

**Local Institutions for Natural Resource Management in  
Bulilimamangwe,  
Zimbabwe.**

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## **Local institutions for Natural Resource Management in Bulilimamangwe, Zimbabwe.<sup>1</sup>**

CAMPFIRE (Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) has become popular as an example of a community based management programme for natural resources. This paper examines the community basis of the programme focussing on Bulilimamangwe District in south western Zimbabwe. A study of conflicts and institutions in the area demonstrates that in this district, CAMPFIRE, though community based in intent, is a top down programme. Also the conflicts show that community based management of natural resources can become an arena for conflict between interest groups from different levels.

Bulilimamangwe District is one of the many districts which has a CAMPFIRE programme. The programme, is about the devolution of authority to local communities to manage wildlife resources. Institutions have been set up which will strengthen the community basis of the management programme. Two wards were studied in greater detail to observe the wildlife committees in practice. The wards were Gala and Makhulela. This study also focusses on these institutions and their role in CAMPFIRE. The major finding is that the problems encountered in CAMPFIRE are divorced from these institutions.

### **Background to Wildlife Resources Management in Zimbabwe.**

Pre colonial resource management is said to have been sustainable.<sup>2</sup> Colonial interests in agriculture and predatory exploitation reduced the wildlife populations significantly. Faced with declining wildlife populations, wildlife in Zimbabwe was declared King's game in 1906. This ordinance outlawed the African people's access to wildlife. Wildlife ceased to have a value in their economic life<sup>3</sup>. It is important to note that African people were made to dissociate wildlife as a source of their survival. As a result they resorted to other forms of living like agro- pastoralism and labour migration.

In 1975 the Parks and Wild Life Act, was enacted. The Act gave privileges to owners of occupiers of alienated land as custodians of wildlife. This legislation benefitted the whites who were the major owners and occupiers of alienated land<sup>4</sup>. Africans held land under communal tenure in the Tribal Trust Lands (communal lands as they were then known). In 1978 attempts were made to avail the benefits of wildlife management to Africans. This was through a programme called Wildlife Industries New Development for All (WINDFALL). District Councils were to submit development plans, subject to state approval, that could be funded from wildlife revenues. " However, the sticky problem remained, that rural communities were more passive objects, than active participants, of state wildlife policy. "<sup>5</sup> There was no local level participation in decision making and nor the demonstration of the link between wildlife management and revenues. Realising such problems created by WINDFALL, the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management came up with another programme, CAMPFIRE in 1984.

### **The Communal Area Management Programme For Indigenous Resources**

CAMPFIRE is a Natural Resources Management Project (NRMP) funded by USAID<sup>6</sup> (in Matabeleland province) as part of a regional initiative in wildlife conservation. CAMPFIRE is an attempt to put the management of wildlife in the hands of the local communities who live, and thus pay the price for living, in proximity to it. CAMPFIRE seeks to direct the

income from wildlife to local communities and households, to ensure that local people derive maximum benefit from the land that they occupy which has suitable habitat for wildlife as well as for livestock and to a lesser extent, agriculture. The income from wildlife to this ward comes from safari hunting of elephants.

Zimbabwe's communal lands are under a communal land tenure system. CAMPFIRE is based on the idea that communal land tenure, as a form of common property resource tenure, unlike open access, is a sustainable form of resource management<sup>7</sup>. The strength of communal tenure lies in the fact that it defines the resource, identifies legitimate users and confers duties on users to sustainably use the resource without compromising interests of other users. Mechanisms in the form of customary laws and norms, built in the communal system of land tenure are said to ensure conformity and sustainable resource use by community members. CAMPFIRE seeks to extend communal resource tenure to wildlife to ensure sustainable and equitable use by the communal area members. This effort to devolve authority to local communities is the focus of this study.

The attainment of Appropriate Authority means that the P.A.C. (Problem Animal Control) responsibility shifted from the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management to the Rural District Council. P.A.C. is at the core of human/wildlife relations in Bulilimangwe. The Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management allows some elephants, the major problem animal to crops in the area, to be killed as problem animals. The council has several ways it can use to deal with P.A.C. An honorary officer may be appointed authorised to shoot offending animals. Officers in the Department of National Parks and Wild Life may be asked to do the job and have their travel and subsistence while on this task paid for by the council. Bulilimangwe District does not do its own hunting. It hires safari hunting operators to do the hunting in the District on a contract. The council may ask a safari operator to do P.A.C. in the district as part of his contract. The third option is of interest in this study, because the Rural District Council relies on it to a large extent. Safari hunting is the most profitable method of using wildlife. The elephant is the most profitable species.<sup>8</sup>

Each of the seven wards selected a man to be trained by the Department of National Parks and Wild Life as a game scout. The person would act as a community worker, natural resource monitor, and problem animal reporter and eventually controller<sup>9</sup>.

### **The Study Area**

The study is being done in Bulilimangwe District of Zimbabwe. For the purposes of administration the district is divided into twenty four wards. Ideally a ward is made up of six villages. A village has 1000 households. Therefore a ward would have 6000 households. Each village has a village development committee (VIDCO), and each ward a ward development committee (WADCO). The chairman of the Ward development committee is the councillor who represents the ward at the Rural District Council.<sup>10</sup> Seven wards are included in the CAMPFIRE programme. These were selected on the basis of their historical, and current access to the grazing, also safari hunting, area. These wards are, Madlambuzi, Hingwe, Bambadzi, Makhulela, Ndolwane, Huhwana and Gala. The household populations for the wards are 808; 918; 713; 840; 967; 1022; and 800, respectively<sup>11</sup>.

The local population is not entirely dependant on the land for production and reproduction. The major source of income is labour migrancy to South Africa. Migration to South Africa is a major feature of Bulilimamangwe's social structure. The following statistics help to illustrate this point.

**Bulilimamangwe District                      1991 Sample Survey**

Ward	Sample <sup>2</sup> households	Total <sup>3</sup>	<u>Persons resident:</u>	
			full <sup>4</sup>	part time <sup>5</sup>
Madlambuzi	107	8.5	7.0	1.3
Hingwe	101	8.5	7.0	1.3
Bambadzi	106	8.8	7.2	1.4
Makhulela	165	9.3	7.7	1.4
Ndolwane	151	9.3	7.3	1.7
Huwana	169	9.6	8.2	1.2
Gala	170	8.8	7.8	1.5

At least one member of each household is away from home, in most cases she or he is a migrant labourer in South Africa and to a small extent Botswana. Finding themselves in marginal areas not suitable for their complete reproduction rural people have devised other coping strategies. This strategies are not related to based on the use of natural resources.

Bulilimangwe is an agriculturally marginal area designated as natural region IV<sup>12</sup>. The area is characterised by low mean annual rainfall of 450-650mm, and therefore, a short growing season. The area is best suited for pastoral activities and extensive agriculture. Peasants mainly grow drought resistant crops like, sorghum (inyahuti) and millet (tsweta). Most of the agricultural activity is focussed on subsistence than on the market.

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<sup>2</sup> Number of sample interviewed.

<sup>3</sup> Total number of individuals enumerated in sample households divided by number of households.

<sup>4</sup> Number of persons reported to be full time residence per household.

<sup>5</sup> Persons reported to be part time residence of the household

### Field size, food crops grown and sold by CAMPFIRE ward<sup>13</sup>

	Median size of cultivated fields in acres									
	<u>Percent of households that grow:</u>									
	maize		sorghum		millet		groundnuts		sunflower	
	finger millet		vegetables		beans		<u>% selling<sup>6</sup></u>			
Madlambuzi	10	94	91	95	77	6	21	0	21	1
Hingwe	10	96	91	94	74	5	7	2	15	3
Bambadzi	10	94	90	96	81	3	2	2	35	13
Makhulela	10	84	88	93	58	0	2	2	13	5
Ndolwane	9	82	65	91	65	3	7	5	13	9
Huwana	10	91	89	88	66	4	4	2	16	21
Gala	10	87	75	84	53	1	6	1	15	12

Each household has access to land and is able to plough in order to meet some of its subsistence needs as an individual household. Any damage to the crops affects the individual household's food security. Hawkes has amply demonstrated that wards like Makhulela, at the forefront have most of the problems with wildlife. Elephants damage their crops at various stages of growth<sup>14</sup>. Therefore when the farmers view CAMPFIRE they are thinking of effective P.A.C. against elephants. Elsewhere the councillor for ward 7 in Tsholotsho District said that, " we know that the electric fence will not keep all the animals out. If it only keeps the elephants out of our fields we can deal with the other animals ourselves." A respondent told us that, " if they (council) would control the elephants we will be happy, we are not worried about money (from safari hunting) being shared among all the wards. " To cultivators CAMPFIRE is, or must be the control of crop raiding elephants. This point important for the topic of this paper. If the programme fails to meet people's expectations regarding this issue, then its community basis becomes questionable. Below following paragraphs will show the place of cattle rearing in CAMPFIRE.

<sup>6</sup> Percent of households selling any crop

Lagisa<sup>15</sup> is a term for a form of transhumance practiced by communal area people of Matabeleland. It involves the seasonal movement of cattle from one area to the other in order to extend the grazing range. This method has historically been practiced by communities in Southern Africa.<sup>16</sup> It is motivated by the need for reliable sources of water, and inter alia for nutritious grasses. Prescott describes the existence of sourvelds and sweetvelds in Matabeleland which influenced the pattern of interseasonal cattle movement in the district.<sup>17</sup> Lagisa is a form of land use which demonstrates the existence of advanced indigenous environmental and technical knowledge among the people of Matabeleland.<sup>18</sup>

The traditional lagisa area in Bulilima Mangwe North includes the area bound by Makhulela Ward, Bambadzi Ward, Hwange National Park boundary fence, Ward 7 in Tsholotsho across the Nata(Manzamnyama) river and the Botswana/Zimbabwe border. In this area is also the Maitengwe Dam, built in the mid 1960s by the colonial government to supply water to wildlife and support an irrigation scheme. The Thekwane river supplies the dam with water.

The lagisa area is also home to a number of wildlife species and also takes the spill over of animals from the nearby Hwange National Park. The area has wildlife species like, elephant, giraffe, buffalo, hippopotamus, zebra, wildebeest, sable, eland, waterbuck, impala, hyaena, warthog, jackal and a variety of bird species including ostrich and guinea fowl. A natural resource inventory of the area has not been done, so it is difficult to know the wildlife exact populations. Some of the animals are not resident in the area but cross over from Hwange National Park into the communal area. Subsistence hunting (poaching) is prohibited by law.

The ideal management system of the lagisa area and its relationship with the local (Kalanga/Ndebele the major ethnic groups involved in agro pastoralism) social system is as follows. During the November to March rainy season the soils in the lagisa area becomes water logged and it becomes impossible for human and livestock movement. At this time cattle are grazed near the homesteads. With the onset of the dry season in April the area becomes dry, and passable. Animals are then allowed into the area for grazing.

The lagisa area has gone through various phases of ownership, in the pre-colonial, colonial, and post colonial eras. From the pre-colonial era to the early colonial era this area was inhabited by the San<sup>19</sup>, a hunting and gathering, nomadic people who did not practice sedentary agriculture nor livestock rearing. The lagisa area also falls in Natural Region IV<sup>20</sup>, where there is inadequate rainfall for reliable rainfed agriculture, but adequate grass and tree cover to support a diverse population of wildlife and birds as well as edible fruits and roots. The San occupied this area and extended across the present border into Botswana where there are larger concentrations of the population. Most of the names of places in the lagisa area indicate a San ancestry.

The early colonial period saw the movement of the Kalanga speaking people into areas close to the lagisa area. These movements of people were a result of the implementation of the provisions of the 1930 Land Apportionment Act, a colonial act of dividing the land into white and African areas. Sedentary agriculture and livestock rearing are the major economic activities of the Kalanga people. The arrival of the Kalanga saw the displacement of the San people into the present lagisa area, in an effort to continue with their way of life. Wildlife populations are scarce in areas of large and concentrated human settlements, so the San might have found it difficult to continue hunting once the area had been turned to agriculture. Forms

of exchange took place between the two tribes based on agricultural produce from the Kalanga and meat from the San. Furthermore, the San began to be employed by the Kalanga to herd cattle and to work on the fields in return for food or money<sup>21</sup>. The Kalanga, and later the Ndebele, used the area as seasonal grazing, lagisa.

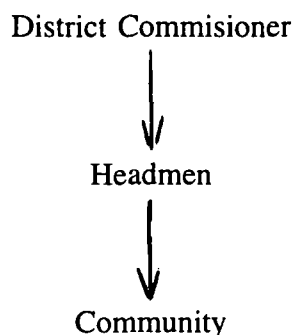
The colonial period marked a time of active government control in the area. One of the major developments in the area was the building of the Maitengwe (Mabhongane) Dam in the mid 1960s. A rest camp for the District Commissioner was also established there. The District Commissioner set up an irrigation scheme, with water supplied from the Maitengwe Dam, where wheat was grown for the urban market. The District Commissioner also ran a ranching scheme in the area, and dip tanks were erected in places like Sihubu, and Bambadzi. The lagisa area was divided up between the cattle of the local people and those of the District Commissioner. Access to the area by local herds was regulated by the District Commissioner, through the headmen of the area.

The District Commissioner also ran hunting safari operations in the area. Canals were also dug up which fed water into pans in the lagisa area for wildlife. The furthest reaches to the west were used for safari hunting operations, apparently for the benefit of the District Commissioner. A motivation for supplying water to the area was to sustain wildlife populations.

The whole area seems to have been held under a state management regime rather than a common property regime<sup>22</sup>. The major source of authority was the District Commissioner. The traditional authorities seem to have derived their authority from him and simply to have passed on his regulations to the people. The headmen of the area do not recall any events when they exercised their authority in the management of the lagisa area. This collective insomnia supports the hypothesis that headmen were not really actively involved as regulating authorities in the colonial era. The lagisa was under a state management regime during the colonial era.

At the height of the war of independence in 1978, local government in the Bulilimangwe was paralysed. The District Commissioner abandoned the irrigation scheme, Maitengwe Dam and the rest camp. Without maintenance, the dam was soon breached. Regulation of access into the lagisa area fell away. Control and access into the lagisa area during, and immediately after, the war approximated open access. The headmen were left with no means of effectively controlling the area because their power base had been the District Commissioner whose authority they represented. The lagisa area was an area held under a state management regime by virtue of the support and control it received from the government.

### Management of the lagisa area in the colonial era.



The above summarises the natural resource management in the colonial era focussing on the lagisa area. Power and authority was in the hands of the District Commissioner. He used the area in for his own interests and the local people had limited rights into the area. They had no access to the wildlife. Management was not community based but top down. It is with this back ground, that this paper discusses CAMPFIRE as a community based natural resources management programme. It is in this area that CAMPFIRE is based. Having given a background of arable agriculture and livestock raising in Bulilimamangwe, the following paragraphs will show some of the conflicts arising from implementing CAMPFIRE in Bulilimamangwe. An examination of the conflicts shows that CAMPFIRE, in this area, is not a community based but top down programme biased in favour of external actors.

### **Farmers versus wildlife**

A major aim of CAMPFIRE is to reduce the conflicts between wildlife and humans. The CAMPFIRE programme in Bulilimamangwe is based on the allocation of range to wildlife. The area set aside for dry seasonal grazing, lagisa is also used by large herd owners to keep their cattle. These herd owners buy, fatten and sell cattle as a commercial activity. Their rationale for keeping cattle is more economic than for purposes of prestige<sup>23</sup>. The cattle owners regard the lagisa area as frontier where they can herd their cattle without problems. This area is far away from the settled area and so the chances of cattle straying into the fields do not exist. Furthermore grazing is in abundance to sustain large herds. The lagisa area is unlike the pastures in the settled area where there is competition from other herd owners. For the commercially oriented the lagisa area is the frontier which allows for their desires to expand.

Therefore the idea of separating the grazing area into wildlife and livestock zones blocks the interests of the large herd owners. This has brought the CAMPFIRE programme into conflict with the cattle owners. A group of cattle owners tried to block the CAMPFIRE project in Bulilimamangwe, as a result. One way they did this was to recommend that the wildlife buffer zone should be as close to Hwange National Park as was possible. To mobilise support for this idea they made it appear, to the other members of the community, that the project was introducing more animals into the area. Therefore to



protect people, fields and livestock this buffer area had to be far away from the settled area by being close to the Hwange National Park. In actual fact this was to ensure grazing for their cattle. This was rejected by the council, arguing that the space left for wildlife was not adequate. The council officials also argued that, the boundary needed not to be that far off, since the buffer zone did not mean that cattle would not be allowed in. In reply one of the cattle owners pointed out that allowing the cattle to mix with willdlife was even worse. " Each time we sell our cattle they are graded lowly. The reason we are given for this is that our animals are coming from the red zone, meaning that they mix with wildlife.<sup>24</sup>"

The Rural District Council sought donor funds to organise grazing in the lagisa by paddocking the area. It was felt that since there was concern over access to grazing, there was a need to make the community use efficiently the pasture they had at present. With such organised grazing it was reasoned that reserving part of the lagisa for wildlife would not result in presuure over the range. The fences were cut up and the gates destroyed. To the large cattle herd owners CAMPFIRE had become a zero sum game between wildlife and their cattle. This event summarised the conflict between wildlife (the council) and cattle herders.

In 1992 the cattle owners labeled themselves as a cooperative seeking to develop the district. They said that they were embarking on a cattle fattening scheme, based ostensibly on pen feeding. In actual practice they were using the lagisa area. Later in the year, they invited a government minister to their field day. The minister was impressed by the project. He said that this was a good demonstration that people did not need to go to town inorder to prosper. The wealth was in the rural areas. This event was significant in that the council could not harass the cattle owners anymore. The government had acknowledged their contribution to national development.

This conflict helps to identify the stakeholders in the natural resources use in Bulilimamngwe. These are the cattle owwners, an elite group, and the Rural District Council. Even though projects were undertaken in the name of the community, the community itself did not identify with these developments. There was no interest to protect what should have been community property. CAMPFIRE is supposed to be a community based project, where the community's interests are taken into account. Below is an analysis of the conflict between the safari operators and the community, which also shows that CAMPFIRE is a top down programme in Bulilimamangwe.

In 1995, a herd of elephants invaded the Bulilimamangwe communal area. Most of the effects were felt in Makhulela ward, which is in the frontline regarding the wildife area. The victims reported to the members of the wildlife committee. A report was sent to the Rural District Council to send someone to attend to P.A.C. Another message was sent to the safari operator, who was at that time in the area hunting with a client to come and attend to P.A.C. The safari operator said that he was waiting for a 'go ahead' from the Rural District Council to shoot the animals. Meanwhile the animals continued to destroy the people's fields. The Rural District Council officials on the other hand said that the safari operator must attend to P.A.C. because that was part of his contract. If a problem animal is shot as a safari animal the Rural District Councils benefits also.

The presence of the elephants continued to worry the residents of the area. The headman of Makhulela was convinced that the safari operator actually drove the elephants from the bush into the communal area to feed on people's fields. This was a way of keeping the animals in the area for him to hunt. In actual fact the safari operator was afraid that if he shot or scared an elephant, the rest would migrate into another district or the Hwange National Park, where he could not hunt. He also felt that the damage did not justify the death of an animal, people were just interested in getting meat. "These elephants are now a problem, if this is the CAMPFIRE, it must be banned(sic)," remarked one member of the village wildlife committee in Makhulela ward. To her CAMPFIRE was the elephants giving them trouble, and the council should solve the problem by stopping the programme.

Ironically when the safari operator was taking his time to react to P.A.C. he was in the company of the community game scout. The appointed representative of the community who was selected to deal with problem animals on behalf of the community. The game scouts are in an interesting position. They are community workers, supposed to be accountable to their respective wards. They get paid from wildlife revenues which would otherwise could have gone to the community. The pay comes from the Rural District Council. They are under the direct supervision of the executive officer in charge of projects in the Rural District Council. They are also used keep people and cattle from the hunting area. The officers in the Rural District Council plan their other duties as well. Although community workers, the game scouts are look up to the Rural District Council for their job security much more than the community. They cannot challenge the safari operator to do P.A.C., it is the council which has the power to do so.

The interests of the safari operator and the Rural District Council conflict with those of the community. The safari operator was reluctant to kill the offending animals. The problem is that safari operators are "trying to convert these problem animals into safari animals to realise greater value from them . . ." <sup>25</sup> The interests of the community may not coincide with those of the safari operator, and the District Council when they view an elephant. The fact that it is the interests of the safari operator which triumphed, demonstrates where the power lies in CAMPFIRE. It is interesting to examine why the safari operator, an outsider wields more power than the resource owning community.

An analysis of how safari operators get a concession to hunt in Bulilimangwe helps to understand their behaviour. Tenders are invited from all the safari operator companies to hunt in the area in a particular season. These are advertised in the local press. A meeting is called when the council opens the tenders and considers the bids. The safari operators are also free to witness the opening of the tenders. However they leave the room when the decision is actually made. and are then called in after the decision is made. The councillors decide on who to select as a group. The councillors do not like to be seen to be opposing a candidate who might be the favourite of the executive officers. Opposition might have ramifications on what they will get from the council for their constituencies and for themselves as individuals. Elsewhere there are cases of a safari operator who give 'donations', for example a vehicle, to a Rural District Council before bidding. The safari operator even burnt the homes of the local people because their homes were in an area he wanted for hunting<sup>26</sup>.

In some instances even outsiders will have influences on which safari operator is selected for the hunt. At one time there was a suggestion that an N.G.O. were pressurising the Bulilimamangwe Rural District Council to select particular safari operators. Since the N.G.O. controls the CAMPFIRE funds from donors to the Rural District Councils it would be in the interests of the council officials to succumb to these demands. The safari operator's authority comes from the Rural District Council than from the community. Inter personal relations with Rural District Councils or their staff further protects him from checks and balances which a community based management programme like CAMPFIRE is likely to impose.

The safari operator has to inform the ward wildlife chairperson when he enters the district to hunt. The safari operator has also to surrender a letter of authority to the game scouts before he starts the hunt. However the hunter just enters the district and hunts. Sometimes he does not bother to surrender the letter of authority to the game scouts. However he always collects one of the game scouts to be with him for the hunt. The behaviour of the safari operator demonstrates that he does not regard the local institutions in the villages to be of any consequence for his activities. With or without informing the community authorities he still can do his business. What is crucial to him is the Rural District Council.

In the 1995 drought in Bulilimamangwe the cattle herders looked up to the lagisa area to save their cattle. As mentioned above this area is also used as the hunting area by the safari operators hired by the council. The drought came shortly after another devastating drought which severely reduced the number of cattle in the area. With this drought still fresh in their minds the cattle herders went into the grazing area much earlier than the agreed time. This was because they wanted to make sure that their cattle had the greatest share before the others got there. The other reason was that there were rumours that the people from the neighbouring Tsholotsho district were already using the area. Therefore by the time the people from Bulilimamangwe would try to go for lagisa, they would find all the pastures already grazed.

The safari operator was in the area at this time to begin the hunt. The council feared that the safari operator would complain about the cattle in the area. Two years before, another safari operator left the district before the completion of his hunting contract. He said he was leaving because there were too many cattle in the area making it difficult for him to hunt<sup>27</sup>. Therefore a decision had to be taken quickly on what had to be done about the cattle grazers who had gone into the 'hunting' area. The interward came to the conclusion that the cattle herders had to be removed to allow for the hunting. This issue had not been discussed in the villages before. A recommendation was made to drive the people out. Again the interests of those outside the community always take precedence. This far from what Gasper says is commonly believed to be the good thing about devolution of authority, " It will avoid the ills of over centralization, **such as insensitivity to local conditions, . . .** " <sup>28</sup>

In the 1995 drought, the interward committee (described below) faced a problem of cattle herders going into the reserved lagisa area before the agreed date. Community game scouts were sent to drive the cattle herders out of the area. After a few days the cattle herders were back again. As mentioned above the presence of cattle in the area conflicts with the

hunting requirements of the safari operator. With no hunting it means that there would be no revenue to the council and to distribute to the communities in the following year. At a meeting one of the interward wildlife committee members suggested that they should use the police to drive away the cattle herders. A police detail present at the meeting said that this was impossible. The land in question was held under communal land tenure, and therefore, inhabitants of that communal area had the right to use the resources of that area. These kinds of solutions to the resource management conflicts demonstrate that CAMPFIRE in Bulilimangwe is not community based.

The conflict between wildlife and farmers is a conflict which lies outside the realm of the local community's ability and power. It reflects that the CAMPFIRE programme in Bulilimangwe is still far from being a community based natural resources management programme.

To the Rural District Council, CAMPFIRE is useful as a source of revenue. Fifty per cent of the revenues from safari hunting are retained by the council. In the first three years of the programme, the Rural District Council was against the idea of handing over revenues from safari hunting to the communities. The N.G.O. working on the project went into bad books with the Rural District Council. The non governmental organisation was querying why the Rural District Council was not handing over the revenues from wildlife to the communities in the 'spirit of CAMPFIRE.'<sup>29</sup> In the meetings communities also began challenging the Rural District Councils for the money. " We are told that the animals belong to us, and that they bring in a lot of money. But where is the money ?" An agitated council felt that this was because the non governmental organisation was inciting the communities to demand the revenues. After some lobbying from outsiders and demands from the community the council agreed to handover the money to the community.

When the money was taken to the seven wards there was talk of one district, Beitbridge, whose residents had opted to share the money among themselves as household dividends. One councillor said that the idea of household dividends was not the good. The money had to be used for development projects. In Gala all but one village had opened bank accounts for their village using the CAMPFIRE money. Some wards have used the money to build toilet blocks at schools and clinics. Some of the villages have used the money to buy fencing to protect field from cattle and goats. In one ward the councillor and a few committee members used the money to buy fences for every village. The villages erected the fences. In two villages the fences were later stolen. The people did not seem to be concerned about the loss of the fence. Some regarded the fence as the property of the government.

The Rural District Council was unwilling to hand over the wildlife revenues to the CAMPFIRE community. Grudgingly the council later handed over the revenues. However it tried to impose its will on the fate of the money. All these conflicts reveal the top heavy nature of CAMPFIRE in Bulilimangwe. The following paragraphs will show that, although structures for community based management have been set up, the process of wildlife management is still top down.

## **Natural Resource Management Institutions in Bulilimamangwe**

The Natural Resources Management programme, CAMPFIRE, is a nation wide attempt to devolve the access, use and management of wildlife to local communities. Legal devolution has been granted to the Rural District Council to be an Appropriate Authority for wildlife management. The Rural District Council has set up wildlife committees at ward and village level. At village and ward level these institutions are called village and ward wildlife committees. They have their chairpersons, secretaries, treasurers and committee members. Each village and ward has a wildlife committee. This section examines these institutions set up for as basis for community based natural resource management.

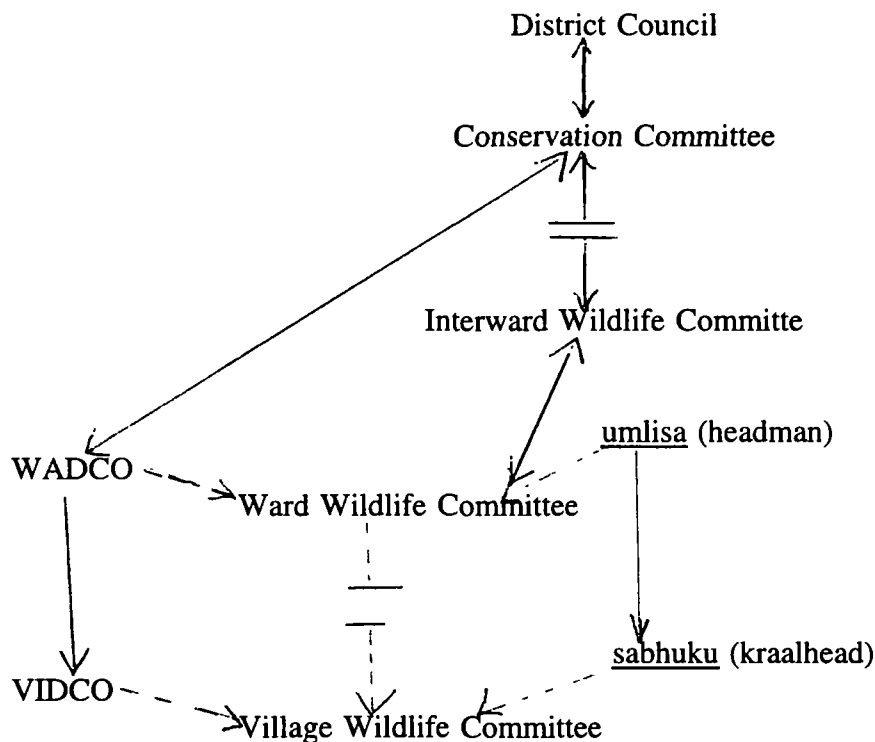
Membership of the committees was through elections at village and ward level. To ensure transparency and efficiency, it was assumed that after serving a period of time the committees would be dissolved and new members selected.

Appropriate authority status is dependent on the Rural District Councils devolving the authority to manage wildlife to the communities living with or close to the wildlife. The Rural District Councils formed committees parallel to, but subordinate, the existing village and ward development committees. The rationale was that the village and ward development committees were responsible for the development in general of their areas. The wildlife committees were specifically for the management of wildlife. Therefore the wildlife committees were made sub committees of the the village and ward development committees.

The wildlife committees are in principle responsible for a number of tasks. These are resource monitoring, problem animal control, safari hunting, habitat management and use of proceeds from the utilisation of wildlife. The committees have received training in book and record keeping, and local government structures. Most of the training has been provided by the Rural District Council and Zimbabwe Trust a non governmental organisation. Members of the Department of Parks and Wild Life Management have also been invited to train the committee members on ecological and resource management issues. Below I show the institutional structure in Bulilimamangwe. The solid lines are used to demonstrate a link between levels. The broken lines show a break in the link between the levels.

### The institutions in practice:

The institutional relationships in the Bulilimamangwe CAMPFIRE can be summarised as follows.



### Village wildlife committees

Each of the villages has a village wildlife committee. On their inception in 1991, the village committees worked without the traditional leaders, sabhuku. However they realised that this alienated the traditional leaders. The real danger was that the traditional leaders could easily stifle the efforts of the wildlife committee. For example, when the village wildlife committee called for a meeting, the traditional leader would call for his own meeting. All the people would go to the sabhuku's and not the wildlife committee meeting. In Pakhama West, Gala ward the secretary to the village wildlife committee said, "In the beginning the sabhukus were left behind. We are now making an attempt to bring them nearer by inviting them to meetings so that they do not feel left out. In this village we give the sabhuku a chance to say something at the meeting."

At village level, the wildlife committees do not meet regularly. Occasions for meeting are when wildlife revenues are released from the Rural District Council and there is need to decide what has to be done. ~~The revenues is released once a year. Also the wildlife~~

~~decide what has to be done.~~ The revenue is released once a year. Also the wildlife committee may meet if there is any information from the ward committee or the inter ward committee needs to inform them. The village committees have not of late been calling for village meetings. " The problem in this ward is that the people do not show any interest in attending meetings. We call for meetings and the people do not come, " complained the secretary of Ntoli village, in Gala. In another village the committee members said that the people preferred to be addressed by someone from outside not the village members they are used to.

Since the establishment of the ward wildlife committees, there has not been any elections for new office bearers. In some cases some committee members have left the village for the cities or South Africa. The committee sits and fills in the gaps created. Asked why they do not have elections the members say that there has never been a call for elections. " It could be that the people are satisfied with the way we are performing. The other reason is that there is always a problem in finding willing members for the committees. Most people refuse when they are elected to these posts. Some say that they are not going to participate in an activity where they do not get paid. " The only times there has been a need to have elections, is when someone has left. Office bearers who had been in the committees in the beginning were still there unless if they had left on their own accord.

The village committee members are not members of the ward wildlife committee or the inter ward wildlife committee. This is because the ward wildlife committees were formed first and the village committees later. Just the institution building process demonstrates that the will to establish a community based management programme. For any communication, the ward chairperson calls representatives from the village committee to a meeting to brief them of any developments. These village wildlife committees are in principle supposed to channel any decisions they make upwards to the ward. The ward in turn will send them to the district council for consideration. In actual practice there is not much discussion regarding wildlife management which takes place at the village level. The villages expect the ward wildlife committee to be the source of information regarding, revenues, training which it gets from attending meetings at the interward or with the Rural District Council officials.

The set up of the village wildlife committees is not designed for effective community based wildlife management. The villages wildlife committees are the lowest units of management. However they are not represented in the ward wildlife committees. Such discontinuities reduce the village wildlife committees to a level of institutional clients of the upper levels for their decisions and information. Instead of the committees being the fora for local level decision making they become fora for hearings of decisions made from above.

### **The Ward Wildlife Committee**

The ward wildlife committee is made up of seven members selected from all the villages in the ward. The ward wildlife committee is a sub committee of the ward development committee. The ward development committee is chaired by the councillor. The councillor is an ex officio member of the ward wildlife committee. In practice, the councillor has more authority in the ward wildlife committee. For example he is the one who attends the

meetings at council. He has access to information. The ward wildlife committee depends on the councillor for information about the latest developments on the projects. This issue is significant in the manner in that it indicates the balance of power within the committees, as will be shown below.

The CAMPFIRE programme has not been a local initiative in Gala Ward nor in Bulilimangwe district. The idea was introduced from outside the district by the Department of National Parks and Wild Life and a N.G.O., Zimbabwe Trust. Initial implementation was done by the N.G.O. using donor funds. The entry point for outsiders intending to undertake or introduce some intervention, is the local authority, the Rural District Council. The project is first debated by the councillors. The councillors then take the idea to the people as a report back, usually after a decision has already been made. The ward wildlife committee is not part of the decision making process. Therefore, by virtue of its lack of access to information, and decision making power the ward wildlife committee finds itself in a subordinate position to that of the councillor. In a top down system those with access to the higher levels are more powerful.

At a meeting in Gala, Rural District Council officials expressed concern at the lack of activity among the village and wildlife committees. Councillors stood up and gave reports about the status of the ward and village wildlife committees. In one case a councillor stood up and informed the meeting of his intention to dissolve a village wildlife committee. Elsewhere the councillor has been known to handpick the people he feels should make up the village and ward wildlife committees. There is a demonstration that the Rural District Council not the community is responsible for defining the roles of the local institutions for resource management. It is also the body which determines whether the committees can be regarded as efficient or not. There is very little room for community development in the programme as it is.

### **The Inter-Ward Wildlife Committee**

By 1993, village and ward wildlife committees had been set up through the ward. However most of the issues were controlled by the councillors who sat in the Rural District Council. There was an institutional break in the representation system of the wildlife committees from the ward to the Rural District Council. The ward committees complained that this concentrated power in the hands of the councillors, who made the crucial decisions on the selection of the safari operator, the use of wildlife revenues, problem animal control and the erection of fences.

As a result the Inter-ward wildlife committee was formed. This committee is made up of representatives of ward wildlife committees from the seven wards. The councillors for these wards also sit on this committee. It attends the CAMPFIRE related meetings of the Conservation Committee of the Rural District Council. However, the committee does not legally make decisions about CAMPFIRE, but makes recommendations to the conservation committee.

The inter ward committee is supposed to link the community of the seven wards with the conservation committee at the Rural District Council. However, the inter ward relies on



meetings called for by the Rural District Council Executive Staff. The agenda, dates and time are arranged by the Rural District Council. At the inter ward meetings the agenda is given to the participants shortly before the onset of the meeting. There is no room in the system for the committee members to go back to their constituencies and discuss the agenda and come up with the recommendations. Minutes for the previous meetings are read and members have a chance to raise matters from decisions made in the previous meetings. However, the point is that the decisions are made by the inter ward committee before they have had an opportunity to meet their constituencies. The following examples will illustrate this issue further.

The interward committee is the highest body of representation in the wildlife committees. Its strength is based on the nature of the CAMPFIRE programme. That is a programme which is devolving power from the top to the bottom. This makes the inter ward weak also because it has to wait for the higher levels of authority to give it a role to play in wildlife management. In the community the interward committee has the problem of power because the councillors are dominant in the development issues of the community. Furthermore as an institution it lacks the basis for getting the compliance from the community.

The councillors have a strong influence on how the inter ward wildlife meetings proceed. They have advantages as mentioned before of access to information, procedure and the final decision making power. Although at the beginning of the meeting the floor is given to the members of the wildlife committees from the wards, the councillors eventually take over and make decisions for the wildlife committee.

### **The Conservation Committee.**

The conservation committee is responsible for many issues regarding land and natural resources. The committee is made of councillors from the CAMPFIRE wards and others from those areas without CAMPFIRE. CAMPFIRE Committee members from the ward and villages are not members of this committee. This is because this is a sub committee of Council where only elected councillors can sit and vote. It is the committee which is responsible for recommending by-laws to the District Council. This committee also sends recommendations for which safari operator to select from the tenders. This committee is important even to the safari operator much more than the village or ward wildlife committee.

### **The Rural District Council**

The Rural District Council is the main policy making body for the District. The Appropriate Authority status is granted to the Rural District Council. It is the council which is accountable in the use of the appropriate authority.

The Rural District Council derives the most income from wildlife revenues than any of the wards. The success of CAMPFIRE means more to the Rural District Council than to the wards or villages. This source of income is important to the rural district council. The Councils have no other sources of income except grants and loans from the Central treasury. CAMPFIRE is therefore an important source of revenue for the Rural District

Council.

## Discussion

This paper studied the process of devolving authority to manage wildlife from the state to the communities as a common property resource. This is done through the Natural Resources Management Programme, CAMPFIRE.

The conflicts encountered in implementing CAMPFIRE in Bulilimamangwe have been examined. The Rural District Council is responsible for most of the management roles. These are like, inviting tenders, selecting tenders, contracts with safari operators, setting up quotas, and receiving the revenue from wildlife use. Council even makes decisions about problem animal control, which is central to human/wildlife relationships in the communal areas. The nature of wildlife management in Bulilimamangwe is top heavy. The tendency is for less authority to filter to the lowest levels.

Wildlife committees have been set up at village and ward levels, to coordinate the management of natural resources at the respective levels. These committees are not fully effective because they have no 'management' role to play. They have to wait for the District Council to handover the revenues from safari hunting. At present the communities are end users of a resource managed by other institutions which do not necessarily live with or close to the wildlife. Consequently, this absence of a community based management system means that the link between wildlife management and benefit is still blurred.

The committees also suffer the same problems as some of the introduced institutions in rural areas<sup>30</sup>. The communities are suspicious of the outsiders' motives in intervening in the social life of the community. As a defence mechanism, the least vulnerable members, socially or economically, of the community are selected for the posts. In the end the institutions are rendered ineffective by the type of people selected into the committees but also by the limited scope of their responsibilities. Also this study has shown that the power which the committees have at the local level is subject to the acknowledgement of other institutions like the traditional leaders. It has been shown also that the power is subject to usurpation by other local leaders like councillors.

Numerous studies have shown that the best resource managers are the local communities<sup>31</sup>. State involvement in local resource management distorts this ability to manage the resources sustainably as shown by the experiences of the colonial era. However, colonial state intervention in resource management atrophied traditional natural management practices. Furthermore local communities have been incorporated into the national social and economic network. Therefore local communities on their own will not necessarily manage the resource sustainably. The state at the local level, with minimum involvement, and the community should work together in resource management. This study has raised some of the problems which result from the devolution of authority.

'Traditional' institutions like lagisa demonstrate the extent to which local institutions were weakened by the state. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that the authority of the traditional leaders depended on the power of the state to function. Thus an institution which had evolved as a community resource management tool, had been converted to service the requirements of a state management regime. This poses a challenge to an attempt to reinvent the commons.

### Conclusion.

The Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources has been hailed as an example of successful community based natural resource management programme. However in this study of Bulilimamangwe District, it is noted that while in principle CAMPFIRE is a community based management programme, in practice it is a top down process. An examination of the conflicts in CAMPFIRE shows that these are independent of the institutions which have been set up for natural resources management. Furthermore this study has shown that community based management programs can be an arena for conflict between various interest groups.

### Notes and References:

1. I am grateful to the Director and staff of S.U.M., the Centre for Development and the Environment for making my attendance at this conference possible.

2. Schoffeleers, J.M. 1979. Guardians of the Land. Gwelo. Mambo Press. This point is debatable, some say that this was because of a lack of technology. Murphree points out to the fact that human populations were much lower to have posed a problem of over harvesting ( 1990 'Decentralising the Proprietorship of Wildlife Resources in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands.' in Carter, N and Lewis, D (eds) Africanizing Conservation in Africa). Some also challenge religious beliefs and myths as deliberate bases for sustainable use (Dzingirai, V 1994 personal communication). Some have pointed out that when the explorer hunters killed four hundred elephants in one day the local San community was actually pleased at this big kill, because of the meat available to them for example see Lee, R. and Solway, J. 1990 'Foragers, Genuine or spurious.' **Current Anthropology**, 31. 2.

3. Peck, J.E. 1993 'From Royal Game to Popular Heritage - Wildlife Policy and Resource Tenure Under Colonial and Independent Rule in Zimbabwe' Paper presented at the 36th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Boston, MA.

See also: Murphree, M.W.1990 in Carter, N and Lewis, D (eds) op cit

Anderson, D. and Groove, R. 1987. **Conservation in Africa - People Policies and**

**Practice.** Cambridge C.U.P.

4. Murphree, M.W 1990 op cit

5. Peck, 1993 op cit

6. United States Agency for International Development

7. See also Bromley and Cernia 1989 op cit for detailed discussion of tenure regimes.

8. At present the safari hunting profession and business is a monopoly of white individuals and companies (about 99%). These do not necessarily believe in CAMPFIRE principles nor in rural development. Sometimes their entry into the communal areas is for the sake of their businesses.

9. See Dzingirai, V et al 1994 An Evaluation of the Game Scout Training in the Natural Resources Management Programme. Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe for a detailed account of safari operator /game scout relations.

10. See Thomas S.J 1991 The Legacy of Dualism and Decision Making: The Prospects for Local Development in CAMPFIRE Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.

For a critical theoretical view see also Murombedzi, J 1990 The Need for Appropriate Local Level Common Property Resource Management Institutions in Communal Tenure Regimes Centre for Applied Social Science. University of Zimbabwe.

11. Government of Zimbabwe 1992 Zimbabwe Preliminary (Census) Report Harare, Central Statistical Office.

12. In Zimbabwe, land is classified into agro ecological regions based on agricultural potential determined by rainfall and soil quality. Region I has the highest potential, and region V has the lowest.

13. Hawkes, R 1994 The Socio-economic base of communities in the NRMP area presented at the 'CAMPFIRE Forum' Elangeni National Training Centre, Bulawayo.

14. Hawkes, R Crop and Livestock Damage in Bulilimangwe

15. Madzudzo, E and Hawkes, R 1995 Grazing Issues in the Bulilimangwe Natural Resources Management Area Harare. Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.

16.

17. Prescott, J.R.V. op cit

18. This system impressed the Natural Resource Board, Native Enquiry in 1942. See also Prescott (1961:216) op cit

19. Those fond of condescending ethnocentric taxonomies call these people 'Bushmen'. I regard this Zimbabwean tribe as a 'Kwa' group of the San people.

20. Government of Zimbabwe 1984 Zimbabwe 1:1 000 000 Natural Regions and Farming Areas. 2nd Edition.(map).

21. There is a small population of people in Makhulela who identify themselves as San and who are so identified by their neighbours, often using the derogatory term "bushman". However, they speak Kalanga as a result of a process of assimilation. For all practical purposes they are the poorest households in the CAMPFIRE area.

22. 'In a state property regime, ownership and control over use rests in the hands of the state. Individuals and groups may be able to make use of the resources, but at the forbearance of the state.' Bromley, D.W. 1972 'The Commons, Common Property, and Environmental Policy' Environmental and Resource Economics 2: 1-17, 1992.

23. One of the large herd owners told me that they were keeping cattle for commercial purposes as a way of protecting the national economy. He said that the white commercial farmers wanted Zimbabwe to fail to meet its beef quota to the E.E.C by turning to wildlife. "Look at the Rosenfels family, who own all the farms from Bulawayo to Plumtree (100 kms). They have turned all that area into wildlife farms. Now CAMPFIRE has joined the conspiracy too. "

24. This is a veterinary zoning system used to control the spread of foot and mouth disease. A red zone is usually that area where livestock mix with buffaloes, the carriers of the disease.

25. Taylor, R 1993 "open discussion" Responsible Wildlife Resource Management: Balancing Biological, Economic, Cultural and Moral Considerations" Conference, Brussels E.B.C.D.

26. Dzingirai, V 1994 'Take back your CAMPFIRE.' Local responses to electric fencing Paper presented at the 'New Perspectives on Agricultural Innovation in Zimbabwe' workshop. Mandel Training Centre. Harare.

27. This could have been a way of avoiding his obligations in order to go for greener pastures. It was later reported in the press that he was involved in corrupt safari hunting in protected areas on behalf of the Vice President, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

Safari operators sell their hunts by creating an impression that hunting is done in pristine wildlife areas where there are neither settlements nor cattle

28. Gasper, D 1989 Decentralisation of Planning and Administration in Zimbabwe. The Hague. I.S.S. Working Paper Series # 64.(page 1).

29. See table below it took the Rural District Council three years, after being granted appropriate authority status.

30. The literature on this issue is immense, for example:

See Gasper op cit

De Valk op cit

Brand, C 1989 " Will Decentralization Enhance Popular Participation" in DeValk op cit

Murombedzi (1994)

31. IUCN, UNEP, WWF 1991 Caring for the Earth. A strategy for Sustainable Living.  
Gland, Switzerland.

# BULILIMANGWE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROJECT

WARDS INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT

