be minimised, and a stable foundation on which to build future transboundary activities will be built, to ensure that big really is beautiful.

1 INTRODUCTION

There is widespread recognition that political boundaries often pose barriers to the development or maintenance of natural resource, economic and social linkages in areas that have common landscape and human elements (Van der Linde et al., 2001). The absence of a joint management system at a landscape level can also increase the risk of natural resource use conflict, or lead to resource degradation. In southern Africa, Transfrontier Conservation Areas¹ (TFCAs) are being heralded as an opportunity to avoid such problems and promote biodiversity conservation, bring socio-economic development and facilitate peace and co-operation in these areas (Hanks, 2003).

Within southern Africa, a large number of potential TFCAs have been identified by non government organisations (NGOs) and government agencies, as providing opportunities to manage wildlife at an eco-regional level and to ensure coordination of efforts across political boundaries. The scale of delivery of transboundary conservation initiatives is regional (i.e. country to country), which challenges local coordination of activities and can produce an environment prohibitive to meaningful and lasting local-level community participation. Added to this are the conservation or economic agendas of donors, NGOs, private-sector and governments that can override or conflict with local objectives (e.g. an emphasis on securing wildlife habitat can be inimical to local peoples' livelihoods).

This paper documents the experience of local practitioners working within the Namibian community based natural resource management programme on the Chobe River floodplain in the Caprivi Region of Namibia. They have had to place their work in the context of a number of transboundary programmes in the area, which is part of the proposed Okavango Upper Zambezi TFCA (the OUZTFCA)² and have used some donor funding for TFCA activities to fund these local-level initiatives. In doing this, local practitioners are trying to use

¹ A Transfrontier Conservation Area 'straddles the boundaries of two or more countries, encompassing one or more protected areas, as well as multiple resources use areas' (SADC, 1999:4).

² A name coined by the Peace Parks Foundation.

opportunities to influence the transboundary conservation process from the bottom up, to put in place structures that can be built upon once the TFCA process starts in earnest, and that can shape the ‘bigger picture’ of conservation and development across international boundaries.³

This has been done by recognising in advance where opportunities and risks might arise in the implementation of transboundary initiatives, and planning local level activities to take advantage of possible opportunities, and reduce exposure to potential risks.

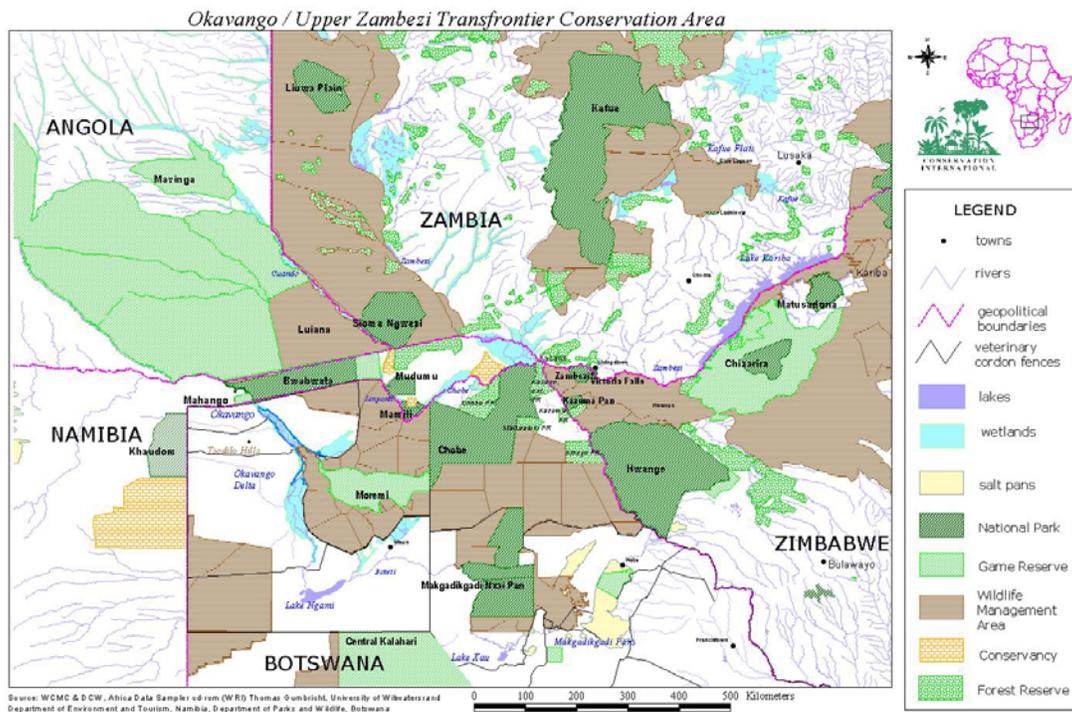
The next section of this paper provides the context of the TFCA and community based natural resource management in the proposed OUZTFCA. Section three of the paper provides more detail about how these local level initiatives can be linked to the regional scale. Conclusions are discussed in the final section of the paper.

2 BACKGROUND

The proposed OUZTFCA encompasses parts of five countries – Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, some of which have a very recent history of civil conflict or political turmoil (see Map 1). It is a large and complicated TFCA in that the physical area covers at least eight national parks or game reserves, an increasing number of community conservation areas as well as tracts of land in between that are not managed for conservation purposes – mostly communal or state-owned land utilised by subsistence farmers. The three primary objectives of TFCAs are biodiversity conservation, economic development and the facilitation of peace and cooperation (Hanks, 2003). The more specific biodiversity aims of the OUZTFCA are to re-establish animal migration routes between countries (particularly for elephants) by securing corridors between protected areas, as well as maintaining the integrity of the Okavango and Zambezi watersheds and linking cross-border riverine and woodland habitats (CI-SAWP, 2004). The focus on elephants in this TFCA is because of the estimated 120,000 elephants currently in northern Botswana – the largest remaining contiguous concentration of free-ranging elephants in Africa – and the necessity for some of these elephants to disperse. This dispersal is hoped to take place through corridors between protected areas in the five countries, and is also important for maintaining the integrity of the Chobe River (Hanks, 2003).

³ These activities – i.e. those in Kasika Conservancy – have been carried out jointly by two NGOs, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and Conservation International (CI).

Map 1. The Okavango/Upper Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area



2.1 Regional level initiatives

While the area has been identified as a potential TFCA, there appears as yet to be no formal process of ‘proclaiming’ or organising and managing a TFCA, and as such no coordinated activities are yet taking place. Despite this absence of a management or implementation process, a number of initiatives already promote transboundary natural resource management⁴ and/or plan to coordinate tourism developments in the area.⁵

The Four Corners transboundary natural resource management area programme (TBNRMA) has been running for three years, implemented by the African Wildlife Foundation and partners. It is designed to improve the management of specific sites by protecting wildlife corridors and securing habitat; improving conservation business partnerships; facilitating TBNRM policy and institutional processes to ensure effective functioning of inter-government and multi-stakeholder fora; and disseminating information and lessons learned within the TBNRMA (Hall-Martin and Modise, 2002). Achievements to date include the development of Santiwani Lodge in Botswana, Chezywa Fishing Camp in Zimbabwe and

⁴ Transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) refers to any process of cooperation across boundaries that facilitates or improves the management of natural resources, to the benefit of all parties in the area concerned (Griffin et al., 1999 cited in Katerere et al., 2001).

⁵ There are a large number of transboundary resource management initiatives in the region, the two described here focus on wildlife management as their main objective and/or cover a large proportion of the proposed TFCA.

Mukuni Cultural Village in Zambia, as well as the establishment of three working groups dealing with fisheries, legal issues and wildlife (N. Samu, pers comm.).

The Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) developed the Okavango Upper Zambezi International Tourism (OUZIT) initiative, which was based on a proposal to establish a new transfrontier wildlife sanctuary in the wetlands associated with the Okavango and Zambezi River systems. It was designed to pilot a regional approach to economic development based on investment in eco-tourism facilities and related infrastructure. OUZIT hopes to take advantage of the region's extensive network of protected and conservation areas, as well as its rich cultural heritage to coordinate tourism development and resource management, to assist the region to become one of the premier nature-based, cultural and adventure tourism destinations in the world. The initiative should also be used to promote infrastructure development and rural investment (DBSA, 1999). To date, the DBSA has published a pre-feasibility assessment of tourism development in the area, but no formal agreements have yet been made between participating countries, and no activities have been implemented.

A number of initiatives dealing with transboundary resource management and/or integrated basin management issues are also taking place within the OUZTFCA – The Zambezi River System Action Plan and the Okavango River Commission.⁶

2.2 Local level initiatives

In terms of local-level initiatives, each country involved in the proposed TFCA has a CBNRM programme (except Angola). The broad aim of the four programmes (in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) is to extend rights to utilise wildlife to communal area residents, with the idea of making the links between conservation and development explicit by using incentives (financial and non-financial) to encourage sustainable utilisation of resources. (See Appendix II for descriptions of each of these CBNRM programmes.)

With regard to national parks in the region, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in Namibia plans to change the status of the Bwabwata National Park (West Caprivi) to allow the communities who live there to benefit from wildlife and tourism (Rousset, 2003). This innovative approach is unique in the OUZTFCA area.

Most CBNRM programmes incorporate some bilateral TBNRM activities⁷ – fourteen different TBNRM projects were identified in a recent review of transboundary activities in Botswana, most of which focus on either wildlife or water management (though not all took

⁶ For more information on these initiatives, refer to Chengeta, et al., 2003.

⁷ This list is not exhaustive, but serves to show the large number, and variety, of transboundary conservation initiatives in the region.

place within the OUZTFCA) (Chengeta et al., 2003). There are also a number of Namibian initiatives, some of which are outlined in Section 3 below. Other TBNRM activities have involved transboundary fisheries management along the Zambezi and Chobe rivers, as well as strengthening and building relationships at community level between Namibia and Zambia. In addition, at the community level, an infinite number of transboundary activities are conducted informally, and with no external support (e.g. legal and illegal trade and visiting friends and family).

2.3 Case studies

As mentioned above, the focus of this paper is experience in community conservation areas (known as conservancies⁸) in the Caprivi Region of Namibia. The Caprivi – the geographical centre of the OUZTFCA – is an elongated finger of land bordering southern Zambia and Angola and northern Botswana, with Zimbabwe to the east. Very strong human and environmental ties exist between countries and the many formal protected areas and community conservation areas mean that transboundary natural resource management initiatives are important here. Local people share a common history of being part of the Great Barotse Empire, as well as a common language (Lozi). The Barotse Royal Establishment and the Barotse King (the Litonga) based in south Zambia are strongly recognised by the Subia people and Subia traditional authorities in eastern Caprivi.

In addition to the three national parks in the Caprivi, there are currently five registered conservancies (with almost 7,500 members, covering a land area of about 1,760 km²), eight more have submitted or are working on their registration and a significant number of other areas that have expressed interest in establishing conservancies.

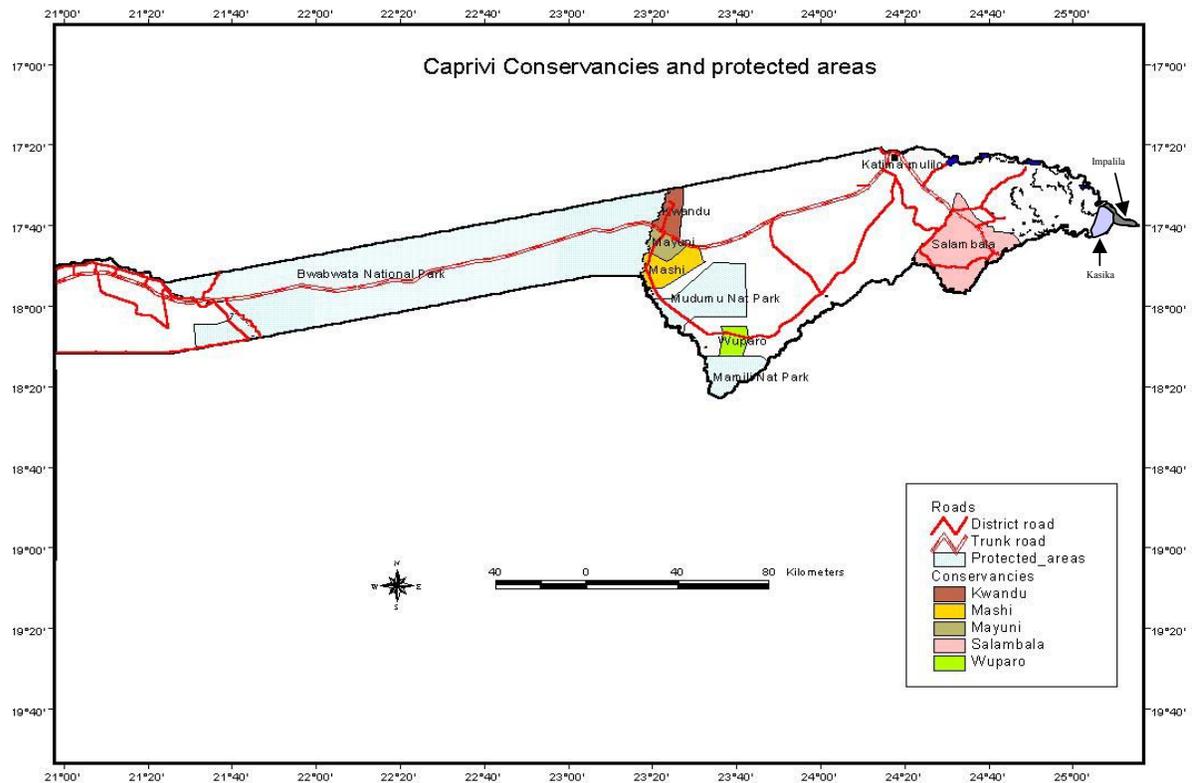
Salambala Conservancy is the oldest conservancy in Caprivi, established in 1998 as a pilot of the lead agency in the Namibian CBNRM programme, WWF-US. The conservancy generates revenue from a trophy hunting quota (about US\$40,000 per annum⁹) as well as a community campsite. The conservancy neighbours another community conservation area across the Chobe River, the Chobe Enclave Community Trust, which is one of the oldest community conservation areas in Botswana. These neighbouring community conservation areas are currently in the process of developing joint natural resource management initiatives relating to fire management, anti-poaching and wildlife monitoring (developing one system on both sides of the border) and livestock theft. According to the Salambala Constitution, the primary

⁸ A conservancy in the communal areas consists of a self-defined community, or a group of communities, within a defined geographical area that jointly manage, conserve and utilise wildlife and other natural resources (MET, 1995).

⁹ Exchange rate of US\$1:NS\$7.

objectives of the conservancy are to create an environment conducive for the return of game to the Salambala area; to manage Salambala's wildlife and other natural resources in accordance with an approved management plan in a sustainable manner to maximise the return of benefits to the communities in and around Salambala; to protect Salambala's wildlife and plants for future generations of Namibia's residents, particularly those living in East Caprivi; and to develop tourism accommodation and guided tours for tourists in the conservancy to derive benefits for the communities.

Map 2. Conservancies and protected areas in Caprivi Region, Namibia



Kasika Conservancy is awaiting formal recognition by the Namibian Government, but already has an active community wildlife monitoring programme and plans to apply for a hunting quota and enter into joint venture negotiations with two private lodges located within its boundary. Kasika Conservancy borders the internationally famous Chobe National Park and Kasane – a town that services the tourism associated with Chobe National Park. The primary aim of the conservancy is, to derive benefits from the sustainable management and consumptive and non-consumptive use of wildlife in the conservancy (Kasika Conservancy Constitution, 2003). Unlike Salambala, Kasika has not started initiating transboundary natural

resource management activities but has been active in building relationships with stakeholders in Botswana as described in Section 3.

3 LINKING LOCAL AND REGIONAL

The lessons learned from implementing CBNRM (and TBNRM) have been widely documented.¹⁰ Among the guiding principles are the early and full engagement of local communities and other stakeholders in the planning and implementation processes; the necessity of strategic planning in design and implementation; the importance of linking with, and building on, existing systems and arrangements; and the importance of monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and lesson learning purposes (apart from determining whether objectives have been achieved) (See Appendix I for guidelines to optimise local level input when developing and implementing transboundary natural resource management initiatives.)

A number of risks associated with such large and ambitious programmes initiated on the region scale have also been identified. These include: imposing a top-down approach (and thus excluding local residents from design and implementation); a lack of coordination between activities; problems with the pace of implementation (too fast and some stakeholders will be left behind, but too slow will disillusion stakeholders – both are likely to result in a lack of support and objectives not being achieved). A major risk, particularly with respect to conservation interventions, is the exclusion of consideration of the major livelihood activities of residents and how they can be incorporated into implementation activities.

There is a concern that transboundary initiatives may hinder the progress of CBNRM in conservancies in Namibia. Governments are inherently reluctant to devolve power to civil society, and transboundary initiatives require government to government agreements (Jacobsohn, 2004). As Jacobsohn notes, the real risk is ‘the sense of local ownership which drives the conservancy programme can be destroyed’ (2004:4). Additionally, transboundary initiatives often have a broad-scale focus where a classic CBNRM principle is that the unit of proprietorship or decision-making should be the same unit as management and benefit (Murphree, 1997). There is potential here for a mismatch.

Establishment of state protected areas have a history of severely affecting the livelihoods and integrity of resident peoples. The negative effects can severely erode local support for protected areas, with profound implications for planning and management (West and Brechin, 1991). If conservation strategies are agreed upon in a truly cooperative framework,

¹⁰ For further information, refer to Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Parks for Peace Conference proceedings; Katerere et al., 2001; and NACSO, 2003.

they will be viewed as more legitimate by local residents, and consequently will be supported by them (Pinkerton 1987 in West and Brechin, 1991). Even though transboundary conservation initiatives often express the need for communities to benefit and to be included, they often fail to establish systems that both protect community interest and guarantee their inclusion. This is because transboundary conservation plans are drawn up at a national scale and are generally concerned with the rights of states and not the local residents (Katerere et al., 2001). In this context it is vital to foster processes and partnerships at the local level and across borders to feed into large scale plans for transboundary conservation areas.

In the absence of a coordinating body and implementation plan for the TFCA as a whole, activities in these two conservancies have been designed to try to balance the opportunities and risks associated with any future implementation, and to ensure a solid foundation upon which TFCA implementation can build.

3.1 Making opportunities

Opportunities arise primarily from the presence of overlapping objectives at the different levels. At the local level, the conservancy hopes to achieve conservation, primarily by providing opportunities for local economic development based on sustainable natural resource use – whether that is consumptive or non-consumptive tourism, production of craft, or the commercialisation of local resources (e.g. the production of marula oil from wild Marula trees – *Sclerocarya birrea*). As stated above, the three main objectives of TFCAs are biodiversity conservation, local economic development and facilitating peace and cooperation between countries. These intersecting objectives provide a number of opportunities for local level activities that should eventually be supported by TFCA implementation activities.

3.1.1 Biodiversity conservation

Concerning biodiversity conservation, both Salambala and Kasika Conservancies have focused on local management of wildlife with community rangers (employed by the conservancies) playing a key role. The main activities the rangers address are wildlife monitoring; local anti-poaching measures and organising sustainable wildlife harvesting through trophy hunting concessions contracted to professional hunters.

Conservancies in Caprivi have been developing a local wildlife monitoring system since 2001¹¹. This system enables local rangers to collect data on wildlife sightings, poaching incidents and incidents of human wildlife conflict. It is a simple, graphic recording system that facilitates a strong sense of local ownership of the data and has allowed community

¹¹ Refer to Stuart Hill, 2003 and Stuart Hill et al., 2003 for more information on the Event Book system. Mulonga et al., 2003 provides some analysis of Event Book data in Caprivi.

rangers to present information to other conservancy members and outsiders. Annual audits of the data collected have been computerised to assist with analysis at a regional (sub-national) scale. The usefulness of this approach to wildlife monitoring has been recognised and there are moves to use the system (or a variation of it) in community conservation areas in Botswana (the Chobe Enclave Community Trust that neighbours Salambala Conservancy) as well as in state protected areas in Botswana, Zambia and Namibia. With regard to the regional level conservation of elephants in the OUZTFCA area, this high quality local wildlife monitoring can and should be used to inform and complement regional research (which includes aerial censuses and satellite tracking) with regard to elephant numbers, movements across international boundaries and incidents of conflict with humans.

When animal movement is indiscriminate of international boundaries, standardised data collection methodologies enable better collaboration amongst regional practitioners, government officials, residents and researchers. The Event Book system mentioned above is a good example of how this harmonisation could be achieved. Integrating data gathering methods across borders allows information to be jointly analysed and appropriate solutions applied. Standardised approaches also apply to other wildlife management strategies such as anti-poaching activities. Combining knowledge, experience and insight of rangers in neighbouring countries is far more effective than operating in separate units, as by pooling information, the area can be dealt with as one homogenous unit. The burning of fire breaks to manage fire is another example of a management tool that conservancies plan to develop with their neighbours.

3.1.2 Land use planning

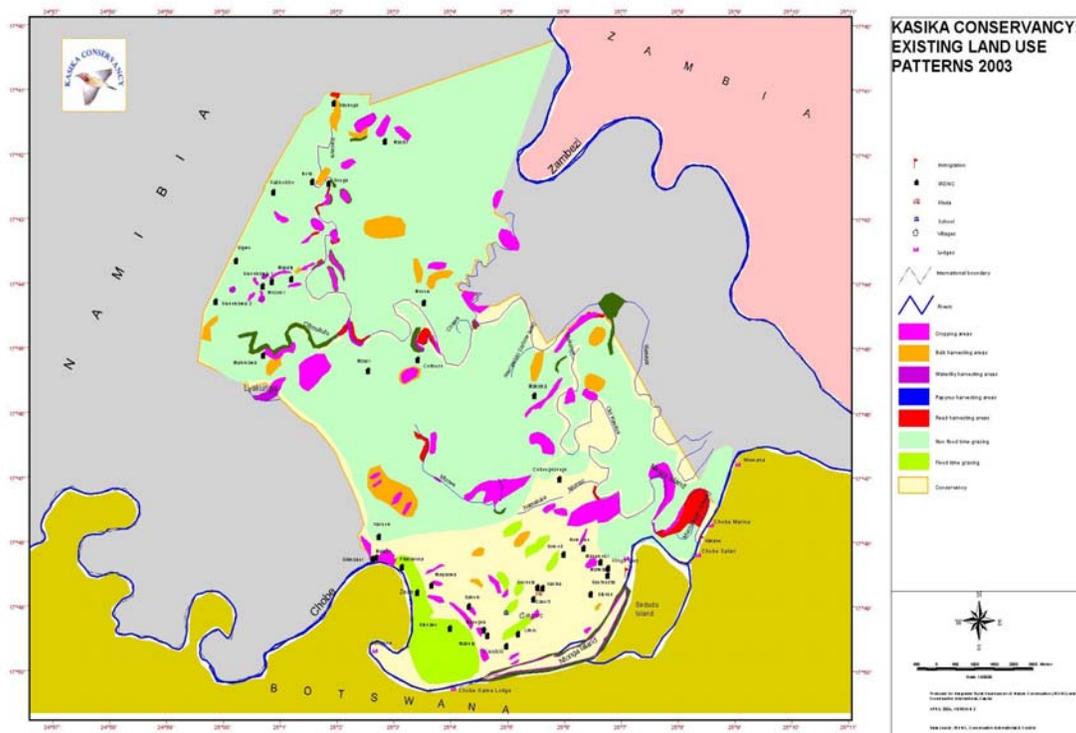
With NGO support, Kasika Conservancy has recently engaged in a community mapping process whereby local, village-level input was used to obtain spatial and quantitative data on peoples' livelihood activities and use of land (e.g. collection of consumable plants such as water lilies and bulbs, as well as grazing, cropping and fishing activities and village populations).

Peoples' recollection of wildlife sightings and movements were also recorded. There is potential to link this local information with analysis of elephant aerial censuses and satellite monitoring data currently being collected on a transboundary scale (Griffin and Chase, 2004). The mapping procedure has been documented as a set of principles for use in other conservancies (IRDNC/CI, 2004).

The information was put on a GIS, and maps produced that have been used to zone the conservancy into manageable parts (e.g. trophy hunting and tourism and wildlife zones)

without compromising existing livelihood activities such as cropping and livestock management. What is very interesting to note about this process is that previous conservation and private sector transboundary agendas wished to create a buffer zone (even a fenced area) along the Chobe River in the conservancy to secure habitat for wildlife crossing from the Chobe National Park. By using the community mapping and zonation process mentioned above, a similar conservation objective has been achieved (i.e. a wildlife and tourism zone along the Kasika Chobe riverfront) by local decision-making and planning rather than being imposed by outsiders.

Map 3. Kasika Conservancy: Existing land use patterns



Should there be a formal transboundary-scale zonation process in the future (e.g. securing large stretches of riverine habitat for wildlife), Kasika Conservancy is in a position to express their land use needs. A documented concern of residents of TFCAs is that transboundary processes interfere with agricultural activities and livestock husbandry – denying people access to grazing areas or river banks (Wolmer, 2002). Sharing the maps as described above provides a platform for sharing knowledge. Projects dealing with human–wildlife conflict and trialling management options to mitigate such conflict should also go some way to reducing these concerns. These maps can assist in highlighting local values assigned to common property resource areas of the TFCA, so that both the common and conflicting values can be

identified and taken into due consideration before decisions are made and broad management plans developed for the TFCA. This can ensure that communities' access to resources is secured, and genuine sharing of decision-making with partners is achieved (Oviedo, 2003).

3.1.3 Economic development

With regard to economic development (the second shared objective of the TFCA and CBNRM), conservancies (with strong NGO support) have focused attention on developing tourism enterprises that optimise conservancy control over decision making. Both Salambala and Kasika conservancies participated in the drafting of the integrated tourism development plan for the Eastern Caprivi Floodplain that highlights tourism opportunities, including identifying specific sites for tourist facilities. Cognisance of tourism planning issues in neighbouring Botswana was addressed by using the same consultancy for the Namibian plan as had produced the plan for Chobe National Park's river-front development in Botswana, that borders both conservancies to the south.

In the OUZTFCA, tourism activities based on wildlife and scenery are often focused on rivers. In this region, these rivers are invariably international boundaries. Successful tourism development in this context therefore requires close transboundary collaboration in planning and implementation (including marketing). Much of the wildlife and scenery attractive to tourists is found within emerging or registered communal area conservancies such as Salambala and Kasika. NGO support has enabled a structured process to take place to optimise local community benefits from tourism developments in these areas. In this context, feasibility assessments are being conducted of potential tourism activities and sites within Kasika Conservancy that were identified in the floodplain tourism plan. Clients from lodges in Kasane and Chobe National Park are potential customers for activities in Kasika Conservancy, and so cooperation will be sought from both tourism operators in Kasane and tourists themselves, in these feasibility studies.

Local structures need to inform the larger TFCA process so that local plans and activities can be coordinated in order to be effective and sustainable. Conservancy representation and effective participation are being encouraged on two existing fora that include participants from Botswana and Namibia. Kasika Conservancy representatives attend Local Advisory Committee for Chobe National Park (LACOM) meetings in Botswana to inform LACOM members of conservancy activities and plans in Namibia. They are also members of the Chobe Tourism Working Group (CTWG) with partners from Namibia and Botswana which was constituted to implement the integrated tourism development plan and meets quarterly. Participation in the CTWG structure allows conservancy representatives to meet other

tourism stakeholders to disseminate information, voice concerns and coordinate planning across the border. For example, it is an opportunity for lodge owners in Botswana to table their concerns about potential negative aesthetic impacts of development in conservancies on their tourist operations (e.g. new conservancy campsites impairing the view from existing lodges).

If and when the OUZIT becomes fully operationally in the region, engagement with these local groups and the constituent conservancies they represent will go a long way to ensure that regional tourism planning is informed by and serves local community and private sector tourism interests.

A third NGO based in Botswana – the Centre for Conservation of African Resources: Animals, Communities and Landuse (CARACAL) – has created an opportunity for Namibian and Botswana government conservation representatives in the OUZTFCA to meet quarterly to discuss common issues such as poaching and wildlife management. This has the potential to lead to joint planning activities such as that taking place between Salambala Conservancy and the Chobe Enclave Community Trust.

3.2 Minimising risks

A number of activities are also being undertaken, which should help to minimise the risk of local-level structures being bypassed during TFCA implementation – by building local capacity and strengthening local institutions, as well as by documenting information useful for local- and regional-level planning. The current lack of a TFCA coordinating body – in spite of repeated attempts by CI staff to get this established – has the potential to lead to ineffective processes taking place, inefficient use of funds and weak partnerships. It also increases the risk that a lack of coordination and mutual misunderstanding amongst partners will prolong processes and create an atmosphere of mistrust on the ground. Activities have been implemented to maximise coordination and collaboration between stakeholders.

As the OUZTFCA is large and complicated there is potential that local communities could be excluded from planning and implementation, leading to missed opportunities. In this context, it is essential that organisations working in a transboundary context take time to understand local structures, livelihood needs and the ecological environment. IRDNC and CI staff tried to ensure that this took place by:

→ Informing conservancy members about the proposed TFCA, where they are situated within it as well as explaining the broad aims of TFCAs.

- Recording the history of the area and formation of the local conservancy as well as the change in natural resources over time.
- Brainstorming some livelihood needs in the context of peoples' perceptions of what the conservancy can deliver.
- Determining the relationship of conservancy members with other organisations, communities and agencies in the region.
- Land use mapping exercises to understand the resource use patterns in the conservancy.

Key partners across borders need to collaborate and share information as much as possible so that all needs and concerns can be integrated into project planning and implementation. Very recently, the African Wildlife Foundation¹² has facilitated the establishment of a forum of community representatives in four of the five OUZTFCA countries which is called ZAZIBONA. There are plans for this forum to act as an advocacy body to represent community interests at a transboundary level. Representation from Namibia is achieved through the Conservancy Chairpersons Forum, where one of the Chairs has been elected to represent community interests on behalf of Caprivian conservancies.

In order to facilitate the coordinated development of wildlife and tourism enterprises such as trophy hunting and joint ventures with (privately-owned) lodges, Kasika Conservancy engaged in an intensive community mapping exercise (as described above). Recording and sharing this local knowledge with all partners is a useful way of informing stakeholders of existing land use patterns and plans in conservancies.

In the future, in order to minimise the risk of a disproportionate influence by one or a small number of powerful interest groups (e.g. government or private sector) in decision-making at the expense of local communities, residents need to participate as equal partners – the community mapping process has compiled information that will enable Kasika Conservancy members to communicate local knowledge and share information with other partners on a larger scale. This puts them in a position to negotiate from a position of comparative strength, in order to gain maximum benefits for the conservancy.

CARACAL and IRDNC/CI are working on a collaborative mapping exercise which has the potential to map neighbouring community areas using the same procedure. This could lead to the development of transboundary maps showing detailed local knowledge that could be used in the future of OUZTFCA planning and management. This should ensure that local information is recognised and utilised transboundary planning processes in the future.

¹² The lead implementing agent of the Four Corners TBNRMA programme.

4 CONCLUSION

The development of TFCAs and TBNRM activities are based on sound principles, but problems can arise in their implementation. A balance between wildlife protection and human centred approaches to conservation and development (historical preservation and sustainable utilisation) needs to be achieved, particularly as the scale of planning in TFCAs is not within local-level control but is the responsibility of government and the donor community..

What is currently lacking in the proposed OUZTFCA is an explicit purpose and a clear process of planning and implementation that includes extensive and meaningful consultation with all stakeholders. As a result of this vacuum, there is currently a plethora of uncoordinated transboundary initiatives that have the potential to lead to confusion and conflict.

To ensure that key partners' goals and priorities are promoted in the TFCA process, the following should be considered:¹³

- incorporation of key partners objectives into TFCA work plans;
- concentration on strategies which are able to meet these objectives;
- negotiation of strategies for partners to share both the costs and benefits of TFCA;¹⁴
- awareness of partner conflicts and ensuring conflict resolution mechanisms are available;
- ensuring benefits are realised on the ground before initiatives are launched on the large scale in order to achieve local support; and
- monitoring TFCA impacts in order to be able adapt implementation to ensure success.

Finding the common ground between CBNRM and TFCA objectives will be critical to success and sustainability. If conservancy, CBNRM, TBNRM and TFCA objectives are complimentary, the 'big picture' will be unable to ignore local communities. A key starting point to ensure that local people participate and benefit in TFCAs is to put the improvement of local livelihoods as a key success factor for transboundary conservation.

For successful long term management, monitoring of interventions (across both the human and ecological fronts) is crucial – to meet part of this information requirement, a long-term programme to monitor the economic and livelihood effects of interventions is already being set up within the TFCA.

¹³ The first step should be signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the five participating countries to establish the TFCA. However, the difficulty in doing this in a TFCA is determining who the relevant stakeholders are that should sign the Memorandum.

¹⁴ For example, the dispersal of elephants within the TFCA is likely to increase human-wildlife conflict in areas where there are currently few or no elephants. Partners can assist in minimising this cost by implementing damage mitigation measures.

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APPENDIX I GUIDELINES TO OPTIMISE LOCAL LEVEL INPUT WHEN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING TRANSBOUNDARY NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES¹⁵

- Support the active participation of local people as equal partners in planning and implementation (e.g. provide transport and capacity-building for their meaningful participation in local fora).
- Deliver any large-scale transboundary initiatives as a integrated whole rather than piecemeal and fragmented.
- Nurture existing informal transboundary linkages where appropriate e.g. sharing craft making skills amongst related groups of indigenous people across international borders.
- Build strong, local level transboundary initiatives as a foundation for large-scale transboundary initiatives (if and when they arrive).
- Look for new opportunities on the ground to support transboundary linkages and relationships (e.g. promoting environmental opportunities (transboundary exchange visits) and mapping of indigenous resources/recording of oral histories).
- Engage with transboundary initiatives to try and bring a local-level focus (even if objectives seem mismatched and misguided).
- Identify and promote amongst all stakeholders, common values and a common vision based on shared resources.
- Support and compliment the work of other parties e.g. NGOs and CBOs.
- Focus on the improvement of local livelihood opportunities including, but not limited to, tourism promotion.
- Obtain and maintain the support of decision-makers (seek endorsement for ‘on-the-ground’ activities from security and other govt departments).
- Promote and coordinate cooperative activities (e.g. exchange information and share expertise).
- Achieve co-ordinated planning and protection (e.g. complementary management plans or wildlife monitoring).
- Develop co-operative agreements if and when appropriate.
- Work towards funding sustainability.
- Monitor and assess progress with regard to the extent to which local communities benefited.

¹⁵ Adapted from, Chengeta et al., (2003).

APPENDIX II CBNRM PROGRAMMES IN THE REGION

CBNRM in Namibia

Background

In 1967, a landmark policy decision was made when the (South African) government gave conditional use rights over wildlife to (white) commercial farmers. This policy, combined with further legislation in 1975 gave commercial farmers conditional rights to utilise wildlife on their land for consumptive or non-consumptive purposes. This resulted in both a major growth in the game-farming industry, and an increase in the numbers of wildlife found on commercial lands. In 1992, policy enabled commercial farmers to form ‘conservancies’, which enabled them to pool their land for wildlife management purposes.

Such rights had not been extended to residents of communal lands, where prior to Independence in 1990, local resource management systems had been weakened through state assumption of control over wildlife. In the early 1980s, a Namibian NGO (IRDNC) started working in the Kunene region, involving traditional authorities and community members, to establish a system of community game guards and of revenue-sharing mechanisms with tour operators. Such pilot projects helped to trigger the expansion of community participation in conservation, and work by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Namibian NGOs helped to develop the subsequent policy and legislation referring to wildlife in communal areas. Legislation was passed in 1996 (*The Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996*) that provided use rights over wildlife to community groups in defined areas (conservancies¹⁶) – with the objective of providing an opportunity to link conservation and development in rural areas, using incentives to encourage the sustainable utilisation of resources and overturning the discriminatory provisions of the past (Bjarnason, 1999).

It should be recognised that conservancies are not strictly protected areas, but areas of land where the management of wildlife is integrated with other uses (primarily arable agriculture and stock keeping).

A number of other resource management programmes and projects in Namibia had similar goals and objectives – including National programme to Combat Desertification (NAPCOD),

¹⁶ A conservancy in the communal areas consists of a self-defined community, or a group of communities, within a defined geographical area that jointly manage, conserve and utilise wildlife and other natural resources (MET, 1995). Each conservancy elects a management committee, develops a management plan for the use of their natural resources (which may include both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of wildlife). Income from these activities is distributed to the community according to the benefit distribution plan – distribution is usually either direct payment to individuals or used to support community projects. All revenue generating conservancies use some of their income to support the administrative and operational costs of the conservancies and to reinvest in the natural resource base.

Sustainable Animal and Range Development Project (SARDEP), the Northern Namibia Environmental Project (NNEP) and the Northern Livestock Development Project (NOLIDEP). Although each had a different emphasis, they all sought to improve rural livelihoods through the sustainable use of natural resources, community institution building and all recognised the need for secure and exclusive tenure over land and resources as a foundation for sustainable use of resources (Hagen et al., 1998). This also provided the opportunity to bring together a number of donors. The most effective strategy for donor coordination would have been through the cooperation of these various donor-funded programmes in developing a joint vision for CBNRM and identifying the requirements for further support, however, this appears not to have happened formally. To date, the CBNRM programme still focuses on wildlife, and very little integration of other livelihood activities has yet occurred within the programme.

Current situation

Namibia has created one of the most progressive policy environments for CBNRM in southern Africa. The conservancy movement has become immensely popular with rural communities across Namibia. Thus far 29 communal area conservancies have been registered and an additional 50 are under development. The registered conservancies encompass slightly more than 70,000km² of prime wildlife habitat, while the emerging conservancies cover an additional estimated 60,000km². In addition, more than 30,000 people are already directly benefiting from improved resource management in registered conservancies, and an additional 60,000 – 80,000 people will soon fall under the conservancy umbrella.

The impact should expand in the future as ministries other than the Ministry of Environment and Tourism are developing policies related to user rights in communal areas, e.g. land, grazing and fisheries. Through careful monitoring, Namibians can ensure that these activities comply with the new policies and other regulations already in place.

The programme is multifaceted, consisting of efforts to:

- develop, implement and analyse the policy and legislative framework for devolving rights over wildlife and tourism to rural communities;
- form conservancies and implement sustainable natural resource management and wildlife-based tourism developments in conservancies;
- develop and implement a CBNRM training programme;
- provide legal advice to communities on enterprise development, joint venture negotiation and conservancy formation (Hagen et al., 1998).

Despite the successes to date, challenges remain for this programme. The current problems in Zimbabwe still impact negatively on tourism in east Caprivi, a key region for the programme, given its abundant wildlife and attractive landscape. HIV/AIDS is also having an impact on programme activities and results in east Caprivi. In 1998, the HIV prevalence rate in that area is over 30 per cent and researchers expect a drastic rise in the 2001 surveillance survey. Conservancies in Caprivi and elsewhere suffer through the loss of trained and experienced managers and workers to HIV/AIDS.

History of CBNRM in Botswana

Background

In 1989 a WWF mission visited Botswana to advise upon a sustainable wildlife utilisation model in its Wildlife Management Area (WMA) (24 per cent of the country is zoned as WMAs, subdivided into Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs). It found huge wildlife areas in seven districts covering 129,000 km² where very little management took place – largely uncontrolled citizen hunting, and State-controlled commercial hunting, with no community management involvement whatsoever.

CBNRM started in Botswana with the USAID-funded Natural Resources Management Project (NRMP) 1989-1999. In most districts, land use and settlement plans were in place and WMA and CHA boundaries designated. Subsistence hunting and gathering made an important contribution to livelihood security of a sizeable proportion of the rural population in the remote areas of the country. The project found an environment conducive for CBNRM in Botswana (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

Most of the work towards developing CBNRM in Botswana included policy development, was instrumental in the development of management plans for community-managed WMAs, and piloted community-based natural resource-related enterprise development and was closely involved in the establishment and monitoring of the first CBNRM project in Botswana (in the Chobe Enclave) to implement one of the most decentralised natural resources management models in southern Africa (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

Other ministries supportive of CBNRM are the Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing (MLGL&H) and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP). The mandate of both ministries includes rural development, especially of the remote areas of Botswana. These have been largely dependent on government subsidies ever since Independence in 1966. Natural resources management and related community involvement showed real development potential. The approach used by Department of Wildlife and

National Parks prompted MFDP to launch its own Community Based Strategy for Rural Development (Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

Current situation

A result of 10 years CBNRM has been the establishment of 83 organisations involved in developing natural resources management regimes at community level. Numbers do not say anything about the effectiveness of these organisations in implementing CBNRM, but any management regime needs an organisation and the establishment of these 83 offers an impressive starting point. Community organisations (trust, co-operatives, interest groups) involved in CBNRM are found all over Botswana. The number of (recognised) villages covered by the CBOs currently stands at 120. This equates to the participation of approximately 103,000 people, or just over six per cent of the national population, according to 2001 census estimates (Rozemeijer, 2003b).

It is difficult to assess the exact impact of CBNRM on the development of the participating communities as there is no systematic collection of data on the existing CBNRM projects.¹⁷ However, citizen hunting has substantially decreased and the actual and perceived value of wildlife has increased tremendously and the granting of legal access by communities to natural resources is generally considered to be an important step in their empowerment process (Taylor, 2000 cited in Rozemeijer and van der Jagt, 2000).

The achievements of the programme were highlighted in the 2003 ten year review as being:

- the development of CBNRM policies, guidelines and natural resource user rights;
- the increased value of natural resources;
- the establishment and strengthened capacity of CBOs involved in CBNRM;
- the increased involvement of NGOs and the private sector as facilitators of CBNRM;
- increased stakeholder coordination;
- the positive impact in terms of income and employment, in addition to non-material benefits derived from CBNRM (Rozemeijer, 2003b).

Also identified in the review were challenges remaining for the programme, including that:

- CBNRM is not yet fully politically accepted, nor is it institutionally embedded in Botswana yet;
- community capacity to exercise management authority is still weak, and the long term nature of building community capacity has perhaps been underestimated;

¹⁷ This is a problem common to most CBNRM programmes.

- the link between incentives and benefits with conservation activities is still weak (due partly to most of the benefits being communally shared or captured by elites, while costs remain borne largely by individuals);
- management of enterprises along business principles (i.e. to make profit) are perhaps not best managed by community structures;
- equitable representation of heterogeneous and complex communities remain difficult.

*History of CBNRM in Zambia*¹⁸

Background

Following Zambia's Independence in 1964, Kaunda's UNIP government instinctively centralized natural resource legislation alongside nationalization of most enterprises. The 1994 National Environmental Action Plan recognised the need to devolve increasing responsibilities for natural resource management to local authorities and communities.

As in other countries, the wildlife sector has led the way in CBNRM. In 1983, in response to heavy rhino and elephant poaching the link between people, economic development and wildlife conservation gave rise to two programmes – the Luangwa Integrated Rural Development (LIRDP) Project and the Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas (ADMAGE) programme.

LIRDP was established with significant Presidential involvement – Kaunda removed this project (and the prime South Luangwa National Park) from the control of the wildlife department into the economic ministry. Expenditure on law enforcement quickly brought poaching under control, and was the greatest success of this project. The community programme was implemented in a top-down manner through six chiefs, with few benefits reaching ordinary local people. The linked rural development programme for roads, water, credit, agricultural research, etc., was bureaucratic, expensive and yielded relatively little. Between 1988 and 1995, the community wildlife programme was managed as a top-down, first generation CBNRM programme. Decisions over wildlife revenue were made by area representatives (chiefs) and used primarily for public works, with communities being mere passive recipients.

It was only when the community programme was restructured in 1996, that it began to work. Using a project-level policy agreed by the policy committee and its several permanent secretaries, it was agreed that 80 per cent of revenues would accrue to the 45 democratically

¹⁸ This section draws heavily on Child, 2003.

elected Village Action Groups (VAGs), and would be managed using procedures that ensured full participation, transparency and accountability. To encourage compliance, annual wildlife revenues were only distributed to VAGs once they had complied with these procedures (e.g. quarterly financial and technical reports to the whole community, regular auditing of finances and projects, and annual elections of office bearers) and less than one per cent of revenues were not accounted for. Comparing the results of the two phases is enlightening.

The national programme – ADMADE – was initiated in the early 1990s. This initially made good progress, but then faltered because it was far too tentative in fiscally and democratically empowering communities. Of the hunting revenues, Treasury retained half, the other half being divided between National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) (25 per cent), employment of Village Scouts by NPWS (40 per cent) and community projects (35 per cent) although less than half of this was actually paid out. Given the fact that fully three-quarters of the quota was under-utilized commercially because it was parcelled out cheaply (sometimes through political hands in Lusaka), and that many projects disproportionately benefited the chiefs, communities received less than four per cent of the potential wildlife revenues. Nevertheless, Village scouts went some way towards controlling poaching. Initially, too, a number of useful projects were built, but the chief dominated decision making and the programme lacked the capacity to enforce top-down transparency mechanisms. Consequently, progress faded after about three years. Furthermore, the organizational policies of the programme entrenched chiefs and did not democratise communities.

More recently, NPWS was transformed into the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) through the *Zambia Wildlife Act of 1998*. The transformation was beset by hurdles and, while most staff are in place, ZAWA has no financial resources and is hardly operational.

This Act is potentially far-sighted – it provides a legal framework for the formation of Community Resource Boards and mechanisms for community involvement in benefit sharing, the allocation of concession agreements and wildlife management. However the Act is weak in that these right can be widely interpreted – it can be used either to devolve or to centralise management authority and benefits. Evidence to date suggests that the Act is not being used in a far-sighted manner – ZAWA and central government intend to retain 50 per cent of wildlife revenues, threatening the sectors' potential for growth and its contribution to poverty reduction.

Although ZAWA tried to involve communities, the hunting allocation process remains highly centralised, and was subject to political/bureaucratic manipulation (albeit not from ZAWA),

with the result that communities have lost considerable revenues (there has been no hunting for two years).

Current situation

ZAWA's CBNRM/GMA Directorate is new and has not yet developed a vision or strategy.

An analysis of CBNRM in Zambia suggests a relatively uncoordinated approach and a strong tendency to avoid tackling the critical issue of proprietorship. Most Zambian CBNRM programmes are taking a livelihoods approach, focusing on natural resources already controlled at the household or village level, (agri-business, honey, etc.) and on production technology rather than addressing fundamental power relationships. This means that the potential to achieve the growth (illustrated by the Botswana, Namibian and Zimbabwean examples) is being forgone.

Criticisms of the Zambian programme include:

- the potential of high valued resources such as wildlife and forestry has not been unlocked;
- the political economic issue necessary for vibrant growth, including empowering communities with authority or fiscal devolution has not been dealt with;
- the approach to CBNRM is ad hoc;
- attempts to establish a CBNRM Consultative Forum and a Natural Resources Consultative Forum have failed;
- there is no CBO Association to represent the interests of communities, although geographically focused projects are working on this in a few places;
- compared to its neighbours, Zambia is isolated and not learning from sister programmes across borders;
- a disabling, rather than an enabling, government regime, with high levels of political involvement.

History of CBNRM in Zimbabwe

Background

Control and use of wildlife was removed from communal area residents during the colonial era. In colonial times, traditional leadership structures were supposed to play a role in land and resource management but these traditional structures had no powers of exclusion and access to certain natural resources for example, wildlife.

In 1978, Wildlife Industries New Development for All (WINDFALL) programme was introduced to address the issue of human wildlife conflict on communal lands which had

wildlife (and the costs which go along with it) but did not derive an income from them. WINDFALL was guided by the belief that human/wildlife conflict would be reduced and attitudes towards conservation improve if affected communities derived some benefit from wildlife utilisation in the form of meat and revenue. Unfortunately this link between wildlife revenues and wildlife management was not made – it was difficult to differentiate wildlife revenues from any other government handouts since the money was used for any project decided by the council. In summary WINDFALL failed (Madzudzo, 1995).

Given the shortcomings of WINDFALL coinciding with the Independence government's desire to decentralise planning and rural development, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM) came up with another programme. After Independence in 1980, researches were hired to determine how the *1975 Parks and Wildlife Act* amendment could be extended to communal areas. It was not until 1988 that the DNPWM granted the initial two Rural District Councils (RDCs) 'Appropriate Authority' status over the wildlife resources in the same manner the private ranch owners had been granted the authority status in 1975.

In 1989 and 1990, 'Appropriate Authority' was granted to the twelve 'wildlife' districts, giving legal control of wildlife to District Councils but under the administrative condition that control was further devolved and CAMPFIRE committees were established at village, ward, district and national levels. In 1998 that the programme began to diversify away from hunting. Diversification was tackled largely through micro-projects including eco-tourism projects and the sale of veldt products. However, very little money was spend on market analysis and research, product development and marketing systems.

From the start the programme was viewed with some suspicion, and the greatest threats to it were political. Recognising that political survival depended on 'indigenising' the programme, and that it needed leadership and legitimate representation, the founding group nurtured the CAMPFIRE Association (CA), a body representing RDCs to which Appropriate Authority over wildlife has been given.

Current situation

From its inception, CAMPFIRE revenue grew steadily, reaching approximately US\$2 million by 2000. By the late 1990s, an estimated 90,000 households (630,000 people) were benefiting from CAMPFIRE revenue (Muir-Leresche et al., 2003).

Significant funding was provided to CAMPFIRE Units (which also go by other names) which usually comprise an executive officer and assistant (and sometimes resource monitors). These units are attached to councils and are responsible for monitoring and supporting the

CAMPFIRE programme and natural resource management activities in general. In the event, support of these Units has been successful as they continue to provide good support to communities. Increased revenue extraction by RDCs was the primary culprit in communities' reduced share of wildlife revenues.

CAMPFIRE's establishment has produced positive changes among the communities. It has led to the strengthening or increased capacity of institutions at the national level (CAMPFIRE Association), District level (District CAMPFIRE Committees), Ward level (Ward CAMPFIRE Committees) and the Village level (Village CAMPFIRE Committees). These are democratically elected committees who are accountable to the local electorate in terms of all development decisions regarding natural resources. (Maveneke, 1998).

Since its inception, CAMPFIRE has had a mixed record – with variability predominantly attributable to each RDCs adherence (or not) guidelines issued by DNPWM, as well as to resource/human population ratios. The achievement of full devolution to localised units of jurisdiction has been blocked by political and economic influence from the centre, hence its success is qualified (Murphree and Mazambani, 2002).

In a recent review of the USAID contribution to CAMPFIRE, a number of both positive impacts and weaknesses of the programme were noted, including (but not limited to):

- Increasing populations of some species, maintained trophy quality, reduced poaching.
- Rapidly increased and then maintained hunting revenues, development of tourism operations (and the associated employment and income impacts), benefits distributed at household level, as well as social investments made.
- Some diversification away from heavy reliance on hunting revenues, to include tourism operations, and income generating opportunities from natural resources (including fisheries, honey and fruits). However diversification has not been particularly successful – consumptive wildlife revenue provides more than 70 per cent of benefits – partly because insufficient efforts were put into product development and feasibility assessments as well as marketing.
- Increased awareness of entitlements and rights, the establishment of 17 sub-district level trusts (of which seven still function despite the current political and economic turmoil), and a general acceptance of the rights of communities to utilise income as they see fit.
- Institution- and capacity-building offerings and up-take by large numbers of individuals and organisations, including training in organisational skills, wildlife management, record keeping, etc.

- High levels of participation and transparency at community level, reasonable accountability at sub-district and district level. Though RDCs strength relative to producer communities may be a cause for concern – particularly with respect to revenue distributions (i.e. disadvantaging the intended primary beneficiaries).
- Wildlife utilisation is becoming a politically accepted form of land use. CAMPFIRE has had a strong impact on the development of CBNRM programmes in surrounding countries (who adopted the principles and adapted the methodology and approach). At a national level however, legislation has still not yet been passed to provide proprietorship at the producer community level.
- Systems, infrastructure and capacity building are being maintained in wards and villages receiving revenue from wildlife utilisation. There is concern about the sustainability of some projects (especially ecotourism projects with weak market links), as well as problems in non-wildlife districts.

Looking to the future, an important question is whether CAMPFIRE Association managed funds wisely to create economic sustainability both for itself and its constituency. Another important question is whether the diversification policy has worked, though measuring this is difficult because of the time lags associated with diversification, the effects of the recent macroeconomic implosion on both the country's national economy and its tourism sector (Child et al., 2003).