

Uganda's Local Council and the Management of Commons: An Attempt of Theoretical Reassessment [♦]

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Due to population growth, unsustainable resource utilization, increasing urbanization and industrial activities, Uganda's stock of natural resources has come under increasing threat of degradation or depletion. These pressures on natural resources have resulted in undesirable phenomena such as land fragmentation, overgrazing and soil erosion among others (Uganda, MoFPED, 1999, p. 95).

1. Introduction

1-1 Background

Environmental degradation is a global concern, and developing countries including African are no exception. It is perhaps very ironical to observe the coexistence of rich wildlife and stark poverty of the majority of Africans. Thus, environmental issues in Africa and elsewhere are entangled with economic as well as socio-political issues, and any solution requires a comprehensive approach for effectiveness and sustainability.

Debate between "conservation" and "development" in Africa carries historical legacies.¹ The post-independence state apparatus were largely centralized, because at that time the "strong state" was considered to serve national integration and economic growth. Even when wildlife and other natural resources were valued, conservation was practiced usually in a "top-down" manner. Central authorities imposed restrictions of resource use, often without prior notice to local residents. It was no surprise that local residents showed little cooperation with conservation authorities.

This "fortress conservation" approach has proved undoubtedly ineffective. This realization has promoted a new thinking on how to achieve sustainable development balancing environmental concerns and poverty alleviation requirements. Consequently, it came to be realized that natural resource management would become more effective with inclusive

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¹ See Beinart (2000) and Broch-Due (2000) for excellent reviews of the contemporary history of environmental issues in Africa.

consultation processes with local resource users. Thus a new notion of “community conservation” has replaced the earlier approach of “fortress conservation.”² Community conservation can be defined as policies and practices that grant greater involvement in management processes of diverse natural resources and that attempt to give residents close to precious resource more equitable benefit in such processes (Hulme and Murphree, 2001b, p. 4). A main rationale of community conservation is that this approach would induce more cooperative attitudes by local residents on conservation activities, which in turn becomes more effective in the long run.

In addition, in parallel to the shift in natural resource management, there has been an important change in thinking about development administration. Especially since around the 1990s, there has been some sort of decentralization reforms implemented in the world, including the developing countries. As a result, participatory development aimed for sustainability became to be combined with the decentralized state. Because environmental issues differ widely from one area to another, local-level management is more suitable to meet different local requirements (Barrow et al., 2000, p. 144). Decentralized management is deemed more appropriate for facilitating community conservation (Dubois and Lowore, 2000; Fortmann et al., 2001; Ribot, 1999, 2001, and 2002; Okoth-Ogendo and Tumushabe, 1999). Various donors and international NGOs have therefore advocated this approach, and several projects were implemented subsequently. As a result, community conservation, by the end of 1990s, has now almost become a “new orthodoxy,” particularly in Africa (Adams and Hulme, 2001, p. 18; Barrow et al., 2000).

1-2 Unanswered Issues

But several questions remain (Lind and Cappon, 2001): is the community conservation approach really a panacea as argued by donors and advocates? Several recent empirical findings expressed more caution in advocating the community conservation approach (Ribot, 2005; Saito 2004). The purpose of this article is to assess whether decentralization processes and community participation in natural resource management have contributed to the intended objectives for the socially disadvantaged to exercise their agency meaningfully, which in turn contribute to the ultimate objective of poverty reduction and sustainable development in the developing countries? This question is particularly important since the notion of sustainable development encompasses social inclusion, economic welfare and environmental conservation.³

² There is a lexicon of terms. Some analysts (for instance, Ostrom, 1990; Gibson et al., 1998) use the term “common property resource management.” Other examples include integrated conservation and development projects; community-based conservation; community-based natural resource management; community wildlife management; collaborative (or co-) management (Barrow and Murphree, 2001, p. 37). Good review of the literature can be found in Agrawal, 2001; Brown, 2000; Ribot, 2001 and 2002.

³ Holling (1995, pp. 32-33) explains: “Sustainable development is neither an ecological problem, a social problem, nor an economic problem. It is an integrated combination of all three. Effective investments in sustainable development therefore simultaneously retain and encourage the adaptive capabilities of people, business enterprises, and nature. The effectiveness of those adaptive capabilities can turn the same unexpected event (e.g. drought, price change, market shifts) into an opportunity for one system, or a crisis for another. These adaptive capacities depend on the processes that permit renewal in society, economies, and ecosystems. For nature it is biosphere structure; for business it is usable knowledge; and for society as a whole it is a trust.”

For the community conservation practices to work, there has to be several conditions. First, the socially disadvantaged need to be represented in the decision-making processes of resource use. If they can be directly included in such processes, it would be perhaps be more preferable. In reality, however, usually such direct participation is impossible. The communities located close to precious wildlife habitat are far from urban centers where political authority and economic wealth are concentrated. They rarely influences when policies related to natural resource management are planned. Furthermore, even within the communities, women, elderly, youth, ethnic minorities, inter alia, tend to be marginalized and are not included in such policy-making processes. Therefore, this kind of situation needs to be rectified at various levels. The poor and the socio-politically weak need to be have some mechanisms in being represented in decision-making processes.

Second, local governments in this process play an essential role in facilitating competing requirements of resource use. For this role to be effectively played, the local governments need more support and not less. However, since the current rationale of decentralization reforms derive from neo-liberal economics, making the states smaller often becomes an uncritically accepted slogan. Privatization is sometimes preferred since private entities are considered to be more efficient than the public sector. Thus, assisting local governments are considered illegitimate by some donors, which then support private companies, NGOs and civil society organizations. Since the current situation not only fragments effective support to localities but also undermines reforms taken by local governments (Ribot, 2005), it therefore apparently needs to be reversed. Becoming an effective facilitator is not equal to become a big and incompetent public office. Facilitation differs from domination. Thus, creating effective local facilitation is indispensable, and often this role needs to be played by the public offices.

Third, in relation to these two issues, role of outsiders becomes crucial. The donors are not in a suitable position to represent the disadvantaged in local decision-making processes. But, the NGOs are usually credited with assisting community groups, which in turn have more chances to voice the concerns of the poor and the marginalized in policy-making processes. Donors are also in a very influential position to shape the function of local authorities in Africa. In some cases, local governments can receive direct assistance from outside donors. Outsiders therefore have to be very careful about their activities. What is essential is that their assistance strategy needs to be based on the understanding that supporting one should not take place at the cost of the other. In other words, outsiders' engagement needs to widen the scope of "win-win" solutions between the local governments and other stakeholders including actual resource users, many of whom are politically marginalized. Only with win-win solution, the collaborative relations between the regulators and the regulated can function.

This article examines weather these conditions are met in reality by drawing on materials from Uganda. After the National Resistance Movement (NRM) took power in 1986, it has been implementing a consistent decentralization program, which is one of the most clearly defined and elaborated on the African continent (Saito, 2003). In addition, the NRM government has also been improving the regulatory framework of environmental control,

management and conservation by implementing a series of legislations. Thus, the case study of Uganda presents a unique opportunity to see whether decentralized environmental conservation can contribute to resolve one of the most serious global challenges as of now. What transpires from this article is that community conservation is in fact an extremely demanding task in attempting to achieve both economic progress in mitigating wide-spread poverty as well as environmental conservation halting the increasing degradations of various natural resources.

1-3 Theoretical Implications of the Research Gap

Theoretically, these considerations have wider implications. The first issue of inclusion/representation reflects deepening understanding of agency. For effective participation by the poor, agency needs to be exercised in embedded socio-political contexts. Here the language of citizenship is both useful and problematic: it is useful that citizenship connotes that all have equal rights to participate in processes that affects one's life. It is problematic because rights cannot be automatically guaranteed in realities of developing countries. Citizenship implies that individuals are autonomous, purposeful actors and able to make choice (Jones and Gaventa, 2002, p. 6). As the debate of citizenship illustrates, however, the poor and the socially disadvantaged usually do not resemble the characteristics of citizenship which centers on agency. For them to realize their legal claim, multi-dimensional empowerment is often needed. As the notion of citizenship covers multidimensional rights, so does empowerment. For the socially disadvantaged, their participation in political sphere, social inclusion as well as security of livelihoods are interrelated. Without such multiple-empowerment, citizenship identified as covering divers rights remains an empty shell without much meaning (Kabeer, 2005).

In order for the marginalized to exercise citizenship meaningfully, one of the key relevant concepts is deliberative democracy. While the notion of liberal democracy is based on individual preferences being aggregated through voting, deliberative democracy emphasizes communicative processes of opinion formation as a suitable mechanism of aggregating different preferences of populations. Deliberative democracy is not to replace representative democracy, but is an expansion of the conventional representative democracy which has been facing serious problems in many different parts of the world (Chambers, 2003). For the socially weak, especially in the tropical countries, this kind of democracy is more suitable than vote-centric and individualistic understanding of democracy. For collaborative natural resource management to work, effective deliberative processes are essential since different resource-users have competing requirements, and diverse individual preference needs to be aggregated effectively.

Second, as a relatively new understanding of democracy has emerged, the notion of "publicness" needs much more careful review. In the past, democratic government with the support of the citizens was considered to have constituted and represented the "public." However, as the demands from the citizens became more heterogeneous, many of the government have not been able to respond to this diversification. Populations in many sections of the world have lost faith in the governments as a main custodian of public services. The governments no longer enjoy legitimacy from the majority of the population.

In response to this difficulty, often decentralization is proposed as a solution. A key term related to decentralization is (local) governance. Because governance is a term used by many for different meanings, some intentionally avoid using it. While the government was the main provider of services (such as in the case of the welfare state), governance highlights the interactive processes of multi-stakeholders (including government) in order to resolve common problems. Governance can be defined as processes and outcomes of consultative processes of different constituent members including public, private, and civil organizations in order to resolve common political, economic, and social issues (Evans et al., 2005; Kooiman, 2003; Saito, 2003).

The governance notion significantly changes what “public” is all about. With governance, entities other than government offices participate in the process of discussing and implementing solutions to resolve issues which affect different constituent members whether they belong to government, private or civil spheres. These new participants are now co-managers of essential services and co-producers of solutions (Kooiman, 2003; Pitschas, 2006). “Public” is no longer equal with the government. The new “publicness” is shared by multiple stakeholders in governance.

It is against the background of the shared concerns that collective action can take place (Olowu and Wunsch 2004, p. 1). If governance is an academic term in analyzing the interaction of multiple stakeholders in governing, then practical action that can be undertaken is collective action.

Apparently these two points of representation/agency and publicness/governance are inter-connected. As the advocates of deliberative democracy assert, the stakeholders engage in dialogues with the spirit of public-mindedness, the process are likely to foster mutual respect. The deliberative processes can enhance the quality of decisions which is based on much broadly-informed discussions. The entire processes of consultation enhance legitimacy of decisions, hence resulting in good governance (Chambers, 2003, p. 316). The interactive processes also improve accountability since participants share information through dialogues. Therefore, the processes of deliberation and (good) governance go hand in hand. This inter-connectedness is important for natural resource management since diverse stakeholders need coordinated solutions for competing requirements.

2. Evolution of Environmental Sector in Uganda

Uganda’s current environmental management policies and practices date back to the colonial history. This legacy has created a protectionist perception in which resource users are problem makers. This perception guided the establishment of protected areas where resource uses were restricted. The total of these restricted areas comprises approximately 8% of Uganda’s total land area (Green, 1995, p. 2, quoted in Hulme and Infield, 2001, p. 106; Barrow et al., 2001b, p. 59).

In the mean time, two relatively recent developments have influenced the environmental

regime in Uganda. First, as international environmental concerns attract global attention, Uganda signed important conservation conventions (Barrow et al., 2000, p. 14). Second, partly influenced by this Uganda's participation in conventions, a new constitution, 1995, clearly stipulates that environmental issues form one of the important matters for the state and the people in Uganda.

Following the new constitution, the National Environment Statute, 1995 was passed to establish the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). While NEMA is responsible for monitoring, planning and coordination of environmental matters, implementation is the responsibility of relevant ministries (Ogaram and Wabunoha, 1997).

The constitution also acknowledges decentralization as one of the major efforts for state (re)building. The processes of decentralization were accelerated in the early 1990s. The Local Council (LC) system, which is a hierarchy of councils and committees, became an important forum for local people to interact with authorities. With decentralization, each LC is responsible for overall planning and implementation of development activities, including environmental conservation.

The Section 15 of the National Environment Statute mandates the establishment of the District Environment Committee (DEC). The DEC is to ensure that environmental concerns are integrated into activities carried out by each district in accordance with the national environmental policy. In most of the district, there is a District Environmental Officer (DEO), who is responsible for overall planning and management of environmental concerns.⁴ Their tasks include creating environmental awareness, incorporating environmental activities in schools and other activities, monitoring economic activities which may have adversarial impacts, building data base on environmental issues in each district, and supporting implementation of environmental actions within the district. (interview with Solomon Musoke, DEO Mukono District, 18 May 2000).

At the grassroots level, the LC system is valuable as a forum for consultation, but local residents do not necessarily consider it as an effective problem-solving institution. At this level, there is no legal requirement for establishing the LECs, but in limited places committees have been formed. Accordingly, the structure of decentralized environmental initiatives is now in place. The real question, then, is how to turn the newly created structure into effective practice.

3. Environmental Management at Local Levels

Even if a significant degree of decentralization has been implemented in Uganda, central authorities still retain important controls over environmental regulations, particularly when they are related to national parks and forest and game reserves.⁵ The main problem is to

⁴ 51 out of 56 districts have DEOs (interview with Margaret Lwaga, District Support Coordinator, NEMA, 31 July 2002).

⁵ The Uganda Wildlife Statute, 1996 contributed to set up the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) (that was created by the merger of former Uganda National Parks and the Game Department of the Ministry of Tourism

secure institutional links between these central authorities and the LC system.

Even if there have been some attempts to promote collaboration between conservation authorities and the LC system, there has not been a clear link established between those two. Thus, quite often collaboration is based on personal ties rather than institutional arrangements. This situation puts local management committees on environmental issues, especially those which are asked to be in charge of national parks and state owned game reserves, in an uncertain position (Barrow et al., 2000. p. 91).

As a result, the kind of integration envisaged between the overall district development plan and various local environmental reports is seldom attained in reality (interview with Solomon Musoke, DEO Mukono District, 18 May 2000). Also ways in which policy guidelines are communicated to newly-established local environmental institutions tend to restrict the autonomy of the LC activities, which frustrates local leaders (Lind and Cappon, 2001).⁶

4. Collaboration / collective action

There are, nonetheless, some examples by which grassroots people collaborate in organizing environmental activities. Some of them have been facilitated by the LC system and others have not. It is useful to adopt a typology to classify community conservation activities into three types (Barrow, et al., 2000, pp. 38-42; Hulme and Murphree, 2001a, chapter 3). The basic standpoint for this typology is that community conservation cannot be analyzed by participation alone, and that the analysis needs to be linked to important elements such as resource ownership, processes of decision making, and leadership (Barrow et al., 2000), which in turn have significant theoretical implications for agency, deliberative democracy, and governance (Table 1).

4-1 Protected Area Outreach

This type of activities is to preserve fragile ecosystems and biodiversity by designating the habitat areas as national parks and game reserves, which are normally brought under state ownership. The state agencies determine resource management and decide required activities. This type of activities has been common in East Africa.

In Uganda, management of Lake Mburo National Park (LMNP) is one such example. The LMNP is the first park in Uganda to employ community conservation wardens and rangers in 1991 (Hulme and Infield, 2001, p. 107). The LMNP borders with 13 parishes with an estimated population of more than 80,000 (ibid, p. 111). With various donors' assistance,

and Wildlife).

⁶ Barrow et al. conclude (2000, p. 15): "While this localization and decentralisation is positive, the environment is still a low priority for most local authorities and districts compared with health, education and rural livelihoods. The link between the environment and the well being of rural people is still not clear, as it is no directly related to rural livelihoods. Such short term perspectives have led to potentially unwise decisions on the use of natural resources, for instance with respect to forest settlement, construction of dams and large

efforts have been made to install an institutional mechanism for reflecting community concerns. Park Management Advisory Committee and Parish Resource Management Committees were established. Through the committees' consultation, relations between the Park and local communities have improved. Small-scale development activities have been carried out, mostly in the form of social infrastructure such as schools, health clinics and trading centers (interviews with Christopher Musumba and Matovu Mutwalibi, LMNP, 7 August 2002). While these are tangible benefits for local residents, the estimated benefit of US\$ 2.3 per person per annum is far below the costs for wildlife conservation (ibid, p. 122; Barrow et al., 2000, pp. 126-8). The distribution of these benefits within and between local communities has not been totally fair either. Although income generating activities have also been initiated, many of them have tended economically unviable. Furthermore, while illegal activities of damaging wildlife within the park appears to be decreased, sustainable biodiversity conservation still requires much further efforts particularly outside of the park areas since the park itself is not "a self-contained" ecological zone (Kangwana, 2001).

Ugandan experience confirms that this type of protected-area management does not fully respect the notion of agency of the resource users. The state agency, especially the central government offices retain the control of decision-making authority. The publicness is usually defined by the government. The local governments act as a kind of messenger. The outside support also tends to be given to central government offices (Table 1).

4-2 Collaborative Management

Collaborative management seeks to forge agreements between local resource users and conservation authorities for negotiated access to natural resources, which are usually under the control of statutory authority. Through this kind of agreements, the objectives of conservation with some rural livelihood benefits are sought.

There are some examples of this approach in Uganda, including the involvement of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park; Mt. Elgon National Park; Rwenzori Mountains National Park (Barrow et al., 2000, pp. 50-56; Namara and Nsabagasani, 2001); and Mgahinga Gorilla National Park (Adams and Infield, 2003; Infield and Adams, 1999; Wild and Mutebi, 1996).⁷ These examples generate some lessons. The activities are all assisted by international NGOs which are keenly interested in environmental issues. The projects usually involved setting-up local users groups and identifying key resources to which local populations would like to maintain their access. The negotiation process evolved to reach an agreement with the UWA. This process normally improves the relations between the authorities and resource users. But sometimes such agreements do not fully reflect genuine support of both sides, which makes implementation difficult. Also monitoring mechanisms are often not adequately addressed in the agreements, and sometimes unfair distribution of resources to those who are not a part of the agreement resulted. Benefits that communities receive do not compensate for actual

irrigation schemes."

⁷ In addition, "Uganda has the most advanced and coherent wetlands programme in the region. The policy actively acknowledges the important role of rural people and communities in wetland management" (Barrow et al., 2000, p. 53). See for the web site of www.ugandawetland.org.

and potential costs for conservation (Hulme and Murphree, 2001a; Infield and Adams, 1999).

Of particular interest is that UWA was required by the Uganda Wildlife Statute, 1996, to share 20% of the entry fees with local governments for developing communities surrounding the protected areas (Barrow et al., 2000, p. 24; Barrow et al., 2001b, p. 65; Hulme and Infield, 2001, p. 107). This sharing arrangement is one of the most innovative practices in Africa. But the loophole in the Statute still allows the UWA to retain the community share in their hands (Barrow et al., 2000, p. 50).

These examples demonstrate that under this category of management, limited respect is given to the notion of agency. The primary decision-making authority, however, still remain in the hands of the government. Local governments play a more important role than the protected-area approach, but their role is still limited to support the central government policies. Thus, the central government still largely defines what the public benefits are all about. Some NGOs' support is given to local communities that have improved their position in negotiating with the government. This improvement is an important difference from the protected-area approach (Table 1).

4-3 Community-based Conservation

Community-based conservation seeks to achieve both sustainable uses of natural resources and adequate conservation practices through devolving control over those resources to local communities. Here, local resource users own land and resources either by de fact or de jure arrangements. For effective operation, an emphasis is placed on developing local economy.

In Uganda, the establishment of the LC system has been contributing this type of community-based conservation activities as well. Granting user rights and establishing community management areas have created the legal structures for community-based conservation and enabling institutional environment for dialogue between the state and communities (Barrow, et a., 2000, p. 73). The activities are led by community-based organizations (CBOs), which often operated with support by the central government and/or international NGOs interested in promoting conservation practices, especially in areas where local governments remain inactive. Some CBOs are well organized and have been in operation for more than 5-7 years. These CBOs have a clear organization structure. Decision-making process is reasonably transparent. Benefits of group activities are shared by the members. Disputes arising from competing requirements for resources can be resolved by consultative processes.

The East African Cross-Border Biodiversity Project, supported by UNDP, GEF, and FAO to preserve the Sango Bay forest and wetland ecosystem is considered to be another example (UNDP/GEF, 2000). With the assistance of local NGOs, collaboration with the LC system was sought. Through the process of consultation, local residents increased their awareness of conservation value. But this has achieved through supplemental activities of promoting fuel-efficient cooking devices and income generating activities (interview John Magalula, IRDI staff, 26 July 2000). As a result, relations between authorities and local residents

have improved, as testified by local forest officer: “In the past, forest officer was considered to be an enemy. But now through the collaborative forest management practices, it is no longer the case. Frequent consultations with local people have changed the relationship” (Erick Twinomugisha, Assistant Forest Officer, 28 July 2000). This officer continued that if local people see illegal activities to cut trees in the protected area, then they report it to the local forestry officer (also confirmed by interview with John Magalula, IRDI staff, 26 July 2000).

In these examples, local governments play a role of facilitator albeit in limited ways, and community resource users are recognized as a legitimate stakeholder in constituting the “publicness” in the locality. The governing processes are shared by more diversified entities. But, while the notion of agency is more respected than the previous categories of protected-area and collaborative management approaches, the full recognition in reality tends to be problematic (Table 1). Among the three categories examined, the third type of community-based conservation practice is most advanced in allowing the disadvantaged to voice their concerns, partake in decision-making, and deliberative processes are initiated. These are all encouraging. However, this approach has yet to be adequately translated into mainstream practices and procedures, particularly in wildlife conservation. It is therefore adequate to conclude that community conservation has been evolving in a piece-meal basis without overall strategic coordination – each example reflects specific contexts within the country.

5. Key Issues toward Effective Local Management

What would these Ugandan examples classified by the typology inform us about assumptions behind key notions discussed earlier? The intersection of theories and realities inform us both limitations of current theories and possible directions for further research.

5-1 Representation

The processes of deliberation, asserted by deliberative democrats, describe an ideal form of interaction among stakeholders. This kind of democracy is very normative and attempt to satisfy both resource management and socio-political justice in such management. Since sustainability rests on not only economic welfare without sacrificing environment but also socio-political fairness and justice as well, the deliberative processes including the poor and the marginalized are pointing the right direction.

However, realizing deliberative democracy in real world is often difficult (Ryfe, 2005). Articulating opinions and exploring possible solutions depend on particular contexts. In addition, the processes entail both cognition (the act of making sense) and culture (the act of making meaning), and effective deliberation in developing countries, especially in Africa, need to find suitable methods to combine these two elements. One possibility is story-telling (Ryfe, 2005). While the notion of deliberative democracy often assumes rational and capable individuals who are free to make choice through reasoning processes, conceptualizing such individuals in developing countries may not contribute to better

understanding of realities. Instead, the actual deliberative processes may be better contemplated as story-making processes. Stories usually employ symbols and discourses that anchor specific issues of natural resource management in concrete contexts. Africa has been historically very rich in narratives and stories. This tradition can be positively utilized for adopting what may perhaps be a Western notion of deliberative democracy.

Put differently, the analogy of drama can be useful (Whitehead, 2002). The different stakeholders perform different roles yet the overall theatrical performance is recognized. Stories are told through such performances and at the same time they combine both cognition and culture. Understanding deliberative processes as a kind of drama allows actors to interpret what kind of stories are unfolding. Drama can be differently interpreted by different stakeholders, and rich variety of interpretation makes such drama more valuable.⁸

If such deliberation is successful, it has a similar effect of social movement (Ryfe, 2005, p. 59). One of the core requirements of successful social movement is to establish common identity for addressing social concerns (Britt, 2002). The identity shaped through deliberative processes also embeds stakeholders in particular cultural settings and may guide them to take purposeful actions. Story-telling is a powerful device to do both acts of making sense and of meaning. Creating new stories about resource management in particular contexts in diverse developing countries provides a new window of opportunities for deliberative democrats who are predominantly located in the developed nations. This new window challenges conventional assumptions and may hint innovative methods and approaches to make “deliberative democracy work” in reality. Even if realizing deliberative democracy in African resource management is never easy, the difficulties show there are rooms for theoretical improvement (Delli Carpini et al., 2004).

In Uganda, East African Cross-Border Biodiversity Project used some stories in promoting fuel-efficient cookers. The stories have usually been understood as a communication tool. Not much consideration has been given to what extent this story-telling is contributing to the simultaneous fulfillment of cognition and culture. This point needs to be researched furthermore.

5-2 Citizenship

In the case of Uganda, the LC system can become a basis upon which such story-making can be arranged. Following, Janoski and Gran (2002), Ribot (2005, p. 12) identifies the main elements of citizenship as membership, ability to influence politics, passive right to exist, universalistic rights applied to all, and equality in legal procedures. The LC system is illuminating since it guarantees most of these elements at least nominally. The residence in localities allows all considered to be a member of the LC system once registered. The

⁸ Another way of contrasting rational individuals assumed in deliberative democracy with story-telling is the notion of utility. The deliberative democrats tend to reflect the notion of rational choice. Individuals chose an equilibrium point in which individual preferences also meet social satisfaction. If the process is understood to uncover story, then various interpretation become reality. No equilibrium can be assumed.

discussion of LC is to inform the policy making processes. The right to exist is recognized. All are equal in front of the law. The procedural equality is also noted. This kind of legalistic characterization, however, may tend to conceal difficulties and disfranchisement of the socially disadvantaged.

Yet if the metaphor of story making and theatrical performance is taken, it becomes perhaps more interesting. Like theatrical performance, some stakeholders play more prominent role than others. Yet as a performance as a whole, the story needs both main and subordinated characters. One cannot do without the others. Thus the notion of equality holds. The formal equality of rights granted to people through the LC system form an important basis upon which this kind of interdependency is recognized between the leading and supporting actors. The collaboration between the different stakeholders in resource management is analogous to the story making; different stakeholders have different roles to play yet they all form an indispensable part of the whole story. If the resources are depleted, all become losers. The shared identity can be created through this process.

5-3 Publicness and Governance

The metaphor of drama also helps us to understand what public is about. Story-telling is also conceptualized as a process of co-governing participated by various stakeholders. If such process is to create a (new) political identity, it contributes to organize collective action. As shared identities encourage people to form society and community, sharing common identity in story-making processes enables participants to orchestrate collective action. By having albeit a minor role in the story, one is recognized as a co-manager of the governing process. This means that all participating actors share certain kind of common publicness. Good governance is an antithesis to the fragmentation of the public sphere jointly held by the government, private, and civil leaders and followers (Syrett, 2006). Ways in which story-telling can orchestrate divergent stakeholders for common action should not be underestimated.

As some of the resource management practices in Uganda are based on collaboration with the LC system, the local government has an important role to play. The local governments transform themselves into facilitators in the interactive processes of collective action. Their role is exercise facilitative leadership. This is a new kind of leadership. Instead of dominating the deliberative processes, they need to allow others to express views and widen the horizon of understanding. Here, the facilitators need to have good communication skills, open-mindedness, a broad perspective to redefine public interests, courage to experiment with something new, and capacity to manage the processes of such new projects with diversified partners.⁹ Future research is much needed to examine in what ways local governments are in reality be able to exercise this new sort of leadership.

⁹ The kind of qualification required for a new type leaders are well presented in Egan Review of England (UK ODPM, 2004). The term of “facilitative leadership” came out during the discussion of Researchers’ symposium of ICLEI World Congress, Cape Town, February 2006.

6. Conclusion

In Uganda, while the institutional foundation was laid, how to turn this new opportunity into an effective deliberative processes both in terms of political participation and economic well-being still remains a major challenge. The experiences in Uganda have much wider theoretical implications. Using the metaphor of story making, inter-relationship between, participation, representation, citizenship, governance has been examined. The notion of deliberative democracy has been central in connecting these key concepts.

In order to these interlocked notions to be effective, it appears that some factors need to be satisfied. The first one is the issue of incentive for collaboration. In other words, all actors need to be motivated to conduct a joint performance. In comparison with other sectors such as education and health, environment encompasses a wide range of stakeholders whose interests and concerns are so diversified and thus difficult to establish a congruent consensus. Quite often benefits from conservation are distributed more to those who do not reside close to natural resources and less to local residents. In contrast, it is the local residents who bear most of the conservation costs (Emerton, 2001). As long as this kind of asymmetrical relation of cost and benefit distribution persists, there is little incentive to collaborate with conservation.

Put differently, representation of the marginalized does not end by itself. It needs to improve the responsiveness by the local governments to the aspiration of populations. Thus, the link between representation and responsiveness is a very important test for decentralized community conservation to be successful.¹⁰

Second, sharing the common script for diverse actors to conduct a coherent performance is essential. This can generally mean that information dissemination and sharing among stakeholders is indispensable.

What is problematic is that grassroots people are not informed of functions and responsibilities of different agencies and offices involved in resource management. It is thus essential that each stakeholders understand their role in respect to others. What is alarming is that very few understand that local government activities are relevant for their efforts of sustainable use of limited natural resources. Many grassroots poor tend to have very limited sources to obtain accurate information which affect their day-to-day survival strategies.

This issue presents a crucial dilemma of information dissemination. On the one hand, certain information needs to be provided by officials and leaders to ordinary people. On the other hand, the powerful may exploit the opportunity for their benefits at the cost of the powerless. As well captured, "individuals, groups and organizations compete to manipulate

¹⁰ The LC system in Uganda is good in discussions and disseminating information downward, but not so effective in bringing actual solutions. If this situation lasts for a certain period, people may lose faith in the LC system itself. The more educated one is, the less hope that one places on the LC system as problem-solving mechanism (Saito, 2003). This kind of feeling may spread to wider population.

both the meaning that is invested in the term and the nature of its practice so as to achieve their personal, group or organizational goals” (Hulme and Murphree, 2001b, p. 5). Information, thus, plays a central role in achieving collaborative efforts for sustainable resource management (Olson, 1992; Sandler, 1992).

Third, conflict management is indispensable for ensuring that development processes are sustainable (Concern Worldwide et al., 1999). Conflicts can take various forms: debate, contest, dispute, disagreement, turmoil, and a state of unrest. The more the resources are precious, the more likely that there will be some conflicts. The development activities also present chances for some to maneuver in order to obtain a larger share. It is therefore critical to see conflict as a part of larger deliberative processes rather than see it as something to be avoided (Carley and Christie, 2000; Warner, 2001). Through the deliberative processes, certain kind of transformation takes place.

Thus, taking conflicts more positively, conflicts do in fact provide new opportunities for initiating more innovative attempts to balance resource uses and conservation (Carley and Christie, 2000, pp. 164-6; Dubois and Lowore, 2000). To facilitate innovation, deliberation can be effective since it intends to facilitate positive-sum agreements between contesting stakeholders by widening people’s understanding of their own and contenders’ interests and aspirations. Its process also encourages them to think beyond entrenched and emotional positions (Warner, 2001). The issue of incentives and information are related to conflict management. The congruence between distribution of cost and benefits would reduce the possibilities of conflict. Likewise, widely available information related to resource use reduces mutual distrust among stakeholders. Further research is needed in what ways this kind of win-win situations can be promoted.¹¹ If effective governance is positive-sum relations, supporting multi-stakeholders simultaneously is essential.

¹¹ Any assistance to support one at the cost of other actors would jeopardize the entire governance process. Conventional ad-hoc assistance implemented by donors and international NGOs does not seem promising, since most of such assistance lack holistic vision to support diverse stakeholders concurrently. This situation merits much caution than usually given.

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Table 1

	Protected Area Outreach	Collaborative Management	Community-based Conservation
Objectives	Conservation of ecosystems, biodiversity and species. No emphasis on rural livelihood development.	Conservation with limited rural livelihood development.	Sustainable rural livelihood development.
Centralization/decentralization	Centralized control by the state	Moderate centralization by the state with limited participation by resource users.	Decentralized governance led by community resource users.
Ownership	State owns land and resources through national parks and game reserves.	State ownership with complex arrangement for collaborative management.	Local resource users own land and resources by either de facto or de jure arrangement.
Decision making	State determines all management activities.	Decisions are made through the limited deliberation between the state and resource users.	Decisions are made by deliberation processes of resource users with or without assistance by the state.
The role of local governments	messenger and implementer of the central government	Primarily as implementer of the central government with limited role of local facilitation.	Facilitator for local deliberation and problem-solving.
Leaders and Leadership style	The state exercise leadership as experts.	The state with the recognition that community-resource users as a stakeholder.	Community-level resource users as cop-managers and co-producers of solutions.
Agency of the socially disadvantaged as citizen	Neglected.	Limited respect	Respected on paper; but not fully materialized in reality.
Publicness	Equated with the government.	Usually equated with government, with limited understanding of governance.	Governing processes shared by the government as well as resource users.
Role of outsiders	Supports the state only.	Primarily support the state and may listen to resource users.	Attempt to create "win-win" solution for both the state and resource users.
Knowledge	The state, supported by science, needs to regulate because resource users are trouble-makers.	It is useful to reflect local knowledge within the overall dominance of scientific knowledge.	Resource users are knowledgeable about local environment.

Source: Barrow et al, 2000, p. 40; Dubois and Lowore , 2000, p. 8; Hulme and Murphree, 2001a, p. 32.