DEVOLUTION AND DEMOCRATISATION: POLICY PROCESSES AND COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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Policy Processes

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Devolution

Decentralisation

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Natural Resource Politics

ABSTRACT

This study undertakes a comparative analysis of Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) policy processes in Zimbabwe and Botswana and in doing so highlights that the devolutionary aspirations of CBNRM have failed to be realized in practice. Empirical evidence is presented which illustrates that at the heart of CBNRM lie issues of power and authority concerning access to and management of valuable natural resources. Attempts to develop appropriate natural resource governance regimes must therefore address some of the most contested social and political issues in these countries. The study identifies those variables which have shaped natural resource governance arrangements, institutions and outcomes, and reveals that devolutionary failure has arisen from the failure of CBNRM policy to engage with broader political processes at levels from the local to international.

In order to explore the links between policy processes and governance outcomes within CBNRM, the study combines two distinct research domains, each with its own conceptual framing, within one overarching explanatory framework. This analysis suggests that it is the nature of the CBNRM policy process – its actor-networks, discourse and structured political interests – that hinders policy makers from engaging with wider political processes. Three framing assumptions of CBNRM are identified as having undermined its ability to engage politically. Firstly, the assumption that conservation is not political in character has prevented strategic political engagement and manoeuvring. Secondly, the assumption that the key focus of policy should be on correct institutional form, as suggested by an influential discourse on the merits of devolution vs decentralisation, which has placed too great an emphasis on structure and external design and failed to accommodate the realities of the highly complex and politicised context of CBNRM. Thirdly, the assumption that rural communities lack agency has hindered the development of creative local solutions to problems.

By presenting case studies from the village of Mahenye in Zimbabwe and the five villages of the Okavango Community Trust in Botswana, the study looks beyond the objectives, discourse and contests of policy and undertakes an investigation of what actions rural people are undertaking inside the institutions established by policy makers, and of governance outcomes at the local level. These case studies reveal that unfettered devolution can lead to elite capture and the perpetuation of poverty; that rural communities themselves have agency and the ability to exercise it; and that there is limited and shrinking political space in both countries which is reducing opportunities for rural communities to engage with political processes. The Botswana case studies demonstrates that an imported and imposed devolutionary initiative which lacks links to higher levels of governance can reduce political space at local levels. The Zimbabwe case study demonstrates

that political space may be more effectively created through decentralisation. The lesson drawn from these case studies is that institutional arrangements and roles should be determined by context specific issues and circumstances and move beyond the structural determinism that has characterized much of the CBNRM debate to date.

The study concludes with policy recommendations. These include the need for recognition of the synergy between CBNRM and democratisation as mutually reinforcing processes and the need to be context-specific. Further recommendations emphasise: recognition of the significance of community agency and adaptive capacity; recognition of the appropriate role of external agents as facilitators of the process; and recognition of the significance of customary structures. The study confirms that CBNRM is a dynamic, evolving process, rather than a binary or limited number of institutional choice options based on central transfers of powers. CBNRM should be viewed as a process of applied and incremental experiments in democracy; of value because it involves not a single 'holy grail' of full devolution or 'ideal democracy' but the interaction of tiers of governance over time in adaptive processes. Governance arrangements must be context specific and should be determined by focusing on which approach will most effectively facilitate community engagement with political processes.

DECLARATION

I declare that *Devolution and Democratisation: Policy Processes and Community-Based Natural Resource Management in southern Africa* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: ………………………………… Date: .……………………

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ACRONYMS

AA   Appropriate Authority (Zimbabwe)

ACORD   Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

ARB   Agricultural Resources Board (Botswana)

ART   Africa Resources Trust

BDF   Botswana Defence Force

BDP   Botswana Democratic Party

BNRMP   Botswana Natural Resource Management Project

BOCOBONET   Botswana Community Based Organizations Network

CA   CAMPFIRE Association

CAMPFIRE   Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources

CASS   Centre for Applied Social Sciences

CBD   Convention on Biological Diversity

CBNRM   Community-Based Natural Resource Management

CBO   Community-Based Organization

CCG   CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group

CI   Conservation International

CITES   Convention on Trade in Endangered Species

CPR   Common Property Resource

CTT   Cgaecgae Tlhabololo Trust

EC	Executive Committee
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
DC	District Council (Botswana)
DCEC	Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime (Botswana)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DWNP	Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Botswana)
DNPWLM	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (Zimbabwe)
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Fund
HOORC	Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (Botswana)
HATAB	Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana
IASCP	International Association for Common Property
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
IWMC	World Conservation Trust
JVP	Joint Venture Partner
KDT	Khwai Development Trust
MBS	Mitcheletti Bates Safaris
MCC	Mahenye CAMPFIRE Committee

MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MP	Member of Parliament
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRMP	Natural Resource Management Programme
OCT	Okavango Community Trust
OWS	Okavango Wilderness Safaris
PAC	Problem Animal Control
PWMA	Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (Zimbabwe)
RDC	Rural District Council (Zimbabwe)
ROSA	Regional Office for Southern Africa (IUCN)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SACWM	Southern African Convention for Wildlife Management
SASUSG	Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group
SCI	Safari Club International
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee (Botswana)
TLA	Traditional Land Authority
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

VDC	Village Development Committee
VTC	Village Technical Committee (Botswana)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBGU	German Advisory Council on Global Change
WCMP	Wildlife Conservation and Management Programme (Botswana)
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples Union

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The majority of Africa's population relies on natural resources for their livelihoods and consequently, few issues are more central to African societies than the use and governance of natural resources. This remains as true today as it was during pre-colonial and colonial eras (Hyden, 2008). Natural resource governance is then fundamentally important to rural economies and this economic importance places issues relating to land and resource rights at political centre stage. Even so, natural resource management is also important to local, national and global concerns about environmental management, conservation and sustainable development. This represents a diverse array of parties with a stake in Africa's environmental future and with the incentives and means to influence natural resource management policy. Many of these stakeholders will have different, sometimes conflicting interests. This thesis examines the politics and policy processes inherent within natural resource management, and highlights the intersection of natural resource governance and local, national and global concerns about environmental management, conservation and sustainable development. This analysis shows the diverse interests that have shaped natural resource management and environmental policy making in the two case study countries in southern Africa. It explores the way incentives and the manner in which different stakeholders influence the process of natural resource management policy development and the outcomes of this.

The dominant approach to conservation of natural resources in Africa in the 20th Century was one of protectionism, which saw people excluded from their environment and their livelihoods undermined. The 1980s witnessed a paradigm shift in conservation from protectionism to community conservation and sustainable use (Adams and Hulme, 2001). The result is that throughout the 1980s and 1990s Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) became a widely adopted and highly regarded conservation strategy in Southern Africa and elsewhere in the world (Adams and

McShane, 1992, Bonner, 1985, Western and Wright, 1994, Agrawal and Gibson, 1999, Roe et al., 2000, Hulme and Murphree, 2001). One of its greatest perceived strengths was that it permitted environmental and developmental (particularly anti-poverty) goals to be addressed simultaneously, resulting in 'sustainable development.' Considering its promise, the geographic, demographic and economic scope of CBNRM in Africa was considerable, and its appeal reached its height in the late 1990s covering significant portions of land in marginalised rural areas within countries throughout Africa and affecting millions of people (Fabricius and Kock, 2004).

However, more recently, CBNRM has come under fierce attack from critics (Oates, 1995, Brandon et al., 1998, Hutton et al., 2006) and it is now heavily contested. Critics argue that CBNRM has failed to live up to its early promises, particularly protection of biodiversity (Oates, 1995) or improving the socio-economic status of poor rural communities (Bond, 2001, Rozemejeir, 2003). While the jury is still out on the success and failure of CBNRM, the greatest challenge facing it in southern African countries is the introduction of governance reforms that lead to the establishment of local level governance institutions that are accountable to their local constituencies. This constraint threatens to undermine the legitimacy of CBNRM as a conservation and development strategy. In view of this realization, CBNRM practitioners, policymakers and implementers have started addressing some of the governance issues that impede and threaten the progress of CBNRM activities.

Interestingly, the period of establishing CBNRM coincided with the spread of liberal democracy in southern Africa. However, some analysts question the degree to which it can be claimed that democracy exists in southern Africa (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997, Bauer and Taylor, 2005, Cousins and Claasens, 2004). An analysis of the requirements for effective CBNRM and for the development of 'participatory' democratic politics illustrates that at least rhetorically they share a common vision - the development of accountable and representative governance institutions, which institutionalize local participation, empower citizens equally and have effective linkages

with institutions at other levels. The assumption is that CBNRM and (local) democratisation are theoretically mutually reinforcing processes, which share important synergies and complementarities. Turner (2004) highlights this point:

> *CBNRM is about local governance. If local governance is ineffective, so is CBNRM...The current crisis in local governance is the real crisis of southern African CBNRM.* (Turner, 2004:12-13)

Nevertheless, these synergies are not simple and straightforward, and have to be worked at to make them of value. However, there appears to have been little strategic interaction or overlap between the policy processes and implementation strategies affecting CBNRM and those relevant to democratisation. CBNRM implementers and advocates have paid scant attention to the socio-political forces that mould local governance and broader democratisation processes determining the trajectory of CBNRM (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Indeed, a central argument of this thesis is that there has been relatively little engagement with or understanding of macro or micro level political and related processes on CBNRM by policy makers and implementers. This thesis explores why this situation has arisen; presents empirical evidence that demonstrates that this has resulted in lost opportunities and compromised outcomes for both CBNRM and democratisation as these potentially reinforcing processes failed to engage with each other; and explores ways in which new opportunities for synergy and linkages can be brokered. In order to achieve this, I critically examine some of the key framing assumptions of CBNRM approaches to date using the analytical framework of policy process analysis (Keeley and Scoones, 2003).

The nature of the CBNRM policy process shapes natural resource management governance reforms and outcomes. Failure of CBNRM policy makers and implementers to engage with wider political processes undermines their ability to positively influence the development of national policies that support the CBNRM sector. I provide evidence that indicates that this failure to engage is largely a result of the origins and framing assumptions of CBNRM. To ensure that CBNRM becomes an effective rural

development strategy it is necessary to ensure that the CBNRM policy processes trigger the appropriate governance reforms. I argue that governance reform, outcomes, and the CBNRM policy process are intimately linked in complex ways. Thus, one of the key determining factors in explaining governance reform outcomes is the CBNRM policy process itself. This study attempts to trace, explore and unravel the threads of these linkages and in doing so offer an alternative way of understanding the mutually reinforcing dynamic between CBNRM and processes of democratisation in the region.

This chapter:

- describes the background and rationale for this study;

- presents the research problem;

- discusses the scope of the research;

- presents the significance and strategic goal of the study;

- describes its aims and objectives; and

- outlines the structure of this thesis, including the research methodology.

1.2 Background

The development of CBNRM policy and approaches within southern Africa has been an evolutionary process and one whose goals and objectives have changed over time. CBNRM initially emerged from ideas that developed in the wildlife sector as an experimental approach to wildlife management through 'community conservation' (Hulme and Murphree, 2001). For the last 30 years, initiatives such as the ADMADE programme in Zambia and activities around the Selous Game Reserve and Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania have experimented with limited co-management strategies - primarily involving benefit sharing from wildlife management activities. A later generation of initiatives emerging in the late 1980s, such as the CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe, took this process a step further, advocating strong 'ownership rights' for communities over wildlife resources outside protected areas in communal tenure regimes. Murphree

characterizes the initiatives as reliant upon 'state permission to experiment' (Murphree, 1995b) rather than a formal basis for devolution and tenurial security .

Since the 1980s CBNRM has evolved into a more integrated approach to natural resource management and it is now widely accepted that for it to be successful, it has to be complemented by national policies and political and administrative decentralization and devolution of authority (Katerere, 2002, NACSO, 2003, Child, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Roe et al., 2000). CBNRM has diffused throughout the SADC region, with most countries adopting it in some form, focusing on a broad range of resources, although wildlife still remains dominant (Rihoy et al., 1999, Hulme and Murphree, 2001, Child, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Jones, 2007). Whilst CBNRM strategies are diverse as to some degree they have emerged to address the specific political, historic, cultural and ecological conditions of each country, the last fifteen years have witnessed the emergence of a shared set of principles and policies (Murphree, 1991, Rihoy et al., 1999). There is an underlying recognition that natural resource management policy must offer local communities and other stakeholder's clearly defined rights, responsibilities and benefits over the resources that they live with if they are to use them in a sustainable manner. Thus, 'CBNRM seeks to provide the legal, institutional and economic frameworks for communities and other stakeholders to become managers of their natural resources' (Jones and Murphree, 2004:63).

CBNRM analysts and implementers argue that CBNRM is facing challenges and that foremost among these problems is the lack of progress in devolving genuine authority to local communities (Shackleton and Campbell, 2001, Ribot, 2002a, Katerere, 2002, SASUSG, forthcoming). Murphree (2000a) notes that whilst 'the flag of devolution has been raised high and many times' within CBNRM there has been relatively little progress in devolving powers to communities; Murombedzi (2003b) concurs that most CBNRM initiatives which characterize themselves as 'devolved' 'reflect rhetoric more than substance', and that, in reality, they continue to be:

characterised by some continuation of substantive central government control and management over natural resources rather than a genuine shift in authority to local people (Murombedzi, 2003a:27).

Whilst SASUSG (forthcoming) concludes that:

incomplete devolution of rights over natural resources – particularly wildlife – remains the single most disabling constraint on sustainable development based on natural resources (SASUSG, forthcoming:7).

There is then general agreement that the enabling legislation for the use and control of natural resources in communal lands vests control in either central or local government, despite rhetoric to the contrary, and that this situation inhibits effective CBNRM outcomes. CBNRM implementers and advocates intervention efforts in southern Africa have focused on ensuring that this situation is rectified by the introduction of a devolutionary approach and where possible from the outset of CBNRM implementation.

Today the primary objective of CBNRM is to develop communal capacity for dynamic and adaptive governance in the arena of natural resource use through the devolution of resource rights to communal land residents (Hulme and Murphree, 2001, Murombedzi, 2003b). The overall 'success' of CBNRM strategies is thus seen to rely on the transfer of power from the state to local communities (devolution) and the development of locally accountable and representative institutions. The distinction between devolution and decentralization is central to this, and is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Ribot (2002b), a widely quoted source of definition of the 'decentralisation' narrative, defines decentralisation as any act in which a central government formally cedes powers to actors and institutions at lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy. He also defines the related concept of 'democratic decentralisation', which occurs when powers and resources are transferred to authorities representative of and

downwardly accountable to local populations. Murphree (2000a) provides a definition, distinct from democratic decentralisation, which is commonly used in the context of devolution in southern Africa. He interprets devolution as 'the creation of relatively autonomous realms of authority, responsibility and entitlement, with a primary accountability to their own constituencies' (Murphree 2000a:6). The critical difference here is that the devolution narrative is concerned with 'relatively autonomous' entities that do not have to be situated within a government political-administration hierarchy.

In addition to upholding devolution as the only way forward, these same analysts and implementers are equally quick to condemn decentralisation - or 'aborted devolution' to use the phrase commonly adopted in southern Africa – as the root of the problem (Campbell and Shackleton, 2001, Child, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Jones and Murphree, 2004). For example, the most prolific critique of the CAMPFIRE programme is that under the programme's enabling statutes, authority passes to local government as represented by the Rural District Councils rather than to the producer communities. Analysts argue that this remaining layer of bureaucracy separates local residents from direct engagement in project management and allows the RDCs to co-opt benefits and hence the summary 'aborted devolution' dismissal (Alexander and McGregor, 2001, Bond, 2001, Hasler, 2000, Dzingirai and Breen, 2005). Other terminology with equally negative connotations is also applied. For example, Jones and Murphree (2004:25) note that 'in Zimbabwe's CBNRM programme devolution has been 'emasculated' to mean decentralisation.' So for the last fifteen years there has been a broad consensus among implementers, analysts and academics within southern Africa, that lack of progress in devolving - as distinct from decentralizing - genuine authority to local communities is the greatest challenge facing CBNRM and one that, unless resolved will ultimately constrain it from delivering appropriate natural resource governance reforms.

1.3 Research Problem

This problem of 'failure' of devolution masks a deeper problem that this research aims to explore and understand. There is compelling evidence from Botswana, Zimbabwe and

elsewhere in the region that CBNRM is not working as the theory and discourse of the idealized version of devolution suggests it should. As Murphree (2000a) laments the fact that devolution has yet to be broadly achieved outside a few isolated instances, and argues '[CBNRM] has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried' (Murphree, 2000a:7). In a global review of CBNRM, Larson and Ribot (2005) come to a similar conclusion and note that the theory essentially posits an 'if-then' proposition. However, in practice, the first part of the proposition, the 'if' is not being achieved and obviously resulting in failure to achieve the 'then'. Understanding the failure to reach 'if' is the core problem that this research aims to unpack and explain.

There is a consensus that the distribution of rights and control over economic and other benefits is a central determinant in the outcome of CBNRM, as with all other natural resource management strategies that necessarily take place in socio-ecological systems. Within southern Africa, focus of natural resource management scholarship and efforts to bring about natural resource management reforms over the last two decades in the region has been on the need for reforms that enable devolved natural resource management jurisdictions to emerge. However, despite the critical nature of natural resource governance reforms and the general acknowledgement that delivering these has been a significant impediment to CBNRM achieving its goals, there has been little emphasis on understanding why efforts to bring such reforms about succeed or fail - why 'if' is not achieved.

Developing and deepening understanding of the macro political, economic and policy context and its implications for CBNRM policy processes and outcomes has gone relatively unexplored within CBNRM and related scholarship[1]. Little empirical research has been undertaken which focuses upon the political and economic implications of natural resource governance reforms and whose interests will be affected by those

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[1] Although there have been notable exceptions, with scholars such as Murphree (1995b, 2000a and b) Murombedzi (2003a, forthcoming), Anstey (2005) drawing attention to the broader political economy of CBNRM for many years.

reforms at the local, national or international scales. Improving understanding of how and why key natural resource governance reforms occur, or do not occur, is thus a priority area for this thesis as it seeks to improve knowledge of key natural resource management issues in the region.

A core argument of this thesis is that the uncritical and simplistic focus on devolution as the appropriate governance arrangement for CBNRM by proponents, analysts and implementers over the years has obscured the political dimensions of CBNRM and its policy context. In so doing the potentially critical links with the politics of democratisation have gone largely unrealized and important opportunities for both improved natural resource management and democratisation left unexploited. A further aim of this thesis then is to address this problem by providing empirical research and analysis that explores, describes and elaborates upon the complex linkages between CBNRM, power, politics and democratisation.

Empirical evidence presented here from Zimbabwe and Botswana demonstrates that failure to reach 'if' arises for a number of complex and interrelated reasons, many of which have little to do with CBNRM *per se* but which relate to its failure to address the broader political economy in which it is situated. A host of different factors that differ from village to village, let alone country-to-country shape CBNRM outcomes. But if this broad array of factors, many of which are apparently external to CBNRM itself, are constraining its outcomes, it is perhaps time to rethink it or to conceptually relocate it within the broader political economy. The evidence presented here suggests that a critical area that needs review is the simplistic and unquestioning assumption amongst CBNRM advocates that devolution is the 'panacea' and decentralisation the 'problem' that they are so often portrayed to be.

The analysis of the CBNRM policy process undertaken by this study indicates it is the nature of the policy process itself that is a significant causal factor of this problem.

Achieving appropriate natural resource governance reforms requires not only a good policy design but also the power to put the policy into practice (Hyden, 2008). The failure of CBNRM policy makers, advocates and implementers to engage with the wider political processes affecting natural resource management and governance is explained by the nature of its origins and framing assumptions upon which it is based. Notably, the origins of CBNRM in the wildlife/conservation sector together with the framing assumption within CBNRM that conservation is not 'political.'

Given the strong linkages and interconnection between the two apparently distinct domains of democratisation and natural resource governance on the one hand, and CBNRM policy processes on the other, in this study I bring them together. Both process and outcome are examined here. This enables exploration and analysis of the causal connections between these two distinct but complexly and intimately connected domains.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

This study has two interlinked objectives. The first objective is to explore the connections between CBNRM and wider processes of democratisation in southern Africa, with a particular focus on devolution and decentralisation. The second objective is to investigate the nature of policy processes in the CBNRM sector in Zimbabwe and Botswana, with a specific focus on how policy processes have resulted in the strong emphasis on devolution of decision making within the sector.

In this thesis, I seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Review the social, economic and political contexts of CBNRM policies and programmes at global, regional and – for Botswana and Zimbabwe – national levels; and identify the complex linkages between these and CBNRM policy decisions and processes in each country.

- Investigate the implementation dynamics and operational specifics of CBNRM programmes in Botswana and Zimbabwe and identify how these have affected local and national level programme outcomes.

- Explore local level outcomes of CBNRM in Botswana and Zimbabwe with a specific focus on community participation in CBNRM decision-making processes and the impacts of governance arrangements on the democratic space for engagement between communities and the state

- Examine why 'devolution' became the dominant discourse within CBNRM and how this has affected outcomes.

- Examine the origins of CBNRM and the nature of the actor-network and epistemic community that have developed as a result as well as the wider implications of these.

- Explore the linkages between democratisation and CBNRM based on empirical evidence provided by the national and local level case studies.

The aim of this thesis is thus to undertake an in-depth comparative analysis of CBNRM policy processes in two southern African countries, namely Botswana and Zimbabwe. It will shed light on the complex linkages between apparently unconnected elements within the broader national and international arenas and CBNRM outcomes. The premise of this study is that CBNRM is an innately political process. This implies that if it is to be successful in meeting its objective of increased participation in natural resource management it must create institutions and mechanisms that will enable marginalised rural dwellers to organise, engage and demand accountability from the state, allowing them to play a more active role in decisions that affect their lives. In effect, it must create new and enhance existing 'democratic spaces' for experimentation and enable communities to engage with and influence policy development themselves. The objective of this thesis is to explore whether CBNRM is or could be providing greater political and democratic space to enhance participation in the policy making process; and if so, under what conditions is this most effectively achieved.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This thesis provides a comparative analysis of CBNRM policy processes and outcomes in Botswana and Zimbabwe and the role that international environmental policy making processes played in determining CBNRM in these countries. The research focus is on the process of policy development and programme implementation from international to local scales. This illustrates how process and outcomes comprise reactions to social complexity where decision-making is dominated by politics at all scales.

The study contextualizes CBNRM within the broader ongoing processes of social change within the region and internationally which are attempting to redistribute social, economic and political power. Throughout the history of CBNRM, these apparently 'exogenous' processes have shaped both policy and implementation and have in turn been shaped by it (Murombedzi, 2003b, Jones and Murphree, 2001). For example, many countries in the region are currently involved in policy and legislative reform relating to issues such as local government, land reform, agrarian reform, affirmative action and constitutional reform. These constitute a background legal and policy environment that has direct and indirect impacts on CBNRM. The focus is then on locating CBNRM within the larger political economy within which it is attempting to shift power[2] to the periphery, and by doing so develop an understanding of the complexities that affect such attempts.

Particular attention is paid to the degree to which CBNRM policy makers, implementers and advocates in the two countries have engaged mainstream political and development processes and in considering whether such engagement translated into the development of sufficient political power and momentum to ensure sustainability. This specific interest on the strategic political dimensions of CBNRM was driven by the recognition

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[2] The interpretation of power follows Hyden's definition: 'power is the ability to achieve a desired outcome in competition with other actors who lay claim to the same resources needed to produce that outcome' (Hyden 2008:13).

that its political landscape has far-reaching implications for governance reforms and ultimately for changing the status quo and levers of power.

Control over valuable natural resources is invariably a contested political process. Two central characteristics of CBNRM make it an inherently political process. Firstly, the transfer of power over resources that is implied by devolution, from the centre to local institutions, runs into powerful vested interests at many levels and is therefore a political process (Murombedzi, 2003a, Murphree, 2000a). Secondly, to date CBNRM in the region has focused on wildlife resources and as clearly illustrated in studies (Anstey, 2005, Duffy, 2000, Gibson, 1999), wildlife is commonly used by politicians as a means to dispense patronage and consequently should be viewed as a 'political commodity' (Gibson, 1999). Given these far reaching political implications, understanding and resolving the problems which currently beset CBNRM, requires an appreciation and investigation that goes beyond viewing it as simply a technically feasible conservation strategy. Interrogation of the social, legislative and political factors that influence devolutionary dynamics is required. In essence, this study focuses its attention on the wider political landscape or terrain within which CBNRM policies have been developed and implemented.

This thesis highlights that although CBNRM is inherently political in nature, implementers and analysts have largely failed to engage with the broader political processes and continue to fail to do so. Indeed, often consciously taking the attitude that politics is best avoided. I explore the reasons for this and suggest that a number of factors have been important. Firstly, CBNRM was initially heralded as the means by which the objectives of both environmental quality and economic growth could be made mutually reinforcing (Adams and McShane, 1992, Martin, 1986, Western and Wright, 1994, SASUSG, 1996). The presentation of 'win-win' solutions as the goal of CBNRM policy has stimulated the 'depoliticisation' of conservation policies as described by Duffy (2001) in the case of Zimbabwe. More generally, Buscher and Whande (2007) maintain that, at the interface of the social sciences and biodiversity conservation, the

concept of 'politics' has tended to have negative connotations, and is therefore largely ignored. This situation arises from the historical dominance of the natural sciences in scientific endeavours related to conservation, and compounded by the recent emphasis on social disempowerment and inequality related to conservation (Buscher and Whande, 2007). One side effect of this has been that the concept and process of politics itself has become synonymous with negativity, and therefore preferably to be avoided. This approach exposes CBNRM to many dangers. Politics is pervasive given the interplay of interests and forces in pursuit of power, resources and status. Manor (2005) notes that attempting to insulate programmes and processes from politics is naïve, as well as impossible, with the outcome generally being that these processes intrude into local politics and reinforce the influence of powerful interests.

In a 1995 keynote address to a regional gathering of CBNRM implementers in southern Africa - the overwhelming majority of whom were drawn from National Parks Departments, conservation and natural science backgrounds - Murphree noted:

> *the mixed profile of success and failure in CBNRM in the region owes much of its ambiguity to our strategic pragmatism in its implementation. We have placed policy and practice before politics and thus have encouraged the birth of CBNRM into a politico-legal environment, which if not hostile, is hardly a nurturing one. ... I am suggesting that in our initial and successful end-run around political processes we run the risk of ignoring their centrality to long-term CBNRM success... The khaki shorts ecology brigade has led us into a largely unrecognized struggle over property rights in rural Africa. Its implications are profound... Tenurial rights make the difference between rural democratic representation and the persistence of perpetual adolescence of rural peoples in national structures of governance... optimal conditions for CBNRM require strong tenurial rights, this requires fundamental devolution of power, one which politicians are unlikely to make unless there is a strong political reason to do so. This reason can only lie in <u>a strong, politically potent constituency demand</u>*

that this takes place... this is the rural resource-managing communities themselves (Murphree, 1995b:47).

In the fifteen years since Murphree made these comments there has been little evidence of strategic political engagement on behalf of CBNRM implementers and advocates, suggesting that Murphree's concern that the centrality of political processes to CBNRM be recognized has gone largely unregistered and unaddressed. In an effort to address this concern, this thesis explores the reasons for this neglect.

Prior to Murphree's address, Parker (1993) noted, in relation to Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme and its decentralisation to RDCs rather than devolution to local governance institutions, that:

> *Hopefully the dichotomy in policy is transient: a stepping stone to conceding the benefits of full ownership. Yet if it sticks halfway – as at present– the CAMPFIRE programmes will stress to the owners what they are missing – not what they are getting. And for this reason the project will fail* (quoted in Murphree, 1997: 31).

This thesis explores whether Parker's perception of the inevitability of failure as a result of adopting decentralisation rather than devolution - characteristic of CBNRM analysis ever since – is valid. It explores the origins of this perception and notes that it is disconnected from mainstream democratisation and decentralization discourses and fails to take into account a range of political and power dynamics. One result has been the political sidelining of CBNRM which has had a significant impact on its ability to deliver governance reforms. I present evidence in the thesis that suggests that Parker's assumption that a realization of what is 'missing' by rural communities will lead to failure is misplaced. Far from leading to failure, it appears to be stimulating engagement and negotiation between communities and local government and by doing so stimulating democratic processes and forces at the local level. The outcome is evidence that, in some

cases, 'constituent accountability' as explained by Murphree (2000a) is becoming evident:

> ***Local jurisdictions must become a significant political constituency of the state***, *a constituency strong enough to counterbalance expropriative interests at the centre and one to which the state is accountable. This condition of 'downward' accountability is critical for effectively linking local and larger scale jurisdictions. Indeed, we can posit **constituent accountability** as a principle in such relationships* (Murphree, 2000:11; emphasis original).

Murphree (2000a) goes on to identify two conditions necessary for this to happen:

> *Firstly, local jurisdictions need to be able to organise and act collectively.*
>
> *Secondly, they need to embody, in principle and practice, an ideal that corresponds to a general public ethos that confers political legitimacy.* (Murphree, 2000a:11).
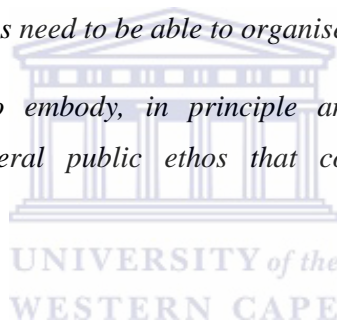
This research explores whether these conditions have developed/are developing; and if so, whether they are leading/will lead to 'constituent accountability (an outcome) anticipated by Murphree (2000a).

The research geographically focuses on CBNRM in Botswana and Zimbabwe, and compares the two countries systematically. Whilst sharing some significant commonalities, for the most part these two countries represent relatively different contexts. Similarities between the two countries, in particular they have both been at the forefront of a southern African wide movement to promote CBNRM and 'sustainable use', provide a good basis for comparison. Differences - particularly in relation to the implementation focus on decentralisation in Zimbabwe and devolution in Botswana - provide scope to undertake an analysis of those issues which lie at the heart of this study.

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An expansion of the sample to other countries would have enriched the database but given time and resource constraints, could only have been undertaken at the expense of the depth of research in these Botswana and Zimbabwe. This in-depth analysis has allowed for a diachronic investigation which has revealed the dynamic and shifting social and political landscapes. This has proven to be a critically important methodological component of the research. The rationale for selecting these countries included:

- CBNRM in both countries is well established, has been operational for 15 years or more, and programmes, and key events and processes are relatively well documented.

- Significant physical and environmental similarities - e.g. relatively abundant and valuable wildlife resources, low human population densities in target areas, relatively marginal environments for rain fed agriculture – make the impact of social and political influences more easily identifiable and comparable.

- Differing political cultures, social, economic and political environments and land tenure arrangements are represented allowing comparative analysis of the influence of broader contexts e.g.,

  o Relatively wealthy, Botswana has remained politically and economically stable since its transition from a British Protectorate, it is generally considered the most democratic country in the region, with an effective bureaucracy, representative land boards and a decentralized approach to government;

  o Zimbabwe is mired in political and economic crisis, land and natural resource tenure in general ostensibly lies at the centre of this; early progress in CBNRM and decentralization is commonly viewed as having stalled.

- There has been significant interaction, exchange of experiences and common activities undertaken between the countries, allowing for consideration of the influence of international and regional environmental activities.

- There are significant differences in the programmatic development of CBNRM in Botswana and Zimbabwe.

- The shape and character of local level natural resource management institutions in the two countries have significant variations; not least, that Zimbabwe broadly represented a decentralized governance system, Botswana, until recently, devolved.

- I have firsthand knowledge and experience with the CBNRM programmes in both countries dating back to their inception and have well developed networks and contacts at both national and village levels to facilitate research.

1.6 Significance and Strategic Goal

Whilst CBNRM has historically received a great deal of support and acclaim, many observers and practitioners consider that it is now at a critical juncture (Hulme and Murphree, 2001, Ribot, 2002a, Hutton et al., 2006) with evaluations and assessments of its outcomes varying widely. Since early 2000 there has been a growing perception in southern Africa and internationally that CBNRM in the region is in some form of 'crisis' (Turner, 2004, Hutton et al., 2006, Dzingirai and Breen, 2005, Murombedzi, 2003b, Roe et al., 2000). The nature and extent of this crisis has been the subject of email discussion groups, workshops, seminars, papers and books but there appears to be little consensus as to whether CBNRM is indeed in crisis and, if so, what constitutes this crisis and how to address it. Some policy makers and international environmentalists and some in the donor community are viewing criticism as 'evidence' that CBNRM, and indeed community participation in conservation *per se*, is not an appropriate conservation strategy (Hutton et al., 2006). A backlash is beginning to form against 'community participation' in natural resource management, which is threatening to undermine CBNRM, and other 'community conservation' strategies, just as they are beginning to address the core issues of governance (Ribot, 2002a, Hulme and Murphree, 2001). This backlash threatens a return to protectionist or 'fortress' approaches to conservation and a reversal of significant gains made by communities to date.

Such a backlash is assuming increasing significance in the face of global challenges that are being faced in the 21st century and which threaten to be most severely felt in Africa (IPCC, 2007). Environment has assumed an immense transformative influence over

global economies (Gomera and Rihoy, in press). Two issues – climate change and ecosystem degradation – have occupied public and scientific discourse since 2007. CBNRM should be assuming increasing significance under these circumstances as the core issues with which it has been involved for the last 25 years - such as appropriate land and resource tenure arrangements, diversification of rural livelihoods and enhanced local governance - are the same issues that must be addressed if efforts to introduce appropriate adaptation and mitigation mechanisms for climate change are to be equitable and effective. To disregard the experience, knowledge and lessons gained over the years from CBNRM, would be to disregard potentially important strategies in addressing climate change at the expense of those marginalised communities who will endure the most of its impact.

Criticisms of CBNRM range from vitriolic and hostile attacks, mainly from the animal rights and 'protectionist' advocates, who are opposed to what they perceive as a 'dilution' of the conservation agenda (Oates, 1995, Brandon et al., 1998); to approaches questioning some of the assumptions of CBNRM, suggesting modifications to current policies and implementation approaches (Adams and Hulme, 2001, Rozemejeir, 2003, Katerere, 2002, Campbell and Shackleton, 2001, Murombedzi, 2003b, Hughes, 2006, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007).

The former critiques are primarily driven by philosophies, conservation paradigms and emotive responses that are largely alien to the context of conservation in southern Africa today (see Hutton et al, 2006 for a comprehensive review). They are also largely oblivious to the economic, social and political processes in which conservation interventions take place, which brings their sustainability into serious doubt. Whilst these critiques do affect the process of policy development within the region - not least because of the impact that they may have on the donors' willingness to fund CBNRM as explored further in Chapter 4 - they have little credibility within southern Africa itself (Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Rihoy et al., 1999, Hutton et al., 2006). It is the latter set of critiques, which are of primary interest here as these have led to a growing realization

that the theoretical foundations of CBNRM lack robustness (Turner, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Peters, 1994).

An exhaustive analysis of even these critiques is beyond the scope, or relevance, of this thesis as they range across the spectrum of social, economic, political and environmental issues.   Those that are of immediate relevance here relate to the failure of CBNRM to improve local governance by not involving local communities effectively and may be leading to increased inequalities and elite capture of benefits (Hughes, 2006, Dzingirai and Breen, 2005, Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). This critique reflects the contradictions in planning based on assumptions of homogeneity and fixity in an otherwise complex and dynamic world (Berry, 1993). Such critiques question the legitimacy and accountability of CBNRM institutions - a criticism that if valid undermines the core arguments presented by CBNRM advocates in making the link between CBNRM and democracy. Whilst this critique is now relatively common it was first clearly articulated by Agrawal and Gibson (1999) in an article that remains influential to this day.

As discussed above, the most common criticism of CBNRM is on the grounds of its perceived inability to 'deliver' devolution, which is seen as a fundamental 'flaw.' Notwithstanding this, there is also acknowledgement that this is a component of an on-going and evolutionary process and that it would be premature to 'write-off' this approach at this early stage (Ribot, 2002b, Campbell and Shackleton, 2001, Murombedzi, 2003a, Hutton et al, 2006). Such serious scholarship, often from within the region, raises questions about some of the framing assumptions on which CBNRM is based. The strategic goal of my research is to contribute to this constructive debate; identifying, exploring and explaining key problems that are constraining CBNRM from achieving appropriate natural resource governance reforms, as well as exploring the potential and actual contributions that CBNRM has made/can make to democratisation processes in the region.

My strategic goal is then to contribute to the ongoing debate surrounding CBNRM specifically by encouraging rethinking of the political process of negotiating politically supportive relations with policy-makers, politicians, the state and civil society stakeholders who may be involved in defining the policy context of CBNRM. Key to achieving this has been the need to demonstrate, with the use of empirical evidence, the extent to which CBNRM policy making process to date – its political interests, actor networks and discourses – has defined its context, which has in turn determined CBNRM's ability to deliver appropriate natural resource management governance reforms.

1.7 Research Approach and Methodology

1.7.1 Research Approach

This study is based on primary research, secondary sources and interviews. It has been informed by a combination of theoretical concepts and disciplinary perspectives, ranging from political science to public administration to anthropology to African studies. This has required the employment of various analytical methodologies. Following Keeley and Scoones (2003) the three primary analytical tools that have been employed are structured political interests, discourse analysis and actor networks. This approach has necessitated the use of multiple sources of evidence in order to capture the complexities and overlaps of these different analytical approaches. The use of multiple sources of evidence had the advantage of ensuring there was some continuity of research variables and similar methodologies applied across the two case study countries. The use of this approach enabled triangulation to be built into the data collection process.

However, the aim of the research was to explore and compare the policy processes of CBNRM within two different countries, identifying what worked when, where, why and how over a period of almost 20 years. This comparative approach required an assessment of different contexts and an analysis of the different implications these had. Keeley and Scoones (2003) point out that the complexities of the individual policy processes do not allow for a direct comparison with an identical methodology applied across all countries

in relation to a fixed set of variables. Instead, in each country specific policy 'stories' have been uncovered, their histories explored, their contexts reviewed, the networks, coalitions and policy entrepreneurs identified and their impacts considered. This approach required a methodology that is, in the words of Keeley and Scoones (2003:19) 'necessarily both qualitative and eclectic.' My approach has had then to be flexible and opportunistic to ensure that all opportunities to gain information and insights were maximized. The different sets of data required meant that a combination of methodologies had to be employed.

1.7.2 Research Methodology

The analysis in each setting started with a focus on relationships, processes and connections, and moved to a situated analysis of institutions, organizations and structures. As individuals moved across locales, practices were linked through specific initiatives (e.g. CBNRM projects, conferences and workshops) funding networks (e.g. USAID, Ford Foundation), and professional alliances (e.g. National Parks Departments or NGO affiliations such as SASUSG). These have been carefully traced with the use of methodologies such as key-informant interviews, actor-biographies, the construction of time-lines and document analysis. The document analysis included official government documents and internal correspondence, donor and NGO documents and correspondence, archival materials, newspaper articles and academic publications. I used participant observation at meetings, workshops and seminars.

The same methods were employed in following the process and tactics by which networks were built and actors enrolled in order to construct the necessary national, regional and international coalitions. The research identifies the 'policy entrepreneurs' - the main protagonists of these networks - the roles they play and the strategies they developed to promote CBNRM policy. It identifies the knowledge and science driving CBNRM policy, including where this knowledge came from, who was able to use it and how it is used. It also looks at the motivations of various actors, both for those in the policy networks and those who were not but arguably should have been involved. It

investigates whose knowledge was included, whose was excluded and why. Furthermore, it explores the linkages and interactions at different scales, from global to local.

In researching local dynamics, I employed a similar approach and methodologies, complimented with additional techniques. These additional methodologies included a variety of Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) techniques such as social mapping and wealth ranking to identify key informants, and livelihood diagrams and charts to reveal natural resource use patterns. These were selected and adapted on a 'trial and error' basis and were combined with semi-structured questionnaires, key-informant interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions. Ongoing analysis of data throughout the fieldwork process enabled me to orient my research techniques and approaches to the particular information that I required. I developed an open-ended questionnaire, which was adapted for different interviewees that also contained some quantitative socio-economic questions, and supported this with key informant interviews and oral narratives.
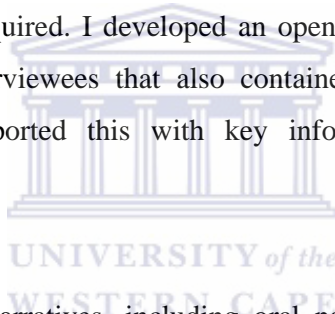
I paid particular attention to narratives, including oral narratives, at all scales. This involved taping, translating when necessary and transcribing over 250 interviews. A focus on narratives proved important in order to understand the range of perceptions and nuances at play. The collection of narratives from informants at a local level provided an empirical basis for discussing local perceptions of natural resources, power and politics. At the local level, comprehensive quantitative financial data was also collected and analysed. This quantitative financial data primarily generated descriptive statistics to substantiate the findings of data collected through more qualitative methods.

The research was conducted over a four year period from 2003-2007, with four field trips to Botswana, each field trip of at least 3 weeks, and I undertook three field trips to Zimbabwe lasting three weeks each as well. These trips incorporated research at the national level as well as the local. A local post-graduate research assistant was employed

in each country for approximately 6 months. These research assistants assisted with the village level research, undertaking initial familiarization studies, including structured interviews with open ended questionnaires with sample groups of representatives, and identified key informants for further interviews with the primary researcher, myself. Ability on my behalf to communicate in Shangaan and Setswana would have made the field research richer but my research assistants provided translation services as necessary. When in a village location I chose to communicate exclusively in the local language with the use of translators to ensure that the respondent was conversing in a medium with which they were fully comfortable.   An unintended outcome was that through repetition of questions, answers and need for triangulation to make sure I was understood, clarification was often enhanced.

Notwithstanding the relatively limited period for fieldwork and primary research activities, I drew upon 15 years of experience working in CBNRM in southern Africa, including in Botswana and Zimbabwe. I drew upon my extensive personal and professional contacts with colleagues from these countries to ensure that I was kept up to date with unfolding policy processes when I was not in the country. I also attended a variety of seminars and meetings in various SADC countries during this period, which brought me into regular contact with key informants from Botswana and Zimbabwe.

My professional experience working with CBNRM has ranged from village-level extension work to national and regional policy advice and programme management, and international representational activities. This experience and background knowledge has been drawn upon throughout the research process.   However, my professional background raises issues of 'positionality' and independence.

1.7.3 Positionality
Given my professional experience, knowledge and ongoing involvement with CBNRM policy and implementation and interaction with many key individuals involved in

CBNRM implementation in the region, it has been necessary to carefully monitor my own independence and positionality. In this regard, I was careful to acknowledge both to others and to myself that my positionality as a 'situated agent' whose own work could influence the policy process.

On the one hand, knowing and having a trusted relationship with many of the policy makers, implementers and representatives of affected communities in each country puts me in a privileged position to identify and access interviewees and gather and analyse information; but equally, it could also lead to personal bias in the selection of interviewees and analysis of findings. Particular care was taken to avoid this at the village level. For example, in Mahenye I had worked on an ad-hoc basis providing capacity building inputs for village and district CAMPFIRE officials in the early 1990's, and was therefore, known by many of those involved in CAMPFIRE during this period. Here I ensured that the primary responsibility for identifying key informants was given to my research assistant. This avoided my personnel bias distorting the current research. This was necessary due to the ongoing conflict in the village between CAMPFIRE officials from the earlier period and those during the research period. At the national level, in addition to drawing upon my own network, 2-3 independent informal advisers in both countries advised on the selection of interviewees to ensure that they are a representative cross-section of relevant parties.

In acknowledgement of my personnel biases, I intentionally selected methodologies, such as open-ended questionnaires and participatory construction of timelines that encouraged interviewees to tell their own stories. This approach ensured that I had to hear, acknowledge and move towards understanding the complexity and nuanced interpretation of situations than would otherwise have been possible. When specific data, facts or incidences were revealed, every effort to verify these through triangulation was made. Given the sensitivity of the information collected, I have withheld names of some interviewees on ethical grounds.

1.8 Thesis Outline

The thesis is presented in 10 chapters. The first three chapters, including this one, describe the objectives, history and background, the methodology, theoretical concepts and analytical framework for the research. These are followed by a chapter which explores the impact and implications of international environmental policy making processes on national CBNRM processes. The following four chapters are largely descriptive accounts of country-specific policy processes in Botswana and Zimbabwe. Chapters 5 and 6 are concerned with Botswana, with Chapter 5 providing a description of the macro political, social, policy and economic contexts and Chapter 6 providing a detailed description of the natural resource governance implications of CBNRM in the five villages of the Okavango Community Trust. Chapter 7 and 8 undertake a similar description and analysis for Zimbabwe, with a case study from the CAMPFIRE programme in Mahenye village. Key emergent issues are then identified and analysed in Chapter 9, which provides a comparative analysis of the CBNRM process and outcomes within the two countries. Finally, key findings and policy recommendations are presented in the conclusion, Chapter 10.

CHAPTER 2
CBNRM, GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY AND DECENTRALIZATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, given the complex linkages and interconnections between CBNRM process and outcomes, this study encompassed both. Only by taking this dual approach is it possible to explore, illustrate and explain that it is the nature of the CBNRM policy process, and some of the key framing assumptions upon which it is based, that has resulted in the failure of CBNRM policy makers to engage with political and macro processes. This has in turn compromised its ability to achieve the necessary natural resource management reforms. This encompassing of dual conceptual domains implies that a dual analytical framework is required for comprehensive analysis. Thus the literature review on CBNRM, decentralisation and devolution presented here provides the analytical framework for exploring and explaining the substantive outcomes; whilst that provided in Chapter 3 provides the analytical framework for exploring the policy process which has led to these outcomes. Consequently, the conceptual and analytical basis, as well as the research methodologies, for the study are broad and are provided by both Chapters 2 and 3 together.

2.2 Background

Historically in southern Africa, 'alien' and racially discriminatory environmental policies have regulated the use of natural resources, undermining locally evolved environmental management and livelihood strategies and entrenching state dominance of natural resource management (Anderson and Grove, 1987, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Marks, 1984, Murombedzi, 2003a, Mandondo, 2000). The transition to democracy, witnessed in the mid to late 20th Century, ensured political expediency in deracialising natural resource management policies and replacing exclusionary policies with those that promoted natural resource management in achieving rural development objectives

(Mandondo, 2000, Jones and Murphree, 2004, Child, 2004). This new policy approach, CBNRM, focused on increasing public participation in environmental management.

CBNRM was initially heralded as the means by which the objectives of environmental quality and economic growth could be made mutually reinforcing (Adams and McShane, 1992, Martin, 1986, Western and Wright, 1994, SASUSG, 1996). One result of the creation of such 'win-win' ideals as the basis for CBNRM discourse has been to stimulate the 'depoliticisation' of conservation policies (Buscher and Whande, 2007, Duffy, 2000) within the region. However, because of the significance of patterns of natural resource use to rural and national economies, natural resource governance issues, such as land and resource tenure underpin evolving relations between the state and its citizens (Nelson, in press; Murombedzi, in press). One thread that this thesis explores is the implications of this 'depoliticisation' of what is a fundamentally political issue. I argue that this has prevented implementers, analysts and advocates from recognizing and strategically engaging with broader political and policy processes in areas such as land tenure and reform or local government reform and other relevant policy making processes. This raises the question, whether failures to achieve desired CBNRM outcomes arise from shortcomings in its operational principles or from failure to recognize the nature and extent of resistance to the necessary reforms.

Despite this, CBNRM policies have met with some success in legitimizing interventions and enhancing prospects for sustainability (Child, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004). Nevertheless, over the last decade, they have been coming under sustained scrutiny and criticism on the grounds that they have failed to live up to their earlier promise of delivering economically enhanced livelihoods and biodiversity conservation (Hutton et al., 2006, Turner, 2004, Roe et al., 2000, Adams and Hulme, 2001). The response of many CBNRM proponents to this criticism has been to acknowledge problems in these

areas but point instead to the success of the social and governance[3] dimensions of this policy thrust (Turner, 2004, Jones and Murphree, 2004, World Bank, 2004). However, whether or not these new policies are able to deliver sustained improvements in natural resource governance and strengthen local democratic processes will depend upon a broad variety of factors external to the specific policies and policy makers in question.

It is necessary to understand not just how conservation and rural development goals and agendas have affected CBNRM but also how colonial history and independence struggles, economic realities, political ideologies, international and regional environmental priorities, donor and international NGO agendas and the economic and political interests of elites have influenced the context and issues shaping CBNRM policy. Political and government agendas within the southern African region are, in relation to land and natural resource management policies, still focused to a large degree on removing past discrimination. The result in many countries, most notably Zimbabwe, is that they remain largely dominated by racial issues (Jones, 2004, Adams and Hulme, 2001). Given this history, environmental governance regimes had to acknowledge and seek to redress the historical legacy of racial discrimination, which nominally CBNRM seeks to do. Nevertheless, what other factors drove and are driving the development of CBNRM policy? What layers of complexity does the historical, social and political context introduce and what implications do these have for future policy developments?

Through a literature review, this chapter explores the general historical and political context of natural resource management in southern Africa. It then focuses on the theoretical backgrounds to decentralization, democracy and governance once again highlighting the political implications of these processes and exploring synergies and complementarities between the objectives of CBNRM and the establishment of

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[3] Governance is used here to refer to; the formal or informal structures and processes of power, authority and accountability that govern decision making and dispute resolution, whether related to natural resource governance or national political and local social governance (adapted from Woodhouse et al, 2000).

participatory democracy in the region. It concludes with a summary of the main points raised to provide the basis for further discussion.

2.3 The Historical and Political Context of Natural Resource Management

The historical context of natural resource management in Africa has been critical in determining how CBNRM has evolved, not least because it is responsible for shaping contemporary public and political attitudes towards natural resource management (Whande, 2009, Mandondo, 2000, Murombedzi, 2006). It has defined the context within which CBNRM operates and has largely determined which elements of the overall national policy agenda have implications for the development of CBNRM policy today and vice versa. The following brief review of the history of natural resource management will focus on drawing out these implications for policy development.

2.3.1 Pre-colonial Era

In pre-colonial times, land and natural resources played a central role in the lives of Africans - as they continue to do today in rural areas - with people relying on the natural resource base as integral to their subsistence strategies. For example, land and natural resources provided grazing for livestock, water for domestic and agricultural use, meat from hunting, medicinal herbs, construction materials and survival options in times of famine (Marks, 1984, Cousins and Benjaminsen, 2000, Mackenzie, 1987, Anderson and Grove, 1987). This dependence on the natural resource base led to an appreciation of nature, resulting in its incorporation into the worldviews, belief systems and folklore of traditional societies. Concepts of the supernatural and spirit world were influenced by people's relationships with natural resources, and in turn, these concepts influenced the perception management and use of certain resources and features of the landscape (Posey, 1999).

This dependence led to the development of institutions and tenure arrangements, which governed and regulated the use and management of natural resources. Land and natural resource tenure were communal in the sense that they provided group control in determining access to and exclusion from the use of communal resources, particularly land. Rights to natural resources and land were shared and relative, with flexible boundaries and high levels of security of tenure (Cousins and Claasens, 2004). Political power and authority were vested in the usually kinship based institutions of the 'chief', one of the principal functions of whom was to regulate access to land and natural resources (Marks, 1984). Customary institutions may have been stable and sophisticated instruments for the social allocation of natural resources and were firmly embedded within social relations both in terms of their centrality to livelihoods and the role of their political authority (Marks, 1984, Anstey, 2001, Cousins and Claasens, 2004).

2.3.2 Colonial Era Policies

Colonisation marked a critical juncture in African history and is widely considered to have set a context that remains a major factor in current debates on land and natural resource management policy and practice (Murombedzi, 2003a, Mandondo, 2000, Adams and Mulligan, 2003). Approaches to natural resource management and conservation adopted during the colonial period were determined by ideologies and values developed in the West (Buscher and Whande, 2007, Peluso, 1992, Brockington, 2002). The impact of these policies saw the subordination of indigenous forms of land tenure, governance and institutions and has had a profound and lasting impact on rural areas and production systems.

Throughout southern Africa, colonisation resulted in land expropriation and forced removals and involved the creation of tenure systems for the new 'native reserves' which were ostensibly based on the customary communal systems (Tshuma, 1997, Mamdani, 1996). The most significant manifestation of this has been the creation of racially based land distribution and tenure systems, which continue to dominate southern Africa today in the form of the 'modern' (commercial) and 'traditional' (communal) sectors. Ranger

(1983) maintains that because of the expropriatory origins of the communal areas, modern communal tenure systems represent an imposed European attitude towards land with the purpose of extending the states control over the countryside. Thus communal tenure as it manifests itself today remains an intensely ideological and political issue (Murombedzi, 2003b).

In British colonies, such as those in southern Africa, the formation and operation of colonial states was based on indirect rule, the objective of which was to establish and maintain subjugation of the local populations and to exercise political domination at minimum cost to the imperial power (Mamdani, 1996, van Nieuwaal and van Dijk, 1999, Hyden, 2008, Berry, 1993). Under indirect rule, the lower tiers of state administration in rural areas were allocated to the authority of chiefs and headmen governing by the ostensibly 'customary law' of different ethnic groups, to which rural people were subject based on their ethnic identity as perceived and legislated by colonial rulers (Ranger, 1983). While the powers of chiefs were entirely subordinated to those of the colonial state authority, they were often greatly increased in relation to their subjects. This colonial redesign of chieftaincy, in effect, fused executive, legislative and judicial powers of 'customary' authority in the countryside. Mamdani (1996) refers to this as the "decentralized despotism" of indirect rule. Communal land tenure was designed to maintain rural stability and control the local population under the patriarchal authority of their chiefs. Indirect rule resulted then in the 'customary' in Africa with respect to land and political status being reinvented to suite the purposes of the colonizers.

In terms of conservation, the arrival of colonial settlers in southern Africa in the mid-17th Century heralded an unprecedented period of pressure on the natural resource base. Most notably, large wild animals came under enormous pressure from uncontrolled hunting by Europeans, which led to serious population depletions (Adams and Mulligan, 2003). By the turn of the 19th Century concerns about natural resource scarcity, particularly wildlife brought environmental issues to the fore. The result was state appropriation of formal control over all wildlife, with some limited, regulated use allowed by white settlers and

foreign tourists. This approach reinforced western imperialist notions of natural resource management, which supported the romantic ideal of the African sub-continent as an unspoiled Eden (Anderson and Grove, 1987). These served to entrench the privileges of European settlers, as well as perpetuating the 'gentlemanly sport' of hunting, differentiating it from African "poaching" for food or trade (Mackenzie, 1987). Africans meanwhile were alienated from wildlife, with all their customary uses of it now becoming outlawed (Anderson and Grove, 1987, Fabricius and Kock, 2004).

Further attempts to preserve wildlife and natural resources resulted in the establishment of protected areas, initially game reserves and later national parks. The establishment of protected areas led to Africans being relocated, often forcibly, from areas which they had previously controlled, and the abandonment of established rights and resource-use patterns (Beinart, 1989, Adams and Mulligan, 2003). Local people no longer had access to the wildlife, pastures, farmland and water resources that they had relied upon for their livelihoods as well as shaped aspects of their belief and governance systems. Protected areas became the preserve of game rangers, scientists, safari hunters, and later, tourists. The prevailing sentiment was that only Europeans knew how to conserve nature. Indigenous people were formally denied access to natural resources, although other racial groups continued to enjoy and build their political and economic power around the same resources (Suzuki, 2001). Everywhere in the region, a paramilitary structure was put in place, charged to protect, and in the event of infraction, prosecute offenders (Child, 2004).

Thus, the preservationist approaches of the colonial period were rooted in imperialist perspectives, science and discourse. Mackenzie (1987) notes that:

> *from the early 1920's the doctrine of trusteeship, which informed colonial thinking, drew increasingly on the authoritative claims of the 'scientific method' both to generate 'crisis narratives' in the Reserve and to construct discourses of*

'betterment' and 'environmentalism' which legitimated a deepening of administrative control (Mackenzie, 1987:698-9).

State control and nature conservation were effectively reinforcing each other under the banner of scientific progress. Such approaches failed entirely to take into account the conceptualisations of nature typical of African societies, which produced interdependent relationships between people and nature (Grove, 1987, Fabricius and Kock, 2004). As Mandondo (2000) notes, colonial natural resource governance systems resulted in over-centralisation because they were crafted in the context of conquest and subjugation.

Clearly, colonial dynamics around conservation and land in Africa triggered deep social changes, many of which, despite a burgeoning literature in recent years (see Buscher and Whande, 2007 for a detailed review), are only just being partially understood today.

2.3.3 Independence Era Policies

As African governments gained their independence, they tended to retain exclusionist colonial policies and legislation, with the colonial state effectively retained in form or in substance (Mandondo, 2000, Gibson, 1999, Hyden, 2008). The foreign and racially discriminatory approach to natural resources management introduced in the colonial era and initially perpetuated by post-colonial independent African governments became, and remains, a highly emotive and divisive political issue charged with controversy. These policies generated a range of social conflicts that endanger the future of natural resources and of those people who rely upon these resources for their livelihoods. Gibson (1999) considers these ramifications:

> *The benefits and costs associated with wildlife policies have influenced African independence movements, legislative debates, government elections, and international agreements.* (Gibson, 1999:5)

Conservation was, and remains to this day, associated by many as synonymous with western hegemony, racial inequality, alienation from resources, poverty and loss of cultural heritage and identity (Adams and Mulligan, 2003). It was partly as a politically motivated and popular attempt to redress the damaging social, cultural and economic effects of colonial approaches to natural resource management that CBNRM approaches emerged and were popularized (Child, 2004, Fabricius and Kock, 2004).

The historically central role of the institutions of traditional leadership in natural resource management presents an additional layer of complexity in attempts to develop appropriate natural resource governance systems. The relationship between traditional leaders and post-colonial states has been ambiguous. This ambiguity has resulted in part from indirect rule that incorporated chiefs as an extension of colonial regimes (Mamdani, 1996). The result has been that many newly independent states saw them as collaborators and impediments to modernization and nation building and curtailed their roles in local governance, Botswana being one of a handful of exceptions to this. However, since the early 1990's the earlier policy of containing traditional authorities has seen a reversal, with a wave of 'retraditionalisation' which has enlarged the formal role of chiefs in local governance and development (Kyed and Buur, 2006). This wave of retraditionalisation accompanied the wave of democratisation and liberalization policies of the 1990's and indeed was interpreted by many as a means to reinforce democratic processes through the provision of new democratic space that enabled the marginalised to access the state (UNECA, 2007).

Given the role that traditional authorities have historically played in determining natural resource use rights, coupled with the present wave of recognizing traditional leaders in governance, this has implications for the development of appropriate natural resource governance institutions and strengthening of democratic processes. Once again, the role of traditional leaders is greeted with some ambivalence. On the one hand, there is widespread recognition that incorporating traditional leaders into local governance structures could lead to efficient, culturally diverse local governance (UNECA, 2007).

Conversely there is also widespread recognition that this move might jeopardize the gains promised by democracy with regards to equity, rights and gender equality by handing over control of development 'to an indeterminate huddle of unelected community organizations and groups' (Kyed and Buur, 2006:9).

'Retraditionalisation' in failed states involves incorporating non-state actors and regaining strength and territorial reach through the use of traditional authorities (Herbst, 2000, Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Kyed and Buur, 2006). The idea being that chiefs fill the authority gap left by failed state institutions, leading to the dominance of modern informal governance, on the one hand, and old-new chiefdom-type politics on the other. The state's loss of control over its citizens provides room for the resurgence of chiefly rule based on tradition. The state then recognizes and incorporates chiefs in order to regain its own control over territories and people. By capturing the chieftaincy, the state is essentially able to (re)extend its rule in rural areas. The 'failed state' hypothesis is challenged by the case of South Africa where traditional leaders have assumed new significance despite the powerful and extensive state apparatus (Cousins and Claasens, 2004). Nevertheless, it serves as a useful analytical tool in the context of Zimbabwe, as discussed further in Chapter 7.

The outcome of attempts to manipulate the powers of traditional institutions is that most countries have since independence experienced a 'mixed polity' or dualism of authority structures in rural areas and unresolved issues abound relating to questions of jurisdiction and authority (UNECA, 2007). Potentially competing actors are elected local governments, traditional authorities or elected local 'committees.' Overlap and lack of clarity on jurisdiction in relation to allocating resource rights is another factor constraining effective management of common property resources.

This historical review of natural resource management and the institutions involved illustrates that contemporary policies and outcomes are shaped by colonial and pre-

colonial institutional arrangements and values. Hyden (2008:12) aptly describes the resulting outcome, and argues that 'the institutional landscape in Africa is a curious mixture of formal and informal behaviours.' Contemporary political and power arrangements are then a reflection of colonial and pre-colonial history, the result of which is a complex blend of formal and informal institutions exercising power. Governance processes must then be analysed in relation to both formal and informal institutions and processes.

This complexity is added to further by the resultant political nature of many contemporary African states. African independence leaders inherited states which claimed wide powers over natural resources, including land, which were placed under discretionary bureaucratic control. This system ensured that discretionary powers were concentrated in the hands of the executive and there were limited means to democratically contest authority. Thus control of the Presidency and other powerful political positions ensures a path to power and wealth and through networks of patronage, social and ethnic security (Ake, 2000, Chabal and Daloz, 1999). Many commentators have noted the high degree of informality of politics in Africa (Ake, 2000, Mamdani, 1996, Bayart et al., 1999, Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Hyden, 2008). Political processes are dominated by kinship ties and relationships based on personal and communal patronage, rather than formal public discourses and institutions (Hyden, 2008). Natural resources, historically placed in the public domain and with high economic values, become central tools in relation to patronage interests that allow governing elites to maintain their powers. Thus in the African context informal patron-client relations, as well as formal and informal institutions are relevant to governance.

In addition, African states also have to merge values of their own societies with norms and values espoused by the international community. Western donors and conservation organisations increasingly provided the financial and technical support for protected area management and conservation in general. This created dependency on outside institutions and allowed external agents to pursue their own strategic agendas (Roe et al.,

2000). Western NGOs focused fund-raising campaigns upon charismatic "flagship species" such as rhinos, elephants and gorillas, which by default excluded the involvement of local people (Hutton et al., 2006).

2.4 The Evolution of CBNRM Approaches

During the 1980s, various factors - analysed in detail in Chapter 4 - combined to catalyze a shift in natural resource management policies away from the centralized, protectionist and 'exclusionary' approach characteristic of the colonial era to an 'inclusive' approach. This 'inclusive' approach encompasses policies and practices that aim to give rural dwellers greater involvement in managing the natural resources in the areas in which they are resident. This approach encompasses many different forms and covers a wide variety of resource or sector-based initiatives, including community based approaches to forestry, fisheries, and water and rangeland management (Turner, 2004). In addition to this sectoral 'focused' CBNRM is what Fabricius et al. (2004) term 'general' or 'everyday' CBNRM, which involve indigenous practices of most rural communities in their day to day use of natural resources.
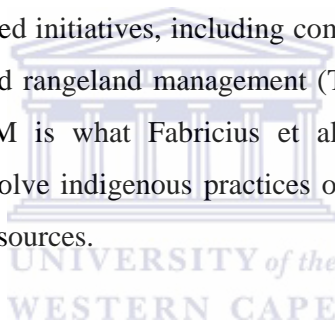
The result of the policy swing within the broader field of environmental management, has resulted in the wildlife sector in what has become generically known as 'community conservation' (Adams and Hulme, 2001), a term which itself encompasses many different types of initiative. On the one end of the spectrum there are 'park outreach' initiatives which allow communities neighbouring national parks to have limited and passive access to park incomes. Whilst at the other end are CBNRM initiatives which have as their objective the development of communal capacity for adaptive governance of natural resources through the devolution of resource rights to communal land residents (Hulme and Murphree, 2001). The use of the term CBNRM within this thesis is confined specifically to these latter initiatives within the wildlife sector.

CBNRM, as referred to here, is underpinned by four conceptual elements:

a) **Sustainable use** of natural resources, which concludes that the highest probability of achieving sustainable use occurs where the prime beneficiaries of use are the people living with the resources.

b) **Economic benefits**, which in the context of rural Africa are identified as the engine for sustainable use and therefore the future of wildlife can only be assured in a policy context where wildlife becomes a competitive form of land use.

c) **Devolutionism** which indicates that the delegation of responsibility is not enough to develop the managerial potential of resource users; delegation of responsibility has to be accompanied by the delegation of authority and the entitlements of full proprietorship if it is to provide the right incentives. The resulting devolution follows the principal of subsidiarity.

d) **Collective Proprietorship** which means defining communities and determining how they can develop effective institutions of collective management are central issues. In determining solutions, insights from common-property management theory are sought which enable policy makers and practitioners to draw upon the concept of communal property regimes (Adapted from Jones and Murphree, 2004:64-66).

Whilst a common conceptual basis for CBNRM can be identified, the details of this process and the programmatic development of CBNRM programmes and policy within each country differs depending on the specific national context, as is demonstrated in Chapters 5 through 8 for Zimbabwe and Botswana.

2.5 Governance, Democratisation and Decentralization: Theory and Linkages

The basic concepts and the underlying framing assumptions of CBNRM which this thesis is particularly concerned with are those that relate to 'devolutionism' and 'collective proprietorship' as identified by Jones and Murphree (2004) above. Appreciating the logical, functional link between democratisation, decentralisation and

governance and CBNRM is essential for the discussion presented here. The concepts of 'devolutionism' and 'collective proprietorship' and the definition and interpretations of these have been instrumental in guiding both policy making and implementation in CBNRM initiatives throughout the region (Ibid). In relation to decentralization, at the sub-national level, there is broad agreement amongst political science and democracy analysts that it can contribute to and strengthen improved governance and vice versa (Manor, 2005, Mahwood, 1983), whilst good governance is frequently equated with democratic governance (UNDP, 2002). Thus improving governance is interpreted as strengthening the process of democratisation. The following sections will place these three concepts in their respective theoretical frameworks.

2.5.1 Governance, Democracy and Democratic Politics

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of governance took on increasing significance amongst influential institutions and individuals as it became identified with the 'fight against corruption' (Kaufman et al., 2003). Since then it has expanded its conceptual domain and is now generally defined as the way in which power and authority are exercised through formal and informal institutions for the common good of the citizenry (Kaufman et al., 2003). Local governance has to take account of all the institutions, rules, arrangements, and types of political, economic, and social modes of action that, in the local context, form the basis for exercising local authority over resources and benefits (Ostrom, 1999). If optimum conditions are created the result will be justice, equity, well-being, and environmental sustainability (Ribot, 2004)[4]. Democracy is one form of governance, containing ideas on how power and authority are accountable in society, and is in its most basic definition the idea of governance by the people.

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[4] The idea of justice, here taken to mean equitable access to resources and equitable vertical and horizontal distribution of profits is central to theories of decentralization and of local governance (Manor, 1997, Kaufman *et al,*. 2003:, Ribot, 2002b).

The concepts of democracy and governance in Africa have leapt to prominence in the last two decades and these issues now dominate the world's interest in Africa to such a degree that donor funding is frequently conditional upon 'democratisation' and 'improved governance'. However, democracy is a contested concept, and there are many competing notions and interpretations of democracy (Gaventa 2006 provides a useful global overview). It is useful for the purposes of discussion here to broadly differentiate 'liberal representative' models and 'deep' or 'participatory' forms[5].

Liberal democracy emphasizes institutional arrangements that pre-empt tyranny, requiring political practices and constitutional arrangements that provide for political representation, participation and accountability through regular competitive, free and fair elections. These liberties include individual rights, freedom of expression, universal suffrage, and a free and independent media, which are upheld by the rule of law. An effective system of checks and balances is in place, based on the separation of powers, with independent judicial and legislative branches and effective civilian control over military and security forces (UNDP, 2002, Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997, Luckham, 2000).

Advocates of 'deep' or 'participatory' democracy also emphasise the need for political systems and processes that enable citizen participation, ensure accountable governments and provide forums for the resolution of political differences but consider that institutional arrangements to prevent tyranny are not sufficient (Ake, 2000, Luckham, 2000). They stress that it requires an increase in the scope for substantive and empowered citizen participation (Ake, 2000, Mamdani, 1996, Jones and Gaventa, 2002) in the political process but note that this will require social and cultural transformations that can only be brought about through the economic upliftment of the poor. They stress the need to 'deepen democracy' by bringing to the fore an economic dimension. This

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[5] Gaventa (2006) identifies four conceptually overlapping and complimentary approaches to 'deepening' democracy; civil society, participatory, deliberative and empowered participatory governance all of which respond to some of the democratic deficits that are prevalent in Africa.

interpretation of democracy emphasises concrete economic rights and the removal of conditions that block the democratic participation of people, such as gross economic inequalities. UNDP (2002:7) maintains that 'the fulfilment of human rights requires democracy that is inclusive'. For these, elections are not enough, new ways must be found to secure economic, social and cultural rights for the most deprived and to ensure participation in decision-making (UNDP, 2002).

The 1990s witnessed what was an ostensibly liberal democracy sweep through southern Africa. Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia all joined Botswana and Zimbabwe – although Zimbabwe's claim to democratic status is now questioned by most analysts - in the replacement of authoritarian systems with democracy, leaving only Swaziland with an unelected government as of 2008. However, Bratton and De Waal (1997) conclude that only if a minimalist definition of liberal democracy, with the single criterion being the holding of competitive elections, can it be claimed that democracy has, in fact, arrived in southern Africa. They consider that much of the apparent progress is largely cosmetic and motivated by outside forces. Abrahamsen (2000) goes further arguing that democratic African states are trapped between demands of external donors for economic liberalization and the needs of local constituents, resulting in the creation of 'exclusionary democracies' that allow political competition without incorporating the demands of the majority. Many other analysts are even more pessimistic concerning the future of political governance in Africa (Bauer and Taylor, 2005 provide a useful summary), highlighting the increased 'criminalisation of the state' (Bayart et al., 1999) or the widespread use by political elites of the 'political instrumentalisation of disorder' (Chabal and Daloz, 1999).

Cousins (2004) concludes that whilst southern Africa has experienced a spread in democratic institutions, this has not been accompanied by 'democratic politics' (Beetham 1994). Essentially then, there is a consensus among analysts that southern Africa experiences a 'democratic deficit' in terms of how citizens engage within democratic
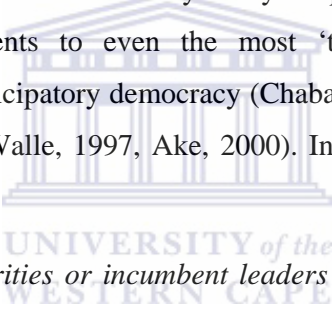
spaces to create more just and equitable states and societies (Gaventa 2006 provides a comprehensive review of the global literature).

Ake (2000) provides a historical global analysis which leads him to conclude that the situation in Africa is in keeping with and reflects the global 'trivialization of democracy' promoted by the advent of liberal democracy in the west. He notes that the outcome of liberal democracy within the African context is such that democracy is no longer threatening to political elites who can now embrace it, enjoying the legitimacy that it confers without subjecting themselves to the 'notorious inconveniences' that democratic practices imply. Moreover, he questions whether liberal democracy - the product of a 'socially atomized' society in which interests are so particularized that the notion of 'common interest' is itself problematic - is indeed relevant to Africa, which remains predominantly pre-capitalist and pre-industrial and where communal structures and loyalties and communalism remain the dominant characteristics of rural society. Thus, he questions the very notion that the apparent spread of liberal democracy within Africa can be equated with democratisation of Africa. Ake (2000:32) concludes that given the current social, economic and political context within the continent, the only way to break the current impasse and begin to achieve incremental political coherence is to 'embrace democracy in the sense of participative negotiated consensus' and develop what he terms 'democracy of the base'.

2.5.2 From Democracy to Democratic Politics

Given the contested notions of democracy, it is useful to distinguish between democratic institutions and democratic politics. Beetham (1994) considers that democratic politics requires not only political competition, but also that competition be mediated by basic moral and political principles, including popular control over governments and political elites and political equality among all citizens. This will depend upon a culture of participation, including a range of mechanisms – e.g. pluralistic media, an active civil society, competing political parties - through which all citizens can acquire a political voice.

There is broad agreement amongst theorists (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Bayart et al., 1999, Mamdani, 1996, Chabal, 2009) that in Africa a culture of participation, as well as the enabling mechanisms, is frequently absent. Mamdani (1996) maintains this is a result of the 'decentralised despotism' introduced under colonial rule. This produced a 'bifurcated society' in which the colonists and urban dwellers were institutionalized as 'citizens', enjoying economic, cultural and legal privileges, whilst the colonized, rural black majority were devalued as 'subjects', whose lives were shaped by customary law and ritual. Reversing this process to effectively enfranchise rural people as citizens will require that they have rights, representation and 'inclusive citizenship' (Gaventa et al 2002). However, such a shift requires commitment on the part of governments to participatory approaches to governance. Many analysts question the commitment of African leaders and governments to even the most 'trivialised' form of liberal democracy, let alone that of participatory democracy (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Bayart et al., 1999, Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997, Ake, 2000). Indeed, Luckham et al (2000) conclude that:

> *in Africa political authorities or incumbent leaders have envisioned democracy primarily as a vent for popular pressure and a vehicle for political legitimation...They have accepted democracy largely as a pre-emptive defence against domestic opposition forces and the good governance concerns of Western donors.* (Luckham et al, 2000:14)

The conflicts and violence surrounding 2007 and 2008 elections in Kenya and Zimbabwe respectively - where election outcomes announced by institutions reliant on the incumbent ruling party were violently contested – or in Madagascar in 2009 – where a democratically elected incumbent President was removed from office by an opponent on the back of a 'popular uprising' and with military support - certainly seems to bear out this pessimistic analysis of democratic practices in Africa.

However, theory suggests that it is possible to exploit existing or open new 'political spaces' to ensure that participatory democratic politics can be promoted within emerging liberal democracies. 'Political spaces' can take many forms, foremost among those identified by Luckham et al (2000) are:

> *those forms of political activity and organization that constitute individuals as equal, active and responsible citizens as opposed to subjects of the state' and 'those political opportunities [that] exist or can be created for citizens to gain access to the public sphere and hold governments and state elites accountable within it.* (Luckham et al, 2000:26)

Jones and Gaventa (2002) note, however, that focusing just on the rights, abilities and mechanisms to enable people to participate in democracy is only half of the equation. Equally important is that the state has the capacity and willingness to provide access, justice and legal redress based on a respect for human rights. Thus, the national social, political and cultural contexts will be a defining factor in determining the outcome of democratisation, as it is for decentralization.

A growing body of research suggests that democracy must be rooted in functioning local self-governance institutions (Wunsch, 2003, Crook and Manor, 1998, Ribot, 2007, Ribot and Larson, 2005, Chabal, 2009), which effectively 'institutionalise' participation[6]. At the same time, other literature (Putnam, 1992) emphasizes the growth of civil society, development of public 'ownership' of political institutions, mobilization of talents and resources into constructive patterns and counterbalancing power vis-á-vis national institutions.

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[6] Since the late 1990's the focus of participatory development, traditionally concerned with 'community projects', has turned towards political participation and increasing poor and marginalised people's influence over the wider decision-making processes affecting their lives (Gaventa, 2006, Jones and Gaventa, 2002).

The central question that this thesis is concerned with is whether CBNRM is or has the potential to contribute to the deepening of democracy within southern Africa by addressing some of the 'democratic deficits' that characterize political processes in the region; and if so, under what conditions is this best achieved. For instance, can it construct and support political cultures of rights and citizenship; enable people to seek out existing public spaces and strengthen these; create or strengthen ways in which civil society engages with the state; and open up policy spaces for the marginalised? In other words, can it facilitate the engagement of the marginalised rural poor with those in political power and influence the nature of this dynamic?

Diamond (2008) comments that:

> *for democratic structures to endure … they must listen to their citizen's voices, engage their participation, tolerate their protests, protect their freedoms, and respond to their need* (Diamond, 2008:39).
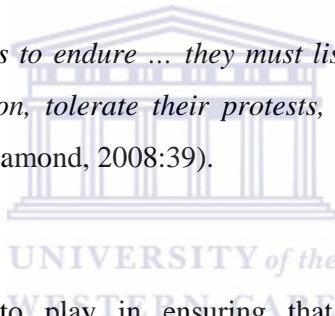
Does CBNRM have a role to play in ensuring that the State develops these characteristics in southern Africa and if so how is this most effectively achieved? This study provides empirical evidence that suggests the conventional wisdom that has characterized CBNRM in southern Africa since the 1980s - to be successful CBNRM must have devolved natural resource management institutions - must be revisited if CBNRM is to contribute to democratic practices within the region.

2.5.3 Decentralisation

The last thirty years have witnessed the dominance of the hypothesis that decentralization offers considerable scope for achieving desirable functional attributes typically associated with 'democratic governance', such as transparency, accountability and participation. As a result since the 1980s the concept of decentralization in developing countries became popular with influential institutions and individuals

globally and was associated by them with the process of democratisation (UNDP, 2002, Ribot, 2004, Crook and Manor, 1998). One outcome was that by 1999 a study by the World Bank found that more than 80% of developing countries and countries with economies in transition were experimenting with some form of decentralization (Manor, 1997). Included within these were at least 60 countries, which were decentralizing some aspects of natural resource management (Ribot, 2002b).

Manor (2005) identifies what he terms a 'second wave' of decentralizations arising more recently, which threaten the progress made by earlier attempts at decentralization. This 'second wave' has implications for people's participation and influence, equity, and the institutions created in the earlier phase. The first wave of the decentralization process transferred powers to multi-purpose, democratically elected local governments whereas the second wave – pushed in large part by donors and NGOs – seeks to transfer power to single-purpose 'user-committees.' He emphasizes how these 'devolved' committees are undermining the democratic processes that were institutionalized by the earlier decentralization process and undermine local government authority. This concern is central to this thesis and empirical evidence is presented in the following chapters that explore related outcomes in Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Initially, decentralisation held broad appeal for a variety of different reasons. Firstly, economists, influenced by neo-liberal ideas, saw it as a means to shift power from the discredited central state: whilst those supporting bottom-up and participatory approaches, saw it as a means through which village communities could achieve their objectives through cooperation rather than competition. Within the political arena, some autocratic leaders saw it as a substitute for democratisation that could be used as a 'sop' for donors who were pushing in this direction; whilst genuinely democratic politicians saw it as a way to make government more responsive (Crook and Manor, 1998). More recently, decentralisation has become commonly viewed as the means, through which new public spaces for participation can be opened up (Gaventa, 2006).

Ribot and Larson (2005:2) describe, in a comprehensive review, the 'tidal wave of decentralization discourse' as well as detail the various justifications for decentralization provided by the host of different analysts working in this field. These justifications include:

- increased efficiency, equity and inclusion which arise from decentralization resulting in better and more sustainable management;
- political and economic advantages, decentralization is believed to play an important role in democratisation and people's participation;
- improved public service performance;
- relief of fiscal crisis;
- political and macroeconomic stability;
- national unity and state building; and
- increasing legitimacy of government.
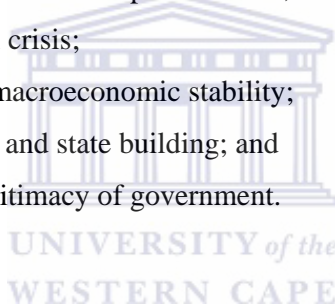
The outcome is that decentralisation is generally viewed as one of those concepts - like 'good governance' or 'sustainable development' - that most governments, organizations and individuals involved in political and socio-economic development in Africa view as a 'good thing,' [7] which enhances participation, good governance and democratisation.

However, despite the overwhelming endorsement of decentralization, there is very little consensus on what it involves. In Africa, many types and forms of decentralization have been implemented since the colonial period with varying degrees of success (Oyono,

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[7] Apparent contradictions or problems that can arise as a result of decentralization, such as the bolstering of the state through legitimisation of national regulation (Agrawal, 2001) or the expansion of state-centred patronage networks throughout rural areas (Blaikie, 2006) are largely brushed aside.

2004, Mamdani, 1996). Decentralisation, it is generally agreed, is a process whereby there is a shift in the locus of power from the centre to the periphery, with theorists agreeing that the primary rational is that efficiency and equity are increased by public decisions being brought closer to and more open and accountable to local populations. Nevertheless, beyond this, there is little definitional consensus (Mahwood, 1983, Ribot, 2004, Oyono, 2004)[8]. What is apparent is that the complex issues with which this process is faced are often reduced to simplistic discourses of devolved/decentralised versus centralized governance. As this research highlights, this lack of definitional clarity characterizing global decentralisation discourse is mirrored within the discourse surrounding 'aborted devolution' or 'decentralization' in the CBNRM context of southern Africa. One result of this has been that whilst there has been considerable progress in decentralizing natural resource management in southern Africa, particularly in relation to wildlife, this decentralization has taken many different forms (Campbell and Shackleton, 2001, Katerere, 2002).

2.5.4 Critical Assessment of the Literature

Despite the definitional 'maze' surrounding decentralization, it is necessary to define the terminologies adopted here. The two forms of decentralization that are of primary relevance to CBNRM are those that are commonly referred to as 'deconcentration' and 'devolution' – the latter of which is also commonly, but mistakenly (see below), conflated with 'democratic decentralisation'. To explore the meaning and implications of devolution as it is used in the southern African context, it is necessary to define it in relation to 'decentralisation' and other related terms, such as 'deconcentration.'

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[8] Oyono (2004) identifies five different forms of decentralization. These include: deconcentration' or 'administrative decentralisation', which involves the transfer of power from central to local branches of the state; 'privatisation' which is the transfer of power from the central state to non-state entities; 'fiscal decentralisation' whereby the centre cedes financial power to lower levels; 'delegation' where specific powers are transferred to semi-independent units; and 'devolution' or 'democratic decentralisation', a process which aims to transfer power to local institutions and to authorities representative of, and accountable to, local people.

'Deconcentration' results in the delegation of local competences to agents of national government that have powers within localized territorial units. Control is maintained centrally by financial or disciplinary measures and central government maintains the right to withdraw or supervise control (Ribot, 2002b). It is this form of decentralization that Manor (2005) identifies as the 'first wave', which has characterized government's decentralization efforts globally throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Ribot characterizes 'deconcentration' as a 'weak' form of decentralization as accountability lies upwards, with primary responsibility being to central government.

A stronger form of decentralization is that which Murphree (2000a) identifies as devolution and defines as:

> *the creation of relatively autonomous realms of authority, responsibility and entitlement, with a primary accountability to their own constituencies.* (Murphree, 2000a:6).
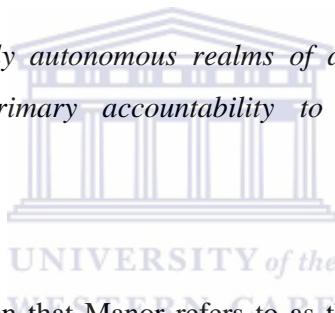
It is this form of decentralisation that Manor refers to as the 'second wave,' which he maintains undermines the institutionalization of local democracy within local government. Devolution has many similarities with what Ribot (2002b) terms 'democratic decentralisation', but there are also important differences. Both analysts agree that the principle of downward accountability and representation to a local constituency, rather than upward accountability and representation to central government is of central importance and that a key component of ensuring downward accountability is securing the transfer of power through legislation in the form of *rights* that can be legally upheld and defended. However, the devolution narrative is concerned with 'relatively autonomous' entities that can encompass bodies holding, for example, land or resource title and legal entity status (such as Trusts or cooperatives) and that may be external to the government political-administrative hierarchy (Anstey and Rihoy, 2009). The democratic decentralisation narrative theorises that this devolution approach to natural resources management operates on an exclusive logic and endangers the
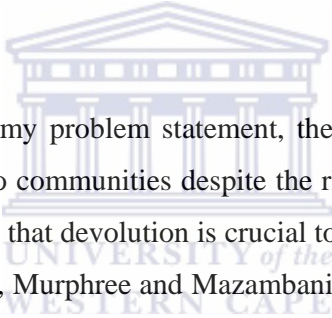
emergence, cohesiveness and effectiveness of elected local government in consolidating local interests in the political-administrative hierarchy (Ribot, 2007, Manor, 2005). It consigns devolution, as commonly used in southern African discourse, as beyond the pale of democratic decentralisation. Ribot and Larson (2005) and Manor (2005) see dangers in non-public entities (as in the 'devolution' options) in natural resource management and local government, as discussed above. In particular, they point to threats of elite capture of natural resources in conditions with: weak elected local government; a proliferation of local institutions; and in the growth of the stature of 'traditional' authority in local governance.

However, there is emerging within southern African scholarship a more nuanced and less doctrinal approach to options for local scale management of natural resources. This is manifested in the 'beyond devolution' shifts emphasizing jurisdictional scale in inter-dependent institutions for natural resource governance, as discussed below. At the same time, the 'democratic decentralisation' narrative is becoming more entrenched and doctrinal, maintaining that **only** by ensuring interventions are made through local government can democracy be strengthened:

> ***Choose democracy by working directly with local democratic authorities***. *When engaging local people in decision making do so through elected local decision makers who are systematically accountable and responsive to the local citizens. Where democratic local government does not exist, work with central government to establish and enable local democracy* (original emphasis; Ribot 2008:2).

As discussed in Chapter 1, creating devolved localized regimes of governance for natural resources has proven to be an elusive exercise in southern Africa. Murphree (2000a) points to the primary cause of this. Establishing local jurisdictions over natural resources can only be carried out with the legitimation of the state. However, the state has its own appropriative interests in local resources and is reluctant to legitimize local jurisdictions as this ultimately undermines the state's own ability to claim the benefits of these

resources. Thus, states will always prefer deconcentration, whereby they retain control over devolution. Murphree (2000a:6) considers that this tendency on the part of states to opt for decentralization rather than devolution is 'more than any other factor, responsible for the failure of programmes ostensibly designed to create local natural resource management jurisdictions.' Studies by Gibson (1999), Duffy (2000) and Anstey (2005) indicate that the incentive structures working against devolution may be compounded even further in the case of policy specific to wildlife. Their analysis concludes that the political and economic significance of wildlife is such that it is essentially a means through which political patronage can be dispensed, with the result that individuals and groups in positions of power attempt to structure wildlife policy to secure its benefits for themselves. Empirical evidence presented here indicates that this is also the case in Zimbabwe and Botswana.

Pursuant to this, as outlined in my problem statement, there is little if any success in achieving devolution of power to communities despite the rhetoric of devolution upheld in CBNRM discourse and claims that devolution is crucial to long-term CBNRM success (Shackleton and Campbell, 2001, Murphree and Mazambani, 2002, Murombedzi, 2003b, Katerere, 2002, Fabricius and Kock, 2004). There is what Ake (2000) calls an intractable contradiction between power and the imperative for its redistribution.

Even in those cases where devolution has been achieved in spite of the contradictory interests of the state, a review of global experiences brings into question the ability of devolution to live up to expectations and raises questions as to whether it may actually undermine democratic dynamics that deconcentration has unleashed. Over the last 10 years there have been many studies demonstrating that when it is achieved it does not necessarily result in poverty reduction or democratisation (Johnson, 2001, Crook and Manor, 1998, Agrawal, 2001, Manor, 2005). At the forefront of problems in this regard is the possibility of devolution leading to elite capture, simply empowering local elites and perpetuating poverty and inequality. This highlights the challenge of encouraging democracy in rural areas where large numbers of people are dependent upon small

numbers of powerful elites. Yet, despite such concerns and the lack of progress in achieving objectives to date, devolution continues to be widely embraced not only as a conceptual root but as the 'holy grail' of CBNRM**.** One of the threads of this research traces how the policy process itself has led to entrenchment of devolution and persists in spite of evidence within the broader development/democratisation literature that it may not always empower the poor and in some cases may undermine them.

These comments on devolution are not to deny that it can enhance rural livelihoods in various ways, as many studies have indicated[9] but these do not in themselves amount to sufficient conditions to lead to enhanced democratic practices. Johnson (2001) notes that the complexity lies in finding the appropriate balance between autonomy and accountability, with the challenge being to maintain the autonomy to overcome powerful interests in society while at the same time engaging the views and preferences of non-state actors. Crook and Sverrisson (2001) note the role that 'higher-level' echelons within government can play, providing an important 'counter elite' to local groups that resist efforts to make local institutions more democratic. This crucial role involves structuring incentives and systems that allow participation and accountability to take root. Whilst Crook and Manor (1998) draw attention to the importance of encouraging a 'culture of accountability' in local political processes and highlight the vital role that external actors such as NGOs and government agents can play in empowering poor and marginalised groups.

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[9] Johnson (2001) summarizes these as: 1) empowerment of local resource users groups improves local management and thereby the resource base on which the poor disproportionately depends because of local knowledge, information and incentives. 2) Collaboration between public agencies and local resource users produces synergies. 3) democratisation and empowerment of local administrative bodies can enhance participation in decision-making fora, particularly among traditionally politically marginalised groups. Participation in local democratically elected bodies can lead to improvements in self-confidence and self-identify, breaking down customs of inequality and discrimination and improve and enhance skills, e.g. leadership, bookkeeping which are transferable to other areas of life.

These and other such commentaries suggest that the central state may have a larger role to play in local development than the more idealized theories of devolution would imply. Sundar (2001) argues that what matters is not the degree of state intervention - i.e. more or less devolution - but the level of state accountability and that finding the right balance is the key but will be variable depending on the particular context of each country. In some cases, more rather than less government intervention may be the answer – in the form of enforcing laws or providing balances to the power of local elites. This may have more democratic consequences than formal devolution. The findings presented here from both Botswana and Zimbabwe bear out these commentaries.

As noted above, if state intervention is to prove beneficial it will depend on the nature of the state and its commitment to democratic processes. Cohen (1974) advises not to expect semi-autonomous, democratic local government to take shape while the overarching political and socioeconomic structure of an autocratic regime is in place (quoted in Harbeson, 2001). From this perspective, the question revolves around how to construct mechanisms and patterns of political accountability between grassroots and national levels of government that afford new discretion to the former. This requires links between local empowerment and national level democratisation. However, Harbeson (2001) notes that:

> *the design of local level democratic participation and its relationship to national level processes of political reform in sub-Saharan Africa have received relatively scant attention in both theoretical terms and at the policy-making level, in strategic terms.* (Harbeson, 2001:10).

He goes on to highlight how many authors seminal in the development of theory in the late 20 Century - such as Dahl (1971), Bratton and van de Walle (1997) and Putnam (1992) - have skirted the issue of the place of local government in the process of democratisation. He notes that simultaneous and interdependent processes of local and national-level democratisation are required. Nevertheless, the focus to date has largely

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been on the local context and processes despite the need to elaborate and create mechanisms to enable the local to influence national political reform processes (Harbeson, 2001:91). In his analysis, what is required is vertical integration between upward grassroots pressures for participation and downward, central government-generated measures for integrating grassroots participation with its own initiatives for political structural reform to institutionalize democracy, or what he terms 'pact formation' between local and national interests in securing political reform**.**

Such sentiments do find echoes within serious CBNRM scholarship in the region in the last few years. This was propelled by a paper by Murphree (2000a) that tackled interaction between jurisdictional scales and institutions in natural resource governance. It pointed out that scaling down to be sustainable also requires scaling up. This paper and elaborations on it (Martin, 2003) emphasize that devolution is not an exercise in isolationism, but a process of finding local regime inter-dependence within the larger setting of inter-dependence at many scales. The key elements of this 'scaling-down, scaling up approach' are:

- the principle of delegated aggregation: Local jurisdictions delegate upwards aspects of their responsibility and authority to collective governance of larger scope (local District Councils) in which they continue to play a role;
- the principle of constituent accountability: each institutional tier above the community level is accountable downwards to the constituency that empowered it.

However, for reasons explored in Chapters 4, 7 and 8 regarding the analysis of the policy process, the influence that these individuals (Murphree and Martin) once wielded in the conceptual and programmatic development of CBNRM throughout the region has diminished, and there is a limited reflection in the broader regional CBNRM literature or in practice of such ideas being embraced.

As already noted above, Luckham et al (2001) and other analysts, conclude that in order to achieve the necessary political structural reform a shift from 'procedural democracy' to 'deep' democracy is required. Whilst Gaventa (2006) stresses that building democracy is an ongoing process of 'struggle and contestation rather than the adoption of a standard institutional design'. Whilst the institutional forms and procedures of democracy may be in place in Botswana and Zimbabwe - although in the latter these have been significantly eroded over the last decade - this research indicates that empowerment and participation are diminishing in both countries. The critical question is then whether CBNRM can deepen inclusiveness and substance, especially in terms of how citizens engage with democratic spaces to create more just and equitable states and societies, and what governance reforms best facilitate this.

2.6 Conclusion

The following section provides a summary of the main points raised in this Chapter to provide the basis for further discussion. The historical review presented above illustrates that colonial approaches and policies to natural resource management and post-colonial responses to this have had a profound and lasting impact on rural areas and production systems throughout Africa. One legacy of this history is that natural resource management is now a highly contested and politicized realm. At the heart of CBNRM lie issues of power and authority concerning access to and management of valuable land and natural resources. Consequently, CBNRM attempts to develop appropriate natural resource governance regimes rest firmly within the realm of some of the most complex and contested social and political issues affecting southern Africa today. In attempting to establish appropriate natural resource management regimes, CBNRM brings to the fore issues of governance, decentralization/devolution, and democratisation. Therefore, CBNRM is itself an intensely ideological and political issue. Given this history and context, CBNRM should engage with the broader political and agrarian debates, such as land reform, institutional reforms and decentralisation reforms.

However, for reasons this thesis explores and explains in detail, CBNRM has been promoted as a largely 'apolitical' process. One outcome of has been adherence to devolution and condemnation of decentralisation in what has amounted to a blue print approach to natural resource management reforms. To date, implementation efforts have largely striven to ensure that devolution is delivered by the stroke of a pen through legislation at the outset of implementation, leap-frogging local government structures along the way. However, global research from the fields of democratisation and decentralisation indicates that this approach may hinder political processes of negotiation between different institutional tiers that are essential if positive engagement with policy makers is to be facilitated, political pitfalls negotiated and ultimately democratic space created for citizen engagement in the policy process. Such a process is an essential ingredient in the development of what Ake (2000:32) terms the 'participative negotiated consensus', which in turn strengthens 'democracy of the base'.

The development of effective and representative institutions and good governance regimes requires accountability, transparency, participation and respect for human rights, some of the basic principles of democracy (Ribot, 2004, Agrawal and Gibson, 1999, Jones and Murphree, 2004). There is then at one level a strong convergence between the conceptual foundations of CBNRM and contemporary thinking concerning the promotion of democracy and the provision of rights to local people. However, despite this conceptual convergence, there is a notable disconnect between CBNRM and mainstream democratisation discourses and politics. This disconnect has affected the prospects of CBNRM in Zimbabwe, Botswana and elsewhere, resulting in adherence to idealized versions of devolution and explicit criticism of decentralization. This ignores the growing body of evidence both regionally and globally, which demonstrates that processes of negotiation and contestation between different institutional tiers in some instances can ensure that decentralisation leads to more equitable and democratic outcomes.

This analysis suggests that the central state may have a larger role to play in local development than the more idealized theories of devolution would imply. Even so, if state intervention is to prove beneficial, it will depend on the nature of the state and its commitment to democratic processes, a commitment frequently lacking in African politics. This would imply that Sundar's (2001) argument that what matters is not the degree of state intervention - i.e. more or less devolution - but the level of state accountability and that finding the right balance is the key but will be variable depending on the particular context of each country, provides an important guide to further analysis. The following Chapter explores how and why such an analysis of the broader policy context and process at both national and international level guides this research.

CHAPTER 3
UNDERSTANDING POLICY PROCESSES

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 has illustrated that CBNRM is based largely on a common conceptual foundation throughout the southern Africa region and that this conceptual basis has informed policy development. However, as chapters 4-8 illustrate, of equal if not greater significance in the process of policy development has been the specific and varied contexts of individual countries. CBNRM policy development does not take place within a vacuum but is affected by political processes, competing discourses, conflicting national policies, international forces and market trends. For example, Chapters 5 and 7 illustrate that both Botswana and Zimbabwe are to varying degrees undergoing significant shifts in their political governance arrangements and dominant political personalities. They are also involved in policy and legislative reforms affecting local government, land reform, affirmative action and economic and constitutional reforms. These shifts provide a background to the political, economic, and legal and policy environment, which have direct and indirect impacts on the policy process determining CBNRM outcomes.

Further complicating this already complex picture is that regional and international processes may in turn shape these influences (Roe et al., 2000). These complex linkages, processes and effects determine the policy environment in which CBNRM decision-making takes place. This policy environment in effect defines the issues and determines the range of policy choices available, as they are the key components of the policy process. This situation ensures that there are complex linkages between CBNRM outcome and process. The literature review on CBNRM, decentralisation and democratisation presented in Chapter 2 provided the analytical framework for exploring and explaining the substantive outcomes. The aim of this chapter is to provide the analytical framework for exploring and unpacking the policy process that has led to these outcomes.

Globally, and within the region, much attention is paid to 'getting things right' within policy frameworks as central to development broadly and environmental management in particular. In the area of natural resource management this is seen as particularly vital given the whole range of policies that are relevant to it, e.g. agricultural services, environmental protection, land tenure, input supply, etc (Keeley and Scoones, 2003). As the discussion above has indicated, this holds even truer for CBNRM given the complexity introduced by the wide range of other social and political processes, the complexity of scales at which these occur and their attendant policy frameworks - beyond even those directly relevant to environmental management - that affect it.

Keeley and Scoones (2003) consider that in order to understand policy processes:

> *we must ask how policies are framed, who is included and who is excluded in the process, which actors and which interests are dominant, and how policy changed over time.* (Keeley and Scoones, 2003: viii).

Therefore, I adopted the analytical framework developed by Keeley and Scoones (2003), policy process analysis, to provide answers to these research questions. This approach allows for an analysis using a variety of 'conceptual lenses', which highlight the continuous interactions between discourse, political interests and multiple actors. This will illustrate the complex dynamics and structural constraints affecting governance reform outcomes. Light is thrown on the political dynamics and complexities, whilst an emphasis is also given to the opportunities for action and change, which can lead to improved understanding of the importance of the policy environment.

3.2 Defining Policy and the Policy Process

Traditional models of policy view change in policy systems as discrete, well-defined events, often precipitated by failures of the earlier systems. In this view, policy

constitutes decisions taken by those with responsibility for a given policy area, assumes that these decisions will usually take the form of statements or formal positions on an issue, and that these will then be implemented by the bureaucracy (Sutton, 1999, Hill, 1997). It is assumed that policy makers approach each issue rationally, going through each logical stage of the process fully informed. This definition of policy led to the development of the traditional 'rationalist' model, which presented policy as a linear process with discrete, well-defined events leading to policy changes (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984, Sutton, 1999).

However, the last few decades have seen a shift in this concept of policy. Rather than seeing it as a single decision implemented in a linear fashion, many now consider that in practice policies generally consist of a broad course of action, or a web of interrelated decisions which evolve over time during the process of implementation (Garret and Islam, 1988). There is growing acknowledgement that the policy process is incremental, complex and dynamic, rarely following precise analytical stages (Lindblom, 1986, Adams and Hulme, 2001, Sutton, 1999). Policy development is subjected to political, economic and social pressures, whilst there may be no clear distinction between policy making and implementation. As Barker (1996) notes:

> *policy is never made once and for all. A policy may change in the process of implementation; the intended outputs and outcomes may not at all be those which result, and those who were intended to benefit, are not always those who do.* (Barker, 1996:27).

Learning and change are continuous and pervasive. Hence, a process of 'adaptive social learning' is applied by many different actors at different levels as they are affected by new knowledge, shifting expectations and practical experience all of which will have a cumulative effect on policy. Whilst Keeley and Scoones (2003) maintain that:

policies emerge…through the interacting, situated practices of scientists and policy-makers and through the mutual construction of story lines and the building of networks and coalitions. (Keeley and Scoones, 2003:52).

Policy is then influenced by many different factors, including the capacities and beliefs of policy or epistemic communities[10], political and other resources available within policy networks[11] and the availability of scientific and other knowledge's, whilst the pace and nature of policy change are highly dependent on context. Policy making is driven by complex interactions of various actors with different, sometimes contradictory, interests and objectives regarding the planned outcomes of any particular regulatory regime. Sutton (1999) illustrates how the policy itself is typically an attempt at accommodating different actors and their interests, which reflects the particular balance of power between the different actors at a specific moment in time. Changes in the balance of power, or in the interests or objectives of the actors, will stimulate changes in the policy. Such moments of change in the cultural, political or economic environment provide important 'windows of opportunity' to influence the policy process (Kingdom, 1984). Consequently, any assessment of the processes of policy making and implementation is at the same time an assessment of power and political economy, and is by definition complex and dynamic.

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[10] Sutton (1999) defines epistemic communities as elite groups of technical experts who have access to privileged information, sharing and discussing ideas amongst themselves and sharing similar basic assumptions about cause and effect relationships. Others who do not have access to this information are excluded. Such communities transcend national boundaries (Haas, 1992) and strategizing amongst them leads to cooperation on environmental agreements and treaties (Keeley and Scoones, 2003). Individuals can be from a broad range of backgrounds and institutions, including research communities, NGOs, international organizations and government bureaucracies. Epistemic communities can have powerful influences on policy making.
[11] The distinction between policy networks and coalitions is the subject of much debate in political science literature. The definition adopted here follows that of Sutton (1999) whereby a policy community is defined as a tightly knit group of organizations and individuals who share similar belief systems and established patterns of behaviours, with greater insulation and more restrictive membership than that of a policy network. Therefore, a policy community is seen as a subset of a policy network.

The conceptual approach developed by Keeley and Scoones (2003) in acknowledgement of the complexity of policy making, brings together analytical approaches and tools from a range of disciplines in an attempt to understand the multiple, incremental and diverse processes of policy formulation. Central to an analysis of the policy process has to be an understanding of the relationships between science, expertise and policy. In addition, Keeley and Scoones (2003) maintain that knowledge is established in policy in different ways. Therefore, policy serves:

- As a reflection of structured political interests;
- As a product of the agency of actors engaged in the policy area;
- As art of overarching power-knowledge relations that discursively frame practice in particular ways (adapted from Keeley and Scoones, 2003:38).

This conceptualization of the policy process enables the researcher to identify and draw upon three overlapping and mutually supportive approaches through which policy change can be analysed. These explore how policy approaches are influenced by dominant policy narratives and discourses, by political interests, and by actor networks. This enables analysis of issues and questions from multiple angles, essentially 'triangulating' the research methodology in an attempt to expand and deepen understanding. Keeley and Scoones (2003) note that these elements frame the relationships between science, expertise, the state and citizens and therefore, ultimately determine whether citizens will engage with policy processes and lead to democratic practices.

3.3 Science, Knowledge and the Policy Process

Keeley and Scoones (2003) argue that knowledge for policy is produced discursively, and consequently reflects and shapes particular institutional and political practices and worldviews. Knowledge for policy may be associated with the creation of 'iconic facts', which can be critical in shaping the management and control of people and resources. Understanding the processes by which knowledge is generated, particularly the creation of influential facts and their supporting data is central to understanding the policy

process as a whole as it reveals the centrality of social and political values to the presentation of what are portrayed as 'rational/scientific' policy.

The traditional 'rationalist' approach to defining environmental policy is based on the assumption that environmental decision-making is driven by scientific certainties, expertise and technocracies, with policy makers developing rational policies based upon 'received wisdom' (Leach and Mearns, 1996) manifesting itself as indisputable scientific fact (Garret and Islam, 1988, Sutton, 1999). The public is generally perceived to be largely ignorant of the science and incapable of understanding the complexities. This 'scientific' view of environmental policy making essentially views it as an apolitical process, and it has recently been the subject of wide ranging critiques, which raise a number of important questions in understanding the environmental policy process (Clay and Schaffer, 1984, Hajer, 1995). For example, Keeley and Scoones (2003) question what happens to democracy and public debates when environmental issues are reified as technical and the sole preserve of experts, whilst other analysts note that it entirely ignores the political, economic and social influences of the broader policy making context (Hajer, 1995, Hill, 1997).

Much of the literature on the sociology of science highlights how science should be viewed as constructed knowledge that arises from competition between different interest groups (Latour, 1987, Long, 2001). New knowledge, and the prospect of policy change that it brings, frequently threatens existing policy relationships and structures of power. In the context of natural resource management and environment in Africa, analysts argue that science plays a critical role in policy development (Western and Wright, 1994, Roe et al., 2000, Adams and Hulme, 2001, Child, 2004), and the colonial and post-colonial states have used it to justify expropriation of land and resources (Tshuma, 1997, Mandondo, 2000, Murombedzi, 2003b). Science has thus shaped the way development and environment problems have been thought about, articulated and framed (Adams and Mulligan, 2003).

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In different policy areas, the way issues are talked about can be extremely important. This is certainly true for environment and conservation policy, where scientific knowledge is important in framing the debate. Lyotard (1979:25) states that 'scientific knowledge requires that one language game be retained and all others excluded'. For example, in the context of southern Africa, conservation discourses are premised on technical notions of 'sustainable use' (SASUSG, 1996, Duffy, 2000). Scientific knowledge develops into a profession that gives rise to institutions, which are consolidated by 'language games run by the professional classes' (Lyotard, 1979:25). This may exclude the knowledge and participation of many others from involvement in the policy process and the network. For example, it may exclude local people's knowledge systems and participation by others from different sectoral backgrounds. Lyotard (1979) maintains that the way in which arguments are framed and articulated will empower those people and institutions whose competencies they are associated with, whilst marginalizing others. Whande (2008) and Welford (2001) both illustrate how this does indeed play out within the context of CBNRM policy making which is dominated by ecologists, environmentalists and economists that ensure that policy making remains far removed from local realities. This has a negative effect on local people's views and perceptions of conservation, including alienation from the natural resource base.

Policy process analysis puts this diverse role of science at centre stage, maintaining that science is highly political and dependent on the role of networks and relationships, alliances and coalitions in establishing the validity of knowledge. This draws upon a Foucauldian (1982) interpretation which places multiple power relations at the heart of discussion, maintaining that linkages between groups are made through knowledge and power relationships of various types, and it is through these networks of knowledge and power that policies are created (Keeley and Scoones, 2003).

It is this perspective that leads Keeley and Scoones (2003) to note that:

understanding policy processes means understanding the interaction of networks and relationships, agency and practice, and knowledge and power dynamics in particular contexts. (Keeley and Scoones, 2003:4-5)

In their view, the development of policy therefore consists of an ongoing process of 'policy contests' – essentially contests about knowledge. Policy making cannot be viewed as a gradual moving towards an ideal and a rational approach to problems solving. However, it is important to explain how different types of knowledge get established and the policy process analysis has to focus on the roles of political interests, actor-oriented and practice-based approaches and policy discourses.

3.4 Structured Political Interests

Political scientists maintain that policy change is primarily the result of interactions between different groups with different political interests (Burgess and Harrison, 1998, Gibson, 1999, Halperin, 1971, Ake, 2000). They interpret the actions and responses of different groups towards policy as a reflection of these group interests, concluding that policy is a consequence of political interactions between and within differing elements of state and society. Ake (2000) considers that within Africa:

development strategies do not simply emerge and get implemented, their feasibility and success being determined by their formal character. Strategies and policies are made and managed by a government in office and political elite in power in a determinate historical state, and a particular configuration of social forces. (Ake, 2000:37).

The work on policy networks (Knocke, 1990) and discourse coalitions (Hajer, 1995) brings together the various strands within the field of political science. These concur that an empirical analysis of each policy domain needs to be undertaken in order to see how different social, economic and political forces are able to influence policy, to identify

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whether the state is weak or strong and how bureaucratic interactions work. Gibson (1999) notes that this approach explicitly focuses upon the institutions through which policy and laws are created and the political consequences of such changes and by doing so it enables an analysis of the impact of the wider political institutional environment on policymakers decisions.

Political scientists agree that policy is the result of deals made in the policy networks[12] that effectively constitute what are identified by Keeley and Scoones (2003) as 'sub governments'. They recognize that processes of interaction, bargaining and the construction of coalitions are important. The sheer complexity of networks of actors engaged in any given policy process should be recognized. Networks and individuals may have connections and interactions, which weave across what is the artificial divide of 'citizens' and 'the state' (Brock et al., 2005); whilst different actors may have multiple and even competing interests and allegiances, and may be embedded in social, political and professional networks that cross multiple networks and discourses. They may use their agency to open or deny access to political space for the engagement of others.

Within the environmental literature, there is general acknowledgement of the diverse array of different groups involved in environmental policy networks (Hutton et al., 2006, Duffy, 2000, World Resources Institute (WRI) et al., 2005, WBGU (German Advisory Council on Global Change), 2005, Wilshusen et al., 2002). These include not only various elements within government – bureaucrats, politicians and scientists - but also business, consumer and local interest groups, communities, donors, the media, NGOs and international agencies, all of whom exert significant influence on policy choices, collectively comprising the 'policy network'. The influence of various groups within the policy networks varies. For example, Lipsky's (1979) analysis of 'street level bureaucrats' illustrates the extent to which the discretion they employ in interpreting and implementing policy affects the form and impact that policy will have in practice.

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[12] Also usefully conceptualized as "flexible circles of association" (Giarchi, 2001), networks facilitate flows of information and resources through interpersonal ties between business associates, colleagues, friends, acquaintances and relations.

Additionally, bureaucratic politics, such as battles within Ministries for control over policy arenas, are relevant. Bureaucrats are not neutral executors of policy but will have their own personal and political agendas to negotiate. The impact of a network will depend on how powerful the group is. The network's power is determined by its control over resources and access to information, its skill in using these advantages, including generation of media coverage, and other player's perceptions of these characteristics, including perceptions of their credibility (Allison, 1971).

Long (2001) defines policy networks as:

> *sets of direct and indirect relationships and exchanges (interpersonal, inter-organisational and socio-technical). They usually transcend institutional domains and link together a variety of arenas. Networks are characterised by flows, content, span, density and multiplicity* (Long, 2001:242).

Long (2001) notes that the outcome of interactions fostered by a network depends upon the interplay between strategically motivated behaviour of network members, the structure and nature of which may evolve over time to meet shifting objectives. Through these multi-leveled, often interpenetrating networks of affiliation, knowledge is interpreted and validated, identities are constructed, power relationships are perpetuated, and strategic aims are played out.

Individuals in specific localities (e.g. at village, national and international levels) are linked both with each other and to wider sets of relationships elsewhere through networks. Network relationships, therefore, criss-cross between multiple actors and intersect through multiple scales. These affiliations shed light on the tensions between economic activities, social relations, political action and cultural practices.

The role of the state in policy formulation will vary from country to country and across different fields, depending on the different histories, administrative settings and

capacities. Policies that (re)define property rights have a clear political impetus, especially for politicians in nascent states, new regimes or governments facing significant political challenges. In these contexts, redefining property rights over natural resources offers a strategy for consolidating power. Politicians utilize rights to land and other natural resources to redefine political identities, redirect political loyalties and establish their authority (Berry, 1993, Hyden, 2008). The last two decades have seen an increasing stream of work from various environmental historians who support the view that wildlife is no exception and has been used as a significant political commodity historically within Africa (Anderson and Grove, 1987, Beinart, 1989, Gibson, 1999). More recently, the work of political ecologists and others supports the view that post-independence, in an era characterized by political uncertainty and economic stress, this situation has not only continued but may have intensified (Hill, 1994, Duffy, 2000, Mandondo, 2000, Anstey, 2005).

Several recent studies in southern Africa (Anstey, 2005, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) have illustrated the highly politicized nature of wildlife and the impact that this has in terms of policy development. Gibson (1999) demonstrates the ways in which political institutions have influenced the choices of individuals and groups in their pursuit of personally advantageous wildlife policies, both at national and local levels in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Zambia. He argues that policy processes and implementation are only components of a larger political conflict between individuals and groups seeking to produce wildlife policy to suit their preferences. He demonstrates this in the case of Zambia, tracing how President Kaunda could exercise his position of dominance within the policy network to maintain the highly unpopular conservation policies of the colonial era because the national political institutions ensured that politicians were accountable to the President, rather than to their constituents. This created a situation whereby Kaunda could establish his personally preferred policy positions.

Gibson (1999) also illustrates how the structure of political institutions is equally as influential at a localised level, and demonstrates that the rural residents did not respond

to the incentives to cease 'illegal' hunting offered by community-based wildlife schemes as no real authority had been vested with them. This remained vested with local government authorities, who were operating within political institutions that provided no incentive for them to undercut their own authority. He concludes that wildlife resources in post independent Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia in which central government/elites controlled wildlife and parks:

> *became another source of goods which an incumbent party could distribute ... Political actors in all three countries regarded the primary benefits of wildlife policy to be distributive goods, and not the collective good of conservation* (Gibson 1999:3).

Using a similar analytical approach to understanding wildlife policy in Zimbabwe, Duffy (2000) argues that the adoption of sustainable use policies (which provide the philosophical underpinnings for CBNRM) adopted after the country's transition to independence, enabled the negotiation of a political settlement between potentially competing domestic interest groups. She shows how diverse interest groups – ranging from the state agencies, local NGO's, local communities and the tourism business - each of which derived some benefit from wildlife use, developed into a strong policy network which determined the outcome of policy decisions. Similarly, Anstey (2000) concludes that complex developments surrounding natural resource management policy that have unfolded in the last decade in Mozambique:

> *reflect an essentially political process involving struggles over access and gatekeeper roles for resources (wildlife, wilderness, timber) of increasing value* (Anstey, 2000:23).

These studies illustrate that whilst the role and impact of political interests and institutions differs depending on national contexts, they do, nevertheless, play a crucial role in determining the outcome of wildlife (and therefore, CBNRM) policy. They demonstrate that as well as understanding the details of the policy networks themselves, to understand the overall process, it is necessary to contextualize this understanding

within the specific characteristics and histories of different national settings. This involves engaging with the broader processes of state formation that determine the nature of political and governance institutions (Sivaramakrishnan, 1995). A review of the level of homogeneity in the state and bureaucracy and of the way in which networks of political patronage and lines of affiliation have been developed over time is required. However, political interests alone have not determined conservation and CBNRM policy. What these other factors are and how they have been influential will be analysed using the two other interconnected analytical tools suggested by Keeley and Scoones (2003).

3.5 Actor-Networks

The second 'lens' used in policy process analysis are the approaches adopted by 'actor-oriented' and 'practice-based approaches'. Actor networks are networks of actors (individuals or institutions) with a shared vision. These are important in spreading and maintaining narratives through chains of persuasion and influence, which can include journals, conferences, informal introductions and teaching. Keeley and Scoones (2000) maintain that it is through these networks that:

> *norms of good and bad practice are reinforced, research agendas are set, and orthodoxies or conventional wisdoms are reiterated and, very often, dissenting opinions or unconventional views are suppressed.* (Keeley and Scoones, 2000:20)

They note that actor networks focus on the practices of individuals and groups of actors, connected in networks, alliances and coalitions of different sorts. Consequently, individual actors that are involved in the policy process, exercise discretion and choice in their actions although their actions occur within socially embedded networks and cultural settings. Keeley and Scoones (2003) differentiate between actor-oriented approaches and structural analyses that are typical in conventional political science literature, such as the 'policy network' approach discussed in the preceding section. They note that the latter focus more on aggregate pictures of interest groups and policy communities, in contrast with actor-oriented approaches which acknowledge that expressions of agency through

practices can lead to both intended and unintended outcomes. Thus, 'serendipity, contingency and chance' (Keeley and Scoones, 2000:34) can be important elements in policy change.

Actor-network theory is a useful way of looking at uncertainty and interconnectedness. It attempts to collapse dichotomies, such as nature/society, local/global or bottom-up/top-down, by looking not at hierarchies but at interconnections and networks that change the nature of distance and space (Long, 2001). Actor networks allow for the fact that some actors may shape the actions of others from a distance (Ibid). These approaches draw on theories of practice and agency developed by Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1977). Giddens (1984) notes that change is affected by people's agency, and he defines agency not in terms of people's intentions to do something but rather in terms 'of their capability of doing those things in the first place' (Giddens, 1984:9). For Giddens (1984), actors are powerful, conscious and reflexive agents, and through engaging in practice, they produce social structures through rules and resources. Agents draw on stocks of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital in order to achieve their strategic aims. Therefore, human agency is conceptualised as dynamic and historical rather than an aggregate of separate actions. Long (2001) provides a further useful definition of agency as:

> *the knowledgeability, capability and social embeddedness associated with acts of doing (and reflecting) that impact upon or shape one's own and others' actions and interpretations...Persons or networks of persons have agency... Agency is composed, therefore, of a complex mix of social, cultural and material element.* (Long, 2001:240-1).

Several theorists highlight that agency is not simply the ability of social actors to act or react, but strategically to influence others (Long, 2001, Latour, 1987). Latour (1986) argues that agency is based upon the 'actions of a chain of agents, each of whom "translates" it in accordance with his/her own projects' (264). Long and van der Ploeg (1989) note that:

agency depends crucially upon the emergence of a network of actors who become partially, though hardly ever completely, enrolled in the projects and practices of some other person or persons. Effective agency then requires the strategic generation/manipulation of a network of social relations (Long and van der Ploeg, 1989:76).

Latour (1987) argues that there are several factors restricting access and power within these networks; foremost among these factors is access to sufficient financial resources. Nevertheless, this is not the only constraint, of perhaps equal importance is access to the fora where networks are built and claims established, be these academic journals, conferences or web based discussion groups. Callon (1986) considers that popularisation of a particular perspective depends upon interaction with effective networks and the application of human and financial resources to the efforts. Even assuming financial resources and access, there is still a communications and credibility gulf between those with formal, scientifically recognised knowledge and those with 'indigenous' or 'traditional' knowledge.
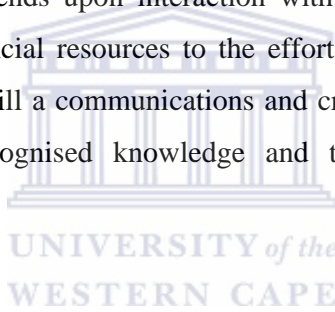
A central element of successful actor networks is what Keeley and Scoones (2003) term 'policy entrepreneurs'. These may be individuals or groups whose key role in the policy process places them at the centre of any attempt to understand the policy process. Their aim is to direct policy in particular ways, through the mobilisation of networks, knowledge and expertise. They are well placed to influence policy and identify 'trigger' events, or 'windows of opportunity' when they occur.

Actor-network approaches provide a tool to enable an understanding of the spread of knowledge through the actions of different actors. This in turn enables the researcher to identify which groups have been influential and/or marginalised from the policy making process. In the context of this thesis, it enabled me to analyse to what degree CBNRM policy and practice have been viewed as a domain for 'conservation' professionals only; whether this has led to certain individuals or groups being excluded in the policy making

process and if so why; and to what degree the rhetoric of 'participation', 'devolution' and 'empowerment' have been translated into action on the ground. This in turn will enable the posing of a key question of whether the policy process is conducive to participation of the marginalised, rural populations; and if not, how could it become so?

As the above discussion has noted, whilst policy change is the prerogative of government decision makers, decisions are not made and implemented in isolation. Policies and programmes are the cumulative result of co-operation and conflict among networks of politicians and bureaucrats from government and various external interest groups. In southern Africa, the trend for global environmental policy to shape and influence national policy agendas, furthered by international donor initiatives, has been documented by many analysts (Duffy, 2000, Roe et al., 2000, Gibson, 1999, Dzingirai and Breen, 2005, Hughes, 2006, Hutton et al., 2006). A very diverse group of individuals and organizations has influenced policy. Foremost among these have been agents of the state, government scientists, bureaucrats and politicians, but other crucial national players have included academics, environmental NGOs, development practitioners, media professionals, traditional leaders, community representatives and the private sector - notably tourism and safari hunting representatives.

Chapter 4 explores and analyses the intersection of national, regional and international environmental policy processes, which have also been important and instrumental in framing national CBNRM policies. Within southern Africa, regional connections have played a central role in spreading lessons and political imperatives, both through SADC (particularly the Wildlife Sector Technical Cooperation Unit, Malawi) and through other regional bodies and institutions, e.g. IUCN's Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG); the USAID Regional NRMP programme and Africa Resources Trust (ART).

The emergence of international agreements on environmental issues, notably in this case the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has led to the development of connections at international levels, resulting in national scientists and others being exposed to and influencing global agendas and practices. These international links have drawn many key southern African actors into the global 'epistemic community' (Haas, 1992) of scientific experts who influence the processes of international environmental policy making. This international relationship has had considerable implications for CBNRM policy making, as explored in detail in Chapter 4.

3.6 Discourse and Narrative

The third tool by which policy processes can be analysed is that of discourse analysis. Keeley and Scoones (2003) explain discourses as 'frames that define the world in certain ways; in the process, they exclude alternative interpretations and they provide the following definition adopted from Hajer (1995):

> a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities (quoted in Keeley and Scoones, 2003:37).

The concept of discourse as it applies here draws once again upon the work of Foucault (1982) to include the socio-political and historical contexts of the production of ideas. Thus discourses have to be understood in the wider context of how certain forms of knowledge are used to exclude others and thereby exercise power through practice. This Foucauldian interpretation of discourse conceptualizes policies as underlain by power relations. Escobar (1995) argues that ideas develop through the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, discourses are about how knowledge and power are articulated. Keeley and Scoones (2003:21) comment that 'Discourses frame the way in which problems are thought about, linking up different issues, often in highly programmatic,

narrative, cause-and-effect form.' Such discourses and the institutional practices upon which they lie may be so entrenched that people are unaware of them and their influence upon them.

Adams and Hulme (2003) note that in the environmental arena, discourse analyses and related approaches (narratives and counter narratives, tropes and rhetoric) have been used to characterize received wisdoms, the evolution of environmental crises and their social construction. Various analysts (Roe, 1991, Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996) have demonstrated how ideas (discourses or narratives) become established and entrenched by national leaders, aid agencies, and elite interest groups. This knowledge becomes institutionalized as 'received wisdom' (Leach and Mearns, 1996) and finds its way into policy through prolonged reiteration of 'stories' about what will happen if events unfold as they describe (Roe, 1991, Roe, 1995)[13].

Hajer (1995) contributes two useful concepts, those of 'story lines' and those of 'discourse coalitions'. He argues that these gain their discursive power by combining elements from different domains to provide actors with a series of symbolic references that suggest not only a symbolic understanding but one that 'sounds right'. This in turn is influenced as much by the trust that people have in the story teller as the persuasiveness of the story itself, and the acceptability of the story for their own identities. Story lines then not only cluster knowledge but position actors, proving 'the essential discursive cement that creates communicative networks amongst actors with different or at best overlapping perceptions and understandings' (Hajer, 1995:61-62). Network members construct collective identities that are maintained through subscription to particular discourses. The stories constructed by these networks then become useful to policy makers and planners as they provide apparently secure platforms for policy (Adger et al., 2001). Long (2001) argues that discourses:

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[13] Such 'stories' are commonly known as 'policy narratives' which describe events, or define the world, in certain ways which consequently shape policy decisions. They often gain validity despite the fact that they often simplify complex issues and processes.

belong to institutions such as the state, the World Bank, or the local community, but it is actors (individuals or institutional representatives) who use them, manipulate them and transform them (Long, 2001:53).

Roe (1991) describes how narratives develop as an attempt to bring order and clarity to the complex interactions and processes which characterize development situations. As narratives are transmitted through policy networks and communities, they assume what Sutton (1999) refers to as their own 'cultural paradigm' as they become influential. According to Sutton (1999) their effect is to reduce the 'policy space'[14] of policy makers, as they curtail their ability to think and gather information on alternative approaches. Narratives are critiqued because they lead to a prescribed approach to development that relies upon the imposition of a set of solutions to an issue which may not always be applicable, resulting in 'blue-print' approaches. Frequently they serve the interests of the epistemic communities that espouse them, but reduce the ability of others to engage in the policy process.
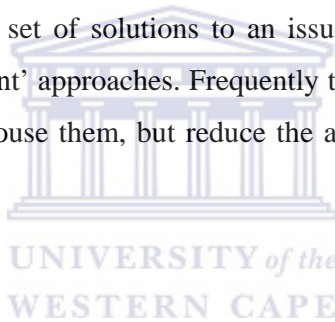
Roe (1991) describes how African development narratives seek to persuade their audience to take a particular course of action, thriving even in the face of strong evidence against their 'story lines'. Whilst Chambers (1993) demonstrates how narratives are established and entrenched by national leaders, donors, elite interest groups who benefit in some way from them, such as scientists, researchers and development professionals. They are then disseminated internationally by donors and nationally by media campaigns and accounts of 'successes'. Adams and Hulme (2001) illustrate how these discourse or narrative notions fit changes that have taken place in the ideology of conservation in

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[14] Policy spaces refer to the arenas where various actors engage each other to influence policy. It essentially entails the public domain and political processes of policy making where different interest groups (actors) seek to shape policy depending on their relative political economic power and influence.

southern Africa as its move away from 'fortress' to 'community' conservation. Adams and Hulme (2001) note that this process leads to a situation whereby:

development policy narratives become culturally, institutionally, and politically embedded, their influence and their longevity related less to their actual economic, social or environmental achievements than to the interests of a complex web of politicians, policy makers, bureaucrats, donors, technical specialists and private sector operators whose needs they serve (Adams and Hulme, 2001:10).

However, they also note that:

it is erroneous to assume that such changes in discourse translate directly into changed policies and practices... the links between discourses, policies and practices are much more complex than the narrative/counter-narrative framework infers (Adams and Hulme, 2001:21).
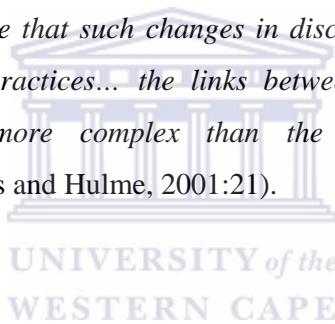
Keeley and Scoones (2003:38) concur with this noting that some of these discourse analyses alone 'fail to give credit to varied actors' consciousness, intentionality and responsibilities – in other words their agency.' Hajer (1995:43) argues that discourse analysis 'has come to mean many different things in as many different places.' Therefore, here I have followed the lead of Adger et al. (2001) in confining interpretation of discourse as being represented by the following three elements: analysis of regularities in expressions to identify discourse; analysis of the actors producing, reproducing and transforming discourses; and social impacts and policy outcomes of discourses.

3.7 Conclusion

The review offered here makes clear that any assessment of the processes of policymaking and implementation is at the same time an assessment of power and

political economy. Environmental policymaking can be viewed as the product of ongoing interactions and compromise between local, national and international processes. This involves accommodating different actors and their varied interests, which reflects the particular balance of power between different actors at a specific moment in time. Changes in the balance of power, or in the interests or objectives of the actors, will stimulate changes in policy. Policy development is then an extremely complex and dynamic process, and it is this process, which ultimately determines natural resource governance outcomes. Outcomes can then be examined and explained, the threads teased apart and complexities explored, by undertaking an analysis of the policy process itself.

Policy process analysis facilitates an understanding of these complexities and linkages by highlighting the continuous interactions between discourse, political interests and multiple actors. This effectively focuses attention on the interface of power, knowledge and politics and emphasizes the complex dynamics and structural constraints, which determine policy outcomes. Particularly revealing in the context of this research is the light thrown by this analytical tool upon the political dynamics and prospects for expansion of political space. Key components of the policy process will be the science or knowledge upon which practices rely, the structured political interests, the agency of actors engaged in the policy area, and the discourse which frames practice.

Science or knowledge plays a critical role in policy development (Western and Wright, 1994, Roe et al., 2000, Adams and Mulligan, 2003, Child, 2004) as it shapes the way development and environment problems are thought about, and articulated and/or framed (Anderson and Grove, 1987, Adams and Mulligan, 2003). Thus the science - often boiled down to 'iconic facts' - framing policy can be critical in shaping the management and control of people and resources. Understanding the processes by which knowledge is generated, particularly the creation of influential facts is central to understanding the policy process as a whole as it reveals the centrality of social and political values to the presentation of what are portrayed as 'rational/scientific' policy. Understanding by whom and how knowledge has been generated assists in revealing who has been

included and excluded in the policy process and the network. Historically CBNRM has been dominated by scientific 'facts' developed by ecologists, environmentalists and economists. Chapters 4 to 8 explore whether this domination has opened or denied access to political space and engagement within the policy process by others, and thus strengthened or weakened local processes of democratisation.

Chapter 2 has already illustrated that at the heart of CBNRM lie issues of power and authority concerning access to and management of natural resources and that this places natural resource governance within the realm of complex and contested social and political issues. Policies that (re)define property rights have a clear political impetus. In these contexts, redefining property rights over natural resources offers a strategy for consolidating power. The role and impact of political interests will differ depending on the national context. In addition to understanding policy networks, it is necessary to contextualize this understanding within the specific characteristics and histories of different national settings. This involves understanding the broader processes of state formation and transformation that determine the nature of political and governance institutions. A review of the level of homogeneity in the state and bureaucracy and of the way in which networks of political patronage and lines of affiliation have been developed over time is required.

The agency exercised by individual actors and groups of actors, actor-networks, involved in the policy process is instrumental in determining outcomes. The actions of actors occur within socially embedded networks and cultural settings. Therefore, agency is dynamic and historical. A central element of successful actor networks will be 'policy entrepreneurs', individuals or groups whose key role places them at the centre of any attempt to understand the policy process. Policies and programmes will be the cumulative result of co-operation and conflict amongst networks. Understanding networks enables an understanding of the spread of knowledge through the actions of different actors. This in turn facilitates identification of which groups have been influential and which marginalised from the policy making process.

Analysis of the discourse that has dominated policy processes throws further light on who has been included and who excluded in policy making processes. The discourses adopted by leaders, interest groups and donors serve to entrench key ideas and approaches, which find their way into policy through prolonged reiteration of 'stories' about what will happen if events unfold as they describe. Such discourses and the institutional practices upon which they lie may be so entrenched that people are unaware of them and their influence upon them. The effect of discourses may be to reduce the 'policy space' of policy makers, as they curtail their ability to think and gather information on alternative approaches, which leads to prescribed approaches and the imposition of a set of solutions to an issue which may not always be applicable. Frequently, they serve the interests of the epistemic communities that espouse them, but reduce the ability of others to engage in the policy process.
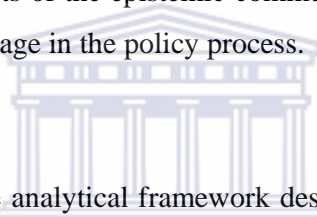
The following chapters adopt the analytical framework described here and in Chapter 2 in an attempt to unpack and understand the multi-level and complex linkages affecting the policy processes that determine CBNRM outcomes. The following Chapter, Chapter 4, investigates policy processes and their effects at regional and international scales. Processes at these scales will affect national and local processes and outcomes, which are described in Chapters 5- 8. Therefore, it is essential to undertake an analysis of the policy process at all scales in order to understand its impact upon natural resource governance outcomes. Ultimately, the dual analytical framework adopted in the following chapters enables an exploration of the prospects of CBNRM contributing to increased political participation and citizen engagement with natural resource management.

CHAPTER 4
INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL LINKAGES AND EFFECTS

4.1 Introduction

As the previous chapters have discussed, conservation can be viewed as a social process, intimately linked to political, social and economic institutions, networks and narratives influencing natural resource management. Natural resource governance is fundamentally important to rural and national economies but also to local, national and global concerns about environmental management and sustainable development. This represents a diverse array of parties and systems with a stake in Africa's environmental future, many of whom have different, sometimes conflicting, interests. These systems are multi-level and complex[15], with institutions and processes at various levels of organization from local to international, all of which are linked but will have differing perspectives depending on their level. Interactions across these spatial scales and competing policy sub-systems and networks of actors and ideas at international scales shape national environmental/conservation policy processes and outcomes.

Keeley and Scoones (2003) examine the influence that the internationalization of the science-policy interface has on environmental policy processes in Africa. Drawing upon the environmental debates which dominated the 1980's and 1990's, they demonstrate how policy is informed and shaped by the 'crisis situation' perceptions that predominate internationally. They illustrate how the process is driven through the creation of scientific commissions, advisory boards, international initiatives, expert consultations, donor-driven technical support and the hosting of conferences. They also explore the role of local networks in co-producing 'facts'. Keeley and Scoones (2003) illustrate how the construction of local knowledge and policy is informed by 'borrowing' from international discourses.

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[15] The definition of complexity used here follows Berkes (2007:15189) 'complexity may be defined as a an interconnected network of components that cannot be described by a few rules; order and function of complexity generally manifest themselves in structure and emerge from interactions among the diverse components.'.

The following chapters adopt the same approach in unravelling CBNRM's policy process in order to understand and explain how this has affected its ability to achieve its aims in relation to natural resource governance reforms. This demonstrates how the sectoral roots of the dominant implementing organizations served to ensure the complex integrated political, social and macro-economic aspects of CBNRM have gone largely unexplored, whilst key framing assumptions have gone unanalyzed and untested. It unpacks how its wildlife management roots ensured that CBNRM concepts and approaches were developed within a narrow actor-network, informed by an international and national epistemic community and discourse whose conceptual framework and knowledge base provided little common ground to engage with other disciplines or policy processes. This has determined what international networks and fora are engaged with; which agencies are involved in implementation; what technical skills are available and which excluded; and who should be included and who excluded in the policy making process. This in turn has determined the nature of interactions with other social and political process's and institutions. At national levels, there were differences in the degree to which CBNRM may have been entrenched within the field of environment to the exclusion of others - for example, CAMPFIRE implementers in Zimbabwe did make concerted efforts to embrace other disciplines and a broad range of stakeholders in comparison with Botswana.

This chapter illustrates how CBNRM became conceptually 'boxed' into the environment arena at the international and regional levels. It explores how this has influenced the framing assumptions on which CBNRM is based, how and why these framing assumptions have become entrenched and the implications of this. It looks at how policy has changed over time, who was dominant in this process, whose interests did this represent and who was excluded. This chapter and the following four are then attempts to draw out the continuous interactions between discourse, political interests and multiple actors and draw attention to 'the interface of power, knowledge and politics' at and between all scales. This illustrates why CBNRM has become marginalised not just from national and international political and rural development processes, but also from the

contemporary international environmental context and priorities, such as climate change, despite its potential significance to both.

4.2 Global Policy Processes and Catalysts: The Background

Conservation narratives, like all others, are situated within and respond to broader developments within the global political economy. During the 1980's various factors combined to catalyze a shift in natural resource management policies away from the centralized, protectionist and 'exclusionary' approach characteristic of the colonial era to an 'inclusive' approach. This 'inclusive' approach encompasses policies and practices, which aim to give rural dwellers greater involvement in managing the natural resources in the areas in which they are resident. Adams and Hulme (2001) identify two common elements that underlie community conservation narratives; firstly, participation by those in and around protected areas in the management of conservation resources; secondly, the linking of conservation objectives to local development needs. They consider that 'community conservation' approaches have now supplanted what they term 'fortress conservation' to such a degree 'that is has been adopted as a central element in global conservation discourse and policy'. Indeed, they consider that this process has gone so far that they regard it as simply a new 'privileged solution' resulting from the dominant discourse over the last 20 years.

The shift from highly centralized, exclusionary approaches to conservation to policies that acknowledged its human dimensions was brought about by both economic and ideological shifts within the region and globally. One of the most significant regional catalysts was the arrival of liberal democracy. Newly elected and representative governments exerted pressure on natural resource management agencies to consider the demands of the rural electorate for greater access to natural resources and to redress the racial imbalances of the past (Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Mandondo, 2000, Hutton et al., 2006, Child, 2004). Meanwhile, key people within these resource management agencies had already recognized the wildlife management merits, as well as the pragmatic political imperative, for a dramatic shift in conservation strategies from exclusion to

inclusion (Child, 1995, Hutton et al., 2006). For example, the initial impetus for CAMPFIRE was ostensibly an attempt to do away with racial discrimination and transfer the economic opportunities that had been granted to private property holders to communal land dwellers by decentralizing rights over wildlife from central to local government authorities (Child, 1995, Jones and Murphree, 2004). The development of conservancy legislation in Namibia was driven by the same motivating factor (Jones and Murphree, 2001). Hutton, et al (2006) and Fakir (2001) point out that the conservation constituency was acting in its own self-interest in pursuing this shift, representing themselves as pursuing conservation 'with the people' and 'by the people' rather than 'against the people' as in fortress conservation. Whatever the motivation, clearly the transfer of authority did not, in fact, confer on communal land dwellers the same legal rights as private landholders (Murphree, 1997b, Murombedzi, 2003b).

The political imperative, which drove the self-interest of the conservation community, was coupled with other practical driving forces at the regional level. State capacities for conservation were becoming increasingly limited. After independence many states adopted structural adjustment packages with accompanying market-oriented economic reforms, public sector retrenchment and in theory decentralized state authority and control (Toye, 1993). The result was a decline in national budgets and lack of resources for law enforcement and management (Child, 2004, SASUSG, 1996). This was accompanied by widespread encroachment of national parks, increasing conflict between rural people and national parks staff and widespread illegal hunting. Clearly, new approaches were required.

These regional factors were accompanied and benefited from significant shifts in the dominant development discourses and narratives at the global level arising from disillusionment with progress made in the preceding decades. The result was a shift from support of centrally planned development schemes towards community development initiatives (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999); the mainstreaming of 'participatory' approaches

in development theory and practice (Roe et al., 2000) and an appreciation of the 'small is beautiful' philosophy advocated by Schumacher (1973).

This shift was underpinned by several factors and emerging trends. Firstly, there was increased understanding and appreciation that natural resources had been integral parts of rural livelihood strategies, contributing to economic development and cultural identities and an appreciation of indigenous technical knowledge and community capacity to manage resources (Roe et al., 2000, WRI et al., 2005). Secondly, there was an increasing emphasis upon governance, empowerment and democracy and, since the turn of the century, on human rights and the concept of 'citizenship' as integral components of the development process (UNDP, 2002, Mander and Asif, 2004). Thirdly, the process of intergovernmental decentralization of governance from the centre to the periphery sought to bring government closer to the people (Ribot, 2004, WRI et al, 2005). Finally, the criticism of 'developmentalism' as a hegemonic western construct shifted attention to the micro-political scale and placed increasing emphasis on development philosophies that encompassed understanding of local heterogeneity and politics of difference (Goetz, 1991, Escobar, 1995, Peet and Watts, 1996).

The result was a growing global trend within conservation to attempt to achieve the dual goals of environmental sustainability and economic development. This was to be achieved by embracing approaches that enhanced biodiversity conservation through addressing the needs of 'communities' and enlisting their support in environmental management (Adams and McShane, 1992, Western and Wright, 1994, Anderson and Grove, 1987). The World Resources Institute (WRI, 2008) notes that the evolutionary process of this international policy shift can be traced through key 'milestone' international environment and development events: starting with the 'World Conservation Strategy' (IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1980), the Brundtland Report, (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, 1992), the World Summit on Sustainable

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Development (2002) and the articulation of the Millennium Development Goals (UNDP, 2003).

These discursive and conceptual shifts - given further impetus by the collapse of communism in 1989 and the end of the Cold War and the resulting dominance of neo-liberal capitalist ideology - resulted in the early 1990's in the development of the 'Washington Consensus'[16]. This came to dominate international relations and 'development' and was based on dual poles of neo-classical economics and liberal democratic theory (Buscher and Whande, 2007). Community conservation and CBNRM fitted in with its economic arguments as it recognized the importance of economic incentives and markets, whilst reducing the role of state. This supported liberal democratic positions as it helped communities to organize themselves to manage natural resources thus adding vibrancy to associational life and deepening the democratic process. At the same time a belief in the congruence between democracy and enhanced environmental management was emerging, although in these early years this belief tended to lack an analytical or empirical basis (USAID, 1996, Walker, 1999). This convergence of influences internationally ensured that CBNRM achieved not only acclaim but considerable financial support from donors, particularly USAID, as it appeared to embody the aims and priorities of Western governments in promoting development in Africa.

Thus, CBNRM policy has been driven in part by seemingly pragmatic national political agendas and economic realities, but it has also been influenced by changing international perspectives, discourses and paradigms of conservation and development. This international influence manifests itself perhaps most obviously through the interventions of international donors[17] and NGOs, which have been influential in the development of CBNRM policy and programme implementation but, as the following discussion

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[16] The election of President Obama and the international financial crisis has seen much speculation on 'the end of the Washington Consensus' in 2009 (Hudson and Sommers, 2008)

[17] The tendency of donors to use their purse strings to influence wildlife policy throughout Africa has been extensively documented (Swatuk, 2005, Suzuki, 2001, Duffy 2000)

illustrates, it also flowed from broader interactions with the international and regional policy and actor networks that CBNRM implementers and advocates were drawn into.

The influence has been a two way process. Not only has policy development within southern Africa been affected by international agendas, southern African countries' policies have also had a considerable effect upon the international environmental agenda. For example, the early successes of the CAMPFIRE programme are generally acknowledged to have given significant impetus to the international shift towards community involvement within conservation (Adams and McShane, 1992, Western and Wright, 1994, Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Turner, 2004, Swatuk, 2005); whilst the influence of many of the advocates of CBNRM from SADC countries - particularly of the sustainable use principles that it encompasses – have been evident in the development of international environmental instruments such as CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as discussed in more detail below. This international role and influence of particular countries, notably Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana, has often translated back into a component of the national political agenda - senior politicians using issues of national sovereignty, self-determination and human - as opposed to animal - rights as potent political platforms around which to garner populist support for their political agendas both nationally and internationally. Such national level political activities are discussed further in Chapters 5 (Botswana) and 7 (Zimbabwe). However, this support for CBNRM articulated by senior political figures on specific, high profile occasions internationally - accompanied by a great deal of national and international media attention - has rarely been translated into ongoing political engagement and support for CBNRM at national and local levels.

4.3 The Driving Forces: International and Regional Environmental Context, Catalysts and Linkages

Why was CBNRM able to exert so much influence internationally on environmental policy making for a decade, and yet fail to translate this influence into the necessary domestic political acceptance and support to ensure its success and sustainability? The

following analysis investigates this process at an international and regional level, examining how actors within the 'community conservation' and 'sustainable use' coalitions participated in various degrees in the production and reproduction of these approaches, whilst Chapters 5 and 7 elaborate upon this domestically for Botswana and Zimbabwe. The aim of this is to identify whether these multi-layered processes have enabled or excluded broad based citizen participation in the relevant national level policy making processes.

Clearly, regional and international discourse coalitions, policy, and actor-networks have been a key component in the policy process. This analysis follows the process and tactics by which networks were built and actors enrolled in order to construct the necessary national, regional and international coalitions. It identifies the 'policy entrepreneurs' - the main protagonists of these networks - and the roles they play(ed) and strategies developed to promote CBNRM policy. It identifies the discourse, knowledge and science driving CBNRM policy; where this knowledge came from, who is able to use it and how it is used. Finally, it investigates who is included and who is excluded and the implications of this.

Notwithstanding the debate about which country is the 'home' of CBNRM, it was Zimbabweans who took the lead in promoting and disseminating CBNRM and its underlying concepts, particularly that of sustainable use, globally. Chapter 6 elaborates on how and why an influential, inclusive and cohesive policy network built up within Zimbabwe, while the focus in this Chapter is on the role this network has played globally.
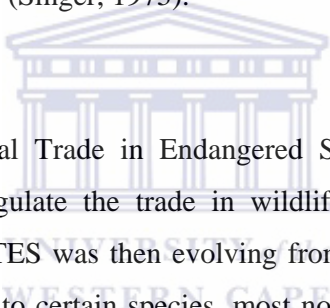
Whilst there had been earlier experiments with community wildlife management in Zimbabwe, it was not until 1986 that the CAMPFIRE programme, based on an elaboration of CBNRM principles, was introduced (Martin, 1986). The gradual and localized nature of its evolution, detailed in Chapter 7, ensured that by the time it was

formally introduced, CAMPFIRE already had an established and powerful national constituency of advocates and implementers, primarily, but not exclusively, with backgrounds in the environment and wildlife management sectors. These included government, local NGOs, academics, the private sector represented by tourism operators, the local media as well as international conservation organisations. Many of these already had established international relationships, networks and roles. For example, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) had played a key role in regional and to some degree international wildlife management discussions for several decades (Graham Child, personal communication, May 2008); the regional WWF office, a key CAMPFIRE implementer, was part of WWF-International and the global conservation community that this implies (Jeanrenaud, 2002); and the University of Zimbabwe had linkages with other social science research institutions and networks, particularly in the US. Notably these included Fulbright scholars, several of whom had played a role in developing some of the scientific underpinnings of CAMPFIRE (Dasmann and Mossman, 1961). This expansive network ensured that CAMPFIRE achieved iconic status and rapidly became the most famous example of CBNRM (Wolmer et al., 2003, Frost and Bond, 2008).
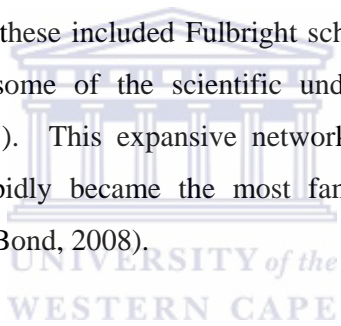
Within a few years of its introduction, CAMPFIRE was the recipient of funding from a variety of Western donors, e.g. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) along with other Nordic countries. In 1989, it received its first significant funding from USAID, which was to prove the main donor for CAMPFIRE, accounting for about two-thirds of external support, amounting to $25.2million, between 1989-2003 (Frost and Bond, 2008). This USAID funding came as a component of a regional Natural Resource Management Programme (NRMP) – initially funding CBNRM initiatives in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Botswana (USAID, 1989) and later extended to Namibia. This regional programme encompassed a regional networking and information exchange component, which was to prove a principal driver of the rapid spread of CBNRM throughout the region.

From its beginning, the CAMPFIRE programme was at the forefront internationally of one of the most emotive and controversial issues in conservation, trading in wildlife products (Zimbabwe Trust, 1990a, Zimbabwe Trust, 1990b). This issue lies at the heart of the divergent conservation philosophies of preservation in contrast to sustainable use. The economic underpinning of CAMPFIRE is environmentally sustainable trophy hunting and this has been a prominent concept in the development of sustainable use approaches to nature conservation (SASUSG, 1996). But it is highly contested by preservationists - particularly animal rights organizations - whose own conservation narratives explicitly condemns any form of use of animals by humans, maintaining that the most basic interests of animals should be afforded the same consideration as the similar interests of human beings (Singer, 1975).

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) was established to regulate the trade in wildlife products. In the view of Zimbabwean policy-makers, CITES was then evolving from a regulatory regime into a prohibition regime with regards to certain species, most notably the elephant and rhino (Duffy, 2000). Within Zimbabwe, prohibition in the trade of ivory products was generally perceived to be unfair and detrimental to Zimbabwe's elephant management strategies, which were based on sustainable use of elephant populations, including trophy hunting, and trade in the resulting products (DNPWLM, 1991, Zimbabwe Trust, 1990a). This provided the incentive for the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) and civil society proponents to take a leading role in elephant management debates at CITES, and in debates relating to principles of use within CITES generally (Duffy, 2000).

Rowan Martin was the key 'policy entrepreneur' advancing the position of Zimbabwe at CITES during the 1980s and early 1990s, and was optimally placed as Deputy Director of DNPWLM - working in close liaison with Zimbabwean allies from NGOs, initially notably David Cummings (WWF) and Rob Monroe (Zimbabwe Trust), and in later years

Tap Maveneke (CAMPFIRE Association), Jon Hutton (ART) and Professor Marshall Murphree (in his role as Chairman of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative). Subsequently, the active role of these individuals, along with a large 'supporting cast' from throughout the region, expanded to other relevant influential international environmental fora and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) where principles of use versus preservation were decided, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), World Trade Organisation (WTO) and IUCN World Conservation Congresses. These international links have drawn these Zimbabweans, other key southern African actors, or those who have worked there and been influenced by such perspectives,[18] into the heart of the global environmental 'epistemic community' of scientific experts and policy makers who influence the processes of international environmental policy making (Haas, 1992). Such policy entrepreneurs have demonstrated their ability to exercise their 'agency' by strategically influencing others and enrolling them in their projects, as the following discussion demonstrates.

In order to achieve their objectives internationally - which was believed to be essential if national conservation strategies based on sustainable use were to be successful - Zimbabwean CBNRM advocates built close alliances with others in the international community who espoused wildlife management strategies and principles aligned to those of Zimbabwe. This included working with and developing common positions with a variety of different governments and indigenous peoples from countries such as Japan, Norway, Canada and Australia, who shared Zimbabwe's sustainable use approach to the management of their wildlife populations. A central component of the strategy adopted *vis-á-vis* CITES was to also build a strong coordinated regional consensus, initially around the issue of ivory trading and later to sustainable use in general. This was eventually formalized as the southern African Convention for Wildlife Management (SACWM), which included Botswana, Namibia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. It generally had

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[18] For example, Dr M Lindique, the former director of the Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism in Namibia and an active international proponent of CBNRM and sustainable use, was recruited as a senior member of the CITES secretariat, before returning to Namibia and taking up the position of Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Likewise, Achim Steiner, formerly with the IUCN ROSA office in Zimbabwe, subsequently became Director General of IUCN and later the Executive Director of UNEP.

the support of the great majority of SADC nations at CITES meetings throughout the 1990s. The regional position was consolidated in 1999 with the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement, which commits member states to adopt measures that facilitate CBNRM in the management of wildlife and law enforcement.

In addition to likeminded governments, relationships and alliances were also formed with a variety of NGO's internationally. These ranged from organizations whose primary *'raison d'être'* was the promotion of hunting - such as Safari Club International (SCI) - or the promotion of sustainable use as a tool for wildlife management - such as the World Conservation Trust (IWMC) - to the mainstream conservation organizations, notably IUCN and WWF. Indeed IUCN, through its secretariat, Specialist Groups and General Assemblies - later known as World Conservation Congress's - provided further important forums in which southern Africans promoted principles of sustainable use that eventually gained endorsement globally.

One outcome of CAMPFIRE implementers' concern about their influence on international environmental policy making was the establishment in 1992 of Africa Resources Trust (ART), an NGO with the express aim of 'promoting CAMPFIRE interests to policy makers and interest groups at regional and international levels' (Zimbabwe Trust, 1996:22). The following quote from Zimtrust's 1996 '15th Anniversary Report', perhaps sums up the prevailing attitude and illustrates the dominant discourse – replete with storylines of 'heroes' (African communities and ART) and 'villains' (northern preservationists) (Hajer, 1995) - among CAMPFIRE implementers from the late 1980s onwards:

> *ART aims to protect the rights of communities involved in the CAMPFIRE programme, and in other similar programmes in the region, to exploit their own resources in a manner which is both sustainable and meets their own needs for economic development. Wildlife markets are threatened by 'northern preservationists' who believe, contrary to CAMPFIRE, that wildlife should be*

protected and not utilized, and who lobby fiercely for the retention of such inhibiting laws as the ban on ivory sales. This is the fundamental issue that is being strongly promoted by the 'animal rights' advocates, which is forcing CAMPFIRE to defend its ground (Zimbabwe Trust, 1996:22).

Such rhetoric clearly presents communities as powerless in the face of external predators, both state and NGO, requiring the protection of well meaning external agents. Throughout the 1990's, ART spearheaded and coordinated the international activities of the civil society organisations of Zimbabwe and its southern African neighbours in relation to CBNRM, working in close coordination with regional governments.   During this period ART established offices in Washington DC[19], London and Brussels with the aim of informing and influencing wildlife management policy, particularly trade policy, in the US and Europe. These offices built upon and expanded the actor-networks already established by Zimbabwe in earlier CITES related activities, once again focusing on issues related to sustainable use and wildlife management with those organizations and government departments who were primarily concerned with wildlife management and environmental issues.[20] One impact of ART international activities was further strengthening the existing regional CBRNM actor-network through continuous process of interactions between key regional CBNRM advocates - from government, NGO's and community representatives - involved in ART international activities. For example, senior government, NGO and community representatives from all SADC countries frequently undertook joint activities throughout Europe and the US. These activities included study tours and provision of testimony at US Congressional hearings on CBNRM related issues (Africa Resources Trust, 1998). Such activities further strengthened actor-networks vertically - from community level to senior government

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[19] The Washington office was established in 1995 and closed in 1998, and at that time was the only permanent representative office of any African NGO in the US.

[20] The activities of these offices ranged from ensuring Southern African representation – drawn from government, NGO and communities - was made at the relevant US Congressional Hearings to arrange academic 'study tours' of southern Africans to US and European Universities; extensive communications and media work; to lobbying the US Congress on particular legislation, such as the Endangered Species Act; and responding to the campaign unleashed by animal rights activists to discredit CAMPFIRE, CBNRM and sustainable use in general.

level - and horizontally – between similar groups and organizations from different countries – throughout the region. These activities also strengthened and expanded upon the existing networks within the environmental community. Supporters in the region constituted local nodes of a global epistemic community mobilized behind sustainable use. This network, or what Hajer (1995) calls 'discourse coalition' was brought and held together through the 'story line' of 'sustainable use'. This sustainable use 'story line' can then be considered as having provided:

> *the essential discursive cement that creates communicative networks amongst actors with different or at best overlapping perceptions and understandings* (Hajer, 1995:63).

A collective identity was effectively maintained through subscription to the discourse of sustainable use. This served not only to incorporate a diverse group of actors internationally, but also to exclude others.
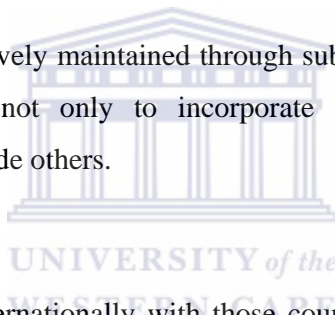
This alignment of CBNRM internationally with those countries and organizations that represented one extreme end of the conservation spectrum - albeit that there was also considerable interaction and support from mainstream conservation groups – resulted in it being vilified and attacked by the influential and financially well-endowed animal rights movement in the West (Fortman, 2005). Animal rights activists targeted CAMPFIRE and CBNRM in a high profile international campaign. The short term objective of this campaign was to cut off USAID funding for CBNRM. The longer term objective being to ensure that sustainable use (as a wildlife management tool) was discredited and a strict preservationist agenda allowed to dominate international conservation policies once again (Africa Resources Trust, 1998). The activities of the animal rights activists soon became viewed throughout the southern Africa region as one of the most significant threats to natural resource management and conservation as well as constituting a renewed form of 'eco-imperialism.' Even heads of state aired their

concern internationally, and President Quett Masire of Botswana stated during an address to the Washington DC conservation and development community in 1997 that:

> *In Botswana, we are proud of our successful conservation efforts. This success has been achieved in part because our natural resource management strategies ensure that conservation contributes to the livelihoods of those who live in proximity to protected areas and wildlife. Unfortunately, our successful conservation record is now being threatened by the activities of certain international organizations who believe that the rights of animals must be on an equal footing with African people...It is environmental imperialism...Let us manage our own resources without interference from these groups* (Masire, 1997:5).

Whilst the CAMPFIRE Associations' Maveneke commented that:

> *Although trophy export is permitted by CITES, it is constantly threatened by domestic legislation, particularly because of the pressure from animal rights organization in the USA. Should export of elephant trophies be jeopardized, then the entire CAMPFIRE program would be severely threatened. We believe that is what these groups want, not just because they hold elephants in such high esteem but because they basically disagree with sustainable use of wildlife…CAMPFIRE views the campaign as a form of environmental fundamentalism* (Africa Resources Trust, 1998:28-29).

Even the normally circumspect Murphree identified the activities of animal rights groups as one of the four major threats to conservation and sustainable use globally:

> *[the fourth threat is] the intentional distortion of conservation concerns by certain individuals and organisations. I referred to these people before in the context of the animal rights movement.... sowing confusion and making real solutions to real problems harder to achieve* (Murphree, 1997a).

The vilification of CBNRM by animal rights groups, ultimately served to cement its international relationships firmly within environmental and conservation policy-networks and epistemic communities, including the sustainable use community. CBNRM actor-networks became embedded in and responded to a 'crisis' narrative (Keeley and Scoones, 2003) - sustainable use, and by extension CBNRM, was under threat from animal rights groups and preservationists. The result was that the epistemic community and actor networks with which CBNRM was engaged were dominated by environmental issues to the exclusion and ultimately detriment of a range of other critical issues and networks which CBNRM could constructively have engaged with in order to inform critical elements of its policy process. Of principle concern to this thesis, being those related to politics, governance and democracy. Magome and Murombedzi (2003) argue that the degree to which other issues were addressed was largely rhetorical:

> *[CBNRM discourse]...is often couched and packaged with the rhetoric of appealing terms, such as 'community participation and empowerment' or 'joint management' in order to disguise its main agenda of biodiversity conservation* (Magome and Murombedzi 2003:116).

However, this is not to suggest that the international policy network and epistemic communities with which CBNRM advocates were involved were limited exclusively to those concerned with conservation or environmental issues. The involvement of the University of Zimbabwe through CASS, ensured that there were also interactions with academic institutions globally, primarily those focusing on social sciences and more specifically with Common Property Resource (CPR) management. This manifested itself in various ways, including the attraction of a constant stream of international researchers interested in CBNRM to the region.[21] Indeed, common property management

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[21] One result of the constant stream of international researchers is that a 'Google Search' of 'CAMPFIRE Zimbabwe' in 2009 yields over 70,000 hits, with over 3,400 in an academic literature search alone. Of the five internationally renowned development initiatives entered by this researcher, only the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh scores more.

is one of the conceptual roots of CAMPFIRE (Murphree, 1997b). Ultimately, the primary international scholarship network with which CBNRM advocates were involved and associated were those of CPR management as illustrated by the prominence at successive International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP) Conferences of discussions related to CBNRM. Turner noted in a 2004 address to the IASCP that:

> *CBNRM is an operational version of common property resource management, deriving from the specific context of rural development and resource conservation efforts in developing countries...Indeed to all intents and purposes CBNRM is management of the commons* (Turner, 2004:3).

CPR principles are a common thread found in much of the relevant academic social science literature relating to CBNRM. CPR is, however, criticized by some analysts on the grounds that it is essentially apolitical as many defences of common property possess a strong anti-state orientation, seemingly based on the premise that common property should be defended because local autonomy should be defended (Ostrom, 1990). Agrawal notes that:

> *Writings on common property have been...relatively inattentive to issues of power and the larger socio-political context within which most common property regimes are embedded.*(Agrawal, 2001:181)

Nelson reinforces this point noting that:

> *CPR focuses on how various institutional arrangements affect the behavioural incentives that determine the way resources are used (i.e. sustainability or lack thereof) rather than how those institutional arrangements evolve in the first place. Little if any attention is paid in terms of the political processes that*

determine the way rights over resources are structured' (Fred Nelson, personal communication, 2009*).*

Consequently, the primary social science theoretical underpinnings and networks which influenced and were influenced by CBNRM in southern Africa failed to encourage the creation of bridges or linkages to discourses and networks focused on what were then contemporary political issues such as democratisation and decentralisation, and in the case of CPR tended to actively discourage this by its apolitical analysis of tenurial regimes. The influence of CPR in this regard should not be underestimated as some of CBNRM's primary policy entrepreneurs have been intimately linked with this. For example, Professor Marshall Murphree, the individual who has arguably played the most influential role in the conceptual development of CBNRM and in its overall development and promotion at all scales, along with many of those whom he has mentored and who have also become influential in their own rights (e.g. Murombedzi, Nemarundwe, Mugabe, Jones, Anstey) have also been closely associated and linked with CPR scholarship and networks.
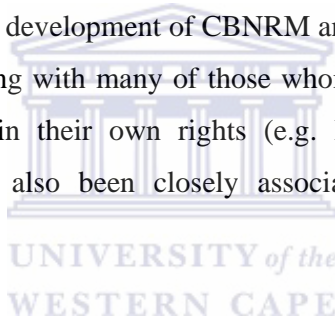
4.3.1 Regional Networks

In many respects, it is a false distinction to identify and discuss regional and international networks separately as the two were/are overlapping and intertwined, sharing common scientific underpinnings and discourses. However, the distinction does bring to the fore certain aspects that are useful to highlight here. Within southern Africa, regional connections, intentionally promoted by donors, have played a central role in spreading lessons and cross-border influences (Rihoy, 1995, NACSO, 2003) spreading the narrative of CBNRM 'success'. This has been done through government institutions such as SADC (particularly the Wildlife Sector Technical Cooperation Unit, Malawi), and the southern African Convention on Wildlife Management (SACWM); and through other regional civil society institutions, e.g. IUCN's southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG, 1996); the Regional NRMP programme (USAID, 1989); ART; the Dutch funded CBNRM network and WWF's Southern African Regional

Programme Office. The result being that by 2003, as well as the existing programmes in Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, new CBNRM programmes had come on line in South Africa (Magome and Murombedzi, 2003); Tanzania (Shackleton and Campbell, 2001), Mozambique (Anstey, 2005) and Malawi (Shackleton and Campbell, 2001). These also gave impetus to new transboundary initiatives – variously known as Transboundary Natural Resource Management (TBNRM) or Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA's) (Munthali, 2007).

Some scholars maintain that the primary beneficiaries of such network related activities were network members themselves. For example, Swatuk (2005:4) claims that 'the emergent narrative touting CBNRM's success reflected not local resource level realities but the interests of this exclusive, empowered network.' The validity of this claim is difficult to ascertain, as there is no empirical evidence to substantiate it, neither is there any empirical evidence to suggest that there was any intention among these institutions or individuals that they should be beneficiaries. However, it is clearly verifiable that they did benefit considerably, not least through generous funding from donors, recognition and acclaim.

As discussed above, CBNRM regional networks developed, to a large degree, from existing relationships within the wildlife management institutions that first launched them. This was reinforced by the actions of donors, most notably USAID, Nordic countries and the EU, who placed CBNRM within their project portfolios as 'Natural Resource Management' and ensured that the 'Goal' and 'Purpose' reflected this focus on wildlife. For example, the 'Purpose' of the USAID Regional NRMP Phase 1 was:

to improve social and economic well-being of residents of rural communities by implementing sustainable community-based wildlife conservation and utilization programs (USAID, 1989:15).

This ensured that financial and technical support from these donors was orientated towards the wildlife management sector and that the national implementing institutions were those from within this sector. For example, the regional component of the USAID NRMP, which aimed at disseminating knowledge and best practices within CBNRM regionally, was housed within the SADC Wildlife Technical Coordination Unit, based in Malawi. The outcome of this donor focus was the further 'black boxing' of CBNRM within the wildlife sector at regional and national levels. Attempts by some local implementing agencies to break out of this 'box' were unsuccessful. For example, efforts to emphasize to the responsible USAID officials that the regional NRMP contributed to two of USAIDs key strategic objectives in Africa, 'protecting the environment' and 'fostering democracy and participation' (USAID, 1996) with a view to broadening and strengthening the programmes by engaging with activities under the 'democracy' objective were generally met with a distinct lack of enthusiasm despite being widely acknowledged as valid by the officials. This lack of enthusiasm by the USAID officers in question emanated from the fact that they had to meet targets and were responsible only for 'protecting the environment', and it was not in the interest of these mid-level bureaucrats to further the objectives of a different USAID strategic objective. Indeed, any attempt on their part to do so could have triggered an internal 'turf war' and bureaucratic wrangling[22].   The consequence of the actions and perceptions of the principal donor was then to reinforce the 'containment' of CBNRM within the wildlife management sector, hindering its ability to interact with other relevant sectors, discourses and expertise within the region and internationally.

The impact of a network will depend on how powerful the group is, and this in turn depends on its control over resources and access to information and its skill in using these advantages, including generation of media coverage (Allison, 1971). The regional CBNRM network of the 1990s was well-resourced and demonstrated remarkable campaigning skills. With the support of funding from a range of bi-lateral and multi-

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[22] This account is based on discussions by the researcher with various USAID officials at regional (Botswana) and international (Washington) levels as a representative of ART and ZimTrust in the 1990s.

lateral donors and private foundations - including the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), EU, USAID, Nordics, Ford Foundation and other private foundations - well funded and well connected networks were established that had excellent outreach mechanisms and connections, including with the local and international media. Other regional bodies, such as IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) - under whose auspices the influential SASUSG was established – ART and WWF, as well as intergovernmental bodies and processes, such as SADC and SACWM, supported and complimented such initiatives. The result was that actor networks were established throughout the region that spanned localities from village to international levels, criss-crossing between multiple-actors and scales. One manifestation of this was the regular presence of community representatives from CBNRM areas from 7 different countries at international fora and MEA negotiations throughout the 1990's, fora which still remain today largely dominated by technical experts and scientists. However, these representatives were entrenched members of these networks, fully conversant with CBNRM and sustainable use discourse and narrative.
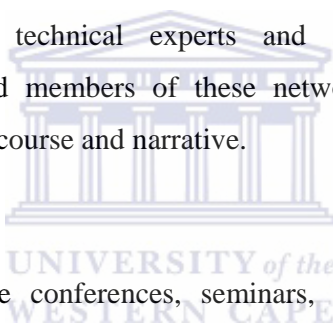
At the regional level, multiple conferences, seminars, 'exposure tours[23]', training programmes, joint research initiatives, press briefings and email groups/list servers were established. As individuals moved across locales, practices became linked and influenced through specific initiatives, funding networks, and professional alliances.

4.4 The Effects of National and Regional Policy Processes and Outcomes

This background and context of CBNRM within the international and regional environmental policy communities has had far reaching effects on the manner in which CBNRM has been implemented and its outcomes. The principles and concepts upon which CBNRM was premised – originating principally from within the Zimbabwean

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[23] Such 'exposure' tours between officials from different countries to introduce them to CBNRM lessons and principals were a common occurrence throughout the 1990s, including countries from as far away as Nigeria, the US and Latin America as well as frequent exchanges between southern African countries.

wildlife sector - became entrenched within the sustainable use discourse through its international linkage and then disbursed throughout a range of countries at many different levels (Rihoy, 1995) in an ongoing process of 'co-construction of knowledge' (Keeley and Scoones, 2003).

One such principle was the necessity to introduce devolved institutional structures for natural resource governance rather than decentralization. Chapters 5, 7 and 9 describe in detail how this materialized in Zimbabwe and Botswana and the effects of this approach on outcomes. As detailed in Chapter 2, from the early 1980's onwards, the world witnessed a wave of decentralisation of power over natural resources to local government (Ribot, 2004). However, by the early 1990's, this wave was being replaced by a second wave of decentralization or 'devolution' that saw the proliferation of 'user committees' and the bypassing of local government structures (Manor, 2005). This second wave was largely pushed by donor enthusiasm for community participation in natural resource management as a means of giving rural dwellers greater influence over decisions that affect them (Manor, 2005, Agrawal, 2001). USAID was at the forefront in this regard, and the significant influence of USAID on CBNRM throughout the SADC region after 1990 has already been discussed above. As a consequence of these networks and connections, CBNRM developed internationally and regionally largely disconnected from mainstream democratisation and political discourses that could have provided further insight and alternative perspectives. The primary influence has been that of donors and their clearly stated preference for devolution as opposed to decentralisation.[24] The mechanism favoured by both donors and the southern African wildlife managers who were the original architects of CBNRM (Martin, 1986), in the absence of rigorous debate or analysis, soon became adopted as 'conventional wisdom' throughout the region and was advanced as a 'blue print' for CBNRM institutional reform. The far-reaching effects of these factors will be returned to and explored in detail in following Chapters.

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[24] This can be viewed as just one of many mechanisms by which biodiversity conservation involves ceding considerable authority and decision-making power to a range of relatively unaccountable supra-national entities – such as bilateral and multilateral donors, international NGOs and multinational or private sector companies – bypassing 'legitimate' state authority structures (Jeanrenaud, 2002, Wilshusen et al, 2002, Brosuis, 2006).

A further framing assumption concerned the apolitical nature of conservation, and by extension, CBNRM. As a result of the actor-networks with which CBNRM was intimately entwined in the 1980s and 1990s, the greatest influence on CBNRM practice and implementation – the role of CASS and other social science institutions within CAMPFIRE notwithstanding due to their focus on CPR - came broadly from within the conservation community, and more specifically from within the sustainable use sub-sector. Within such circles, it was a generally accepted 'adage' that 'conservation and politics don't mix', leading to claims that the environment was somehow above politics and needed to be insulated from it (Duffy, 2000, Manor, 2005, Buscher and Whande, 2007, Anderson and Grove, 1987)[25]. Environmental policies and sustainable use in particular, were presented as non-political 'scientific' prescriptions, albeit that social science was incorporated. The rhetoric of conservation became depoliticized as uncontested 'science'. Reinforcing this is that sustainable use and therefore CBNRM discourse tends to rely on the apolitical and ahistorical narrative of agricultural economics, emphasizing 'financial and economic profitability' and 'Africa's comparative advantage' with a focus on returns on land area (Wolmer et al., 2003).

This enabled the bypassing of complex ethical, political and governance considerations that lie at the heart of conservation policies. As discussed in Chapter 2, such policies ultimately determine access to land and other natural resources. Therefore, they have significant influence on rural economies generally. The conservation community, due to its wealth and influence compared to most local actors, often become key players. In short, 'conservation practices are not benign. They alter the local playing field, sometimes drastically' (Wilshusen et al., 2002:24). Only in the last decade has there been increasing realization that the politics of conservation is a central concern (Brosuis,

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[25] This is not to disregard the 'political ecology' approach first developed in the 1970's, which called for an understanding of ecology within wider political economic relations (Peet and Watts, 1996), but rather to concur with Buscher and Wolmer's (2007) contention that the principle impact of such 'shock therapies' has been to ascribe negative connotations to the politics of conservation thus creating an antipathy for such politics. The outcome being the 'pretence' that it is possible to do away with politics altogether (Buscher and Wolmer, 2007:6).

2006) and power struggles between actors over access to resources are a principal determinant of policy. However, Brosius (2006) and Jeanrenaud (2002) remain sceptical as to whether environmentalists have accepted social science out of pragmatism in an era of community based conservation and whether there is any understanding of the aims of social science besides the conservation of biodiversity.

This apolitical conservation agenda ensured that the complex myriad of issues encompassing CBNRM at a national level went largely unexplored by analysts and implementers for several decades. Isolated attempts, probably the earliest of which came from Murphree (1995b), to draw attention to such issues appear to have gained little traction at the time, perhaps soon lost among the calls from other policy entrepreneurs to address what were perceived by them to be the more pressing problems and threats, notably those emanating from the international animal rights movement.

One of the key agrarian issues that CBNRM has notably failed to address is that of land tenure reform in communal areas. This is a direct result of the dominance of a scientific and technical discourse that portrayed wildlife management as an apolitical, technical exercise, coupled with its dominance by an array of international donors and national and international NGOs driven by private capital investments (Hughes, 2006). CBNRM initiatives are implemented in the context of southern Africa's communal tenure regimes but CBNRM notably fails to problematise the nature and dynamics of tenure systems and their associated governance and power structures. The result has been failure on behalf of CBNRM to engage with broader agrarian debates, notably that of land reform. Indeed, Murombedzi (in press) maintains that the state-capital collaboration produced by the alliance of organisations dominant within CBNRM, functions to protect existing property rights and helps deflect attention away from the struggles of rural communities for land and property rights by providing limited access to financial benefits from resource use. CBNRM has been shaped according to the alliance of interests represented by the dominant players' interests, rather than those of rural dwellers.

Land tenure systems must be understood in relation to the economic, political, and social systems, which produce them and are influenced by them (Bruce, 1988). Chapter 3 has already discussed the way natural resources serve as a source of political patronage for the elite in many African states. Control and distribution of these resources play a key role in shaping the post-independent state and its relationship to its citizens. As Chapters 5 to 7 reveal, Zimbabwe and Botswana have been no exception in this regard. Maintenance of the existing tenurial status-quo serves the interest of the state. However, under the guise of CBNRM, the state has been able to present itself as having a modernizing, pro-reform agenda. For example, this pro-reform agenda has entailed righting the racial injustices of the colonial era in accessing benefits from wildlife, and thus the state has simultaneously appeared to speak out on behalf of the citizens of Africa internationally in the face of creeping 'eco-imperialism' – which has, in effect, served to deflect attention away from its failure to address broader and more pressing agrarian issues such as land reform. Thus, the state has effectively co-opted CBNRM in its attempts to maintain the status-quo. Despite the calls for tenure reform within the CBNRM discourse and the appearance that this is being addressed, efforts have largely been confined to the 'aborted devolution' discourse with its focus on specific, limited rights to wildlife to communities rather than local authorities. Such calls do not address the central issues underlying tenurial reform (Alexander and McGregor, 2001). CBNRM in southern Africa generally constitutes limited resource tenure reforms. It has created new, yet limited, rights to natural resources. It has essentially left unchanged communal tenure regimes, and fails to engage wider issues of land rights or regulation of access to high-value natural resources as well as make changes in the local administrative structures.

By failing to address land tenure issues, CBNRM has not only protected the interests of political elites at the expense of communal land dwellers; it also serves the interests of 'capital'. Clearly, the private sector, both foreign and local, has historical and political reasons not to address the broader objectives related to land tenure reform within the

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CBNRM agenda. Because of the post-structural adjustment and the neo-liberal agenda supported by governments and aid agencies, CBNRM initiatives throughout the region tend to support private sector ecotourism and commercial wildlife utilization interests rather than local resource proprietorship (Hughes, 2006). Through CBNRM, the private sector has been able to expand its operations into communal areas, while also mobilizing state support to ensure the security of this expanded access to natural resources (Alexander and McGregor, 2001). Due to limited rights to natural resources under CBNRM approaches, local communities have little discretion to determine actual resource uses and only have rights to revenues generated from natural resource exploitation by external interests (Murombedzi, 2003).

The framing of this alliance of capital and state also enables the co-optation of local community elites (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007, Rihoy et al., 2007) into the CBNRM agenda. By focusing on 'communities', CBNRM glosses over the problems of socio-economic stratification and class formation in the rural societies in which it is situated (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). The result is that the power dynamics internal to individual locations, and the strategies employed by the different strata within communities to engage with CBNRM go largely unrecognized. Nevertheless, internal contradictions, conflicts and specific class interests play an important role in community organization and dynamics in CBNRM programmes.

A focus of discussion in this chapter has been identification of those involved in the policy process, but of equal importance is those who were excluded from it. One outcome of CBNRM is that people at the margins of developing states and societies found themselves at the centre of the global environment and development discourse (Swatuk, 2005, Hughes, 2006). Communities involved in CBNRM generally occupy remote areas near national parks that are regarded as marginal for arable and pastoral activities. The new development framework introduced by CBNRM brings an entire infrastructure involving the state, donors, powerful conservation organizations and the private sector into areas that have traditionally been largely outside the interest of these

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agents. As illustrated in the discussion above, CAMPFIRE and similar initiatives led to the development of a diverse network of stakeholders in support of CBNRM. Nevertheless, to what degree were those rural dwellers involved on a daily basis on natural resource management encompassed within the policy making process? The discourse and actor-network with which CBNRM became so intimately intertwined internationally served to marginalize more than just expertise and insights from other disciplines.

In different policy areas, the way issues are talked about can be extremely important and this is certainly true for environment and conservation policy, where scientific knowledge is important in framing the debate. As Lyotard (1979:25) points out 'scientific knowledge requires that one language game be retained and all others excluded'. The 'sustainable use' discourse predominant in southern Africa is just such a 'language game run by the professional classes' (ibid), which has in some instances excluded the knowledge and participation of others from involvement in the policy process and network. The ways in which arguments have been framed and articulated has empowered those people and institutions whose competencies they are associated with, whilst marginalizing others. Both Whande (2009) and Welford (2001) illustrate how this does indeed play out within the context of CBNRM policy making, which is dominated by ecologists, environmentalists and economists who ensure that policy making remains far removed from local realities. They also explore the negative effect of this on local people's views and perceptions of conservation and their alienation from the natural resource base.

Sustainable use provides the scientific rationale for CBNRM, and this rationale has played a role in enabling the state, encompassing CBNRM implementers and advocates, to retain authority over certain wildlife resources whenever convenient. The result is that, rhetorically, and in reality, some aspects of community participation are encouraged while scientists and technical experts continue to determine the parameters of participation in wildlife management. For example, the suitability for the inclusion of a

village in CAMPFIRE is determined at the top of the administrative hierarchy by DNPWLM. This denies communities the right to choose whether to engage in the programme. Once the community members are involved, they may be engaged in some proscribed elements of decision-making such as quota setting. However, the technical aspects of wildlife management come as predetermined technology packages, developed and approved by experts and bureaucrats. The RDCs, safari companies and DNPWLM effectively make all decisions concerning wildlife management. The same situation prevails in Botswana.

Thus communities continue to be constructed as 'subjects' of development planning, not 'citizens' fully involved and engaged (Mamdani, 1996). This allows for selective 'participation' in wildlife management decision making processes, and hence claims by advocates that the process is participatory, whilst having no bearing on whether communities participate in the policy making process itself. Once again, Murphree (2004) sums up this situation:

> *This epistemic community continues to be dominated by a scientific-cum-bureaucratic paradigm which is deterministic, reductionist and impositional. Applied to communal approaches this paradigm translates into the following assumptions and attributes: designs emanated from external agents whose knowledge and norms are transcendent; designs can be engineered to produce predictable outcomes; designs are implemented through a time and resource-bound project mode; projects are produced by external agents on behalf of third parties, the communal actors who are its independent subjects* (Murphree, 2004:215).

4.5 Conclusion

This Chapter has described and explored the effect of broader developments within the global and regional political economy upon the CBNRM policy process and implementation. This has revealed how CBNRM policy has been driven in part by

seemingly pragmatic national political agendas and economic realities; ranging from the political imperative to do away with the racial inequalities of the colonial period after the arrival of liberal democracy in the region, to the economic necessity arising from budgetary cut-backs introduced by structural adjustment programmes. It has traced how the international influence has manifested itself most obviously through the interventions of international donors and NGOs which have been instrumental in shaping CBNRM policy and programme implementation and has explained how this influence contributed to the entrenchment of devolution as a blue print approach within CBNRM. This has highlighted the domination of CBNRM by a neo-liberal agenda..

By tracing the process and identifying the tactics whereby networks were built and actors enrolled, this chapter has identified where the science driving policy originated from, who used it and how it was used. It revealed the dominance of wildlife management objectives, whether by government, donors or NGOs, in policy and programme development. The chapter explored how the emergence of a perceived 'crisis', resulting from challenges and threats arising from the animal rights movement, further polarized and entrenched networks and discourses and thus further entrenching CBNRM within the wildlife conservation field. Reinforcing this 'black boxing' has been the failure of primary social science theoretical underpinnings and networks influencing CBNRM, stemming from common property management studies, to encourage the creation of bridges or linkages to discourses and networks focused on political issues such as democratisation and decentralisation. Indeed, CPR tended to discourage this by its apolitical analysis of tenurial regimes. The overall effect was the boxing of CBNRM within the field of environment, and thus limiting its ability to engage with other disciplines, narratives and actors who could have constructively informed critical elements of policy development.

Examination of this history and background has revealed the dominance and implications of two framing assumptions upon which CBNRM is based: adherence to the ideal of devolved institutional structures rather than decentralized; and the belief that

conservation, and by extension CBNRM, were inherently apolitical. These assumptions meant CBNRM implementers and policy makers ignored or bypassed complex ethical, political, and governance considerations that lie at the heart of conservation policies. Foremost among issues that CBNRM has failed to engage with are those of land rights and reforms in communal areas. Indeed, I maintain that CBNRM has been used by the state, in pursuit of the interests of the elite and private sector, to deflect attention away from the need for agrarian reforms. Finally, I have explained how the dominance of a 'scientific' discourse and environmental epistemic community failed to create policy space for rural dwellers, despite rhetoric to the contrary. Indeed, CBNRM to date has been shaped according to the alliance of interests represented by those dominant within the actor-networks and political elites, rather than those of its intended beneficiaries, rural dwellers.

CHAPTER 5

THE POLICY PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH IN BOTSWANA

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter explores the process of CBNRM policy development and implementation in Botswana at the national level. It reveals how the process and outcomes of policy making reflect social and political complexities and contestations in decision making in a context dominated by political economic interests at both national and local levels. The policy environment in which CBNRM was introduced and implemented is reviewed to identify macro-level policy trends and structured political interests contextualising CBNRM, and an examination of how these have constrained and influenced policy is undertaken. This focus on CBNRM policy highlights the importance of political choices in natural resource management, demonstrating that policy making is not a rational, linear process guided by scientific knowledge but rather a political process where ideology and individuals' and groups' interests interact. An analysis of the actor networks involved in policy making and implementation is undertaken, as is an analysis of the narrative dominant within conservation and shifts in this narrative over the last twenty years.

The analysis offered in this Chapter and the following indicates that the current problems facing CBNRM in Botswana result from myriad and iterative, social, political and economic processes at local and national scales. Many problems relate directly to the origins of the CBNRM programme, the Natural Resources Management Project (NRMP) and its successors, and the way CBNRM projects were and/or are being implemented. The problems range from the historical dominance of the NRMP by expatriate staff leading to the absence of a supportive national 'actor network', to the nature of the strategies adopted by the NRMP to enhance local Community-Based Organization's (CBO) governance capacities.

The broader national policy and political environment has been a crucial determinant of the implementation process. It tends to contradict and undermine CBNRM. For example, the 'localisation' of wildlife management inherent within CBNRM contradicts the nation-building ideal on which the Constitution of Botswana is based, particularly that of 'nationalization' of all natural resources. Likewise, the dominant trend towards privatization or the dominance of cattle-focused policies in rural development strategies at the national level presents impediments to progress. This operating environment presents challenges for CBNRM. Despite the often uncritical acceptance of the 'progressive' state of democracy in Botswana, a serious re-examination of its current political system reveals an increasingly autocratic political atmosphere dominated by a few senior political figures (Molutsi, 2005, Good and Taylor, 2005, Swatuk, 2005, Rotberg, 2007, Makgala, 2007) several of whom play a critical role in shaping CBNRM outcomes.[26]
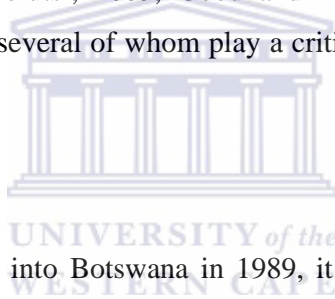
When CBNRM was introduced into Botswana in 1989, it was greeted with optimism within the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), other relevant ministries and NGOs. Its formal introduction was under the auspices of the well-funded USAID-supported NRMP. Underpinning the programme was the scientific rationale of sustainable use and the perception that socio-political and environmental conditions in Botswana were ideal for the successful implementation (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). It was accepted as an ecologically and economically viable land use option in significant portions of the country. Very low and sparse population densities of approximately 1.5 million people with an average density of 2.4 per square kilometer,

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[26] The influence of powerful political individuals, most notably President Ian Khama, in CBNRM reflects the dominance of the traditional / modernized political economic elites in wildlife conservation described by Gibson (1999).

high-value resources, a limited range of alternative land use options,[27] with only 5% of the land suitable for productive agriculture (UNDP, 2005, Whiteside et al, 1995, White, 1998), and relatively small and 'homogenous' communities were considered ideal conditions. Furthermore, the national policy and political priorities, emphasis on 'citizen participation and citizen empowerment', sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources, economic diversification and commitment to decentralisation and democratic government (Picard, 1987) all appeared to provide an ideal context in which to implement CBNRM.

Within this national context, the basic institutional framework developed for CBNRM involved the creation of local trusts or 'community-based organizations' (CBOs), since communities in rural Botswana have no pre-existing corporate identity. Once they form a CBO, communities are able to apply to DWNP for user rights to wildlife, in the form of a quota, and until 2008 were entitled to keep 100% of revenue from wildlife utilization. In addition, if communities wish to develop commercial ventures on their land, such as tourism enterprises, the CBO must obtain a land lease from District Land Boards. Leases are granted on 15-year terms and enable the CBO to enter into third-party access agreements or 'joint ventures'.

Research in Botswana from 2005-2008 revealed an interesting unfolding scenario relating to the devolutionary dynamics and democratic promise of CBNRM which contradicted the earlier optimism. Today its prospects look bleak. There is a general concern about the broadly perceived 'failure' of CBNRM to live up to its expectations,

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[27] Approximately 45% of land is cattle pasture, 17% national parks and game reserves, and 22% Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). WMAs are meant to benefit communities that live on or near them, and wildlife utilization is the primary form of land use. Other forms of development and agricultural or pastoral land uses are restricted. There are approximately 163 Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs) that overlie other forms of land use in Botswana. The Government of Botswana has zoned 42 CHAs for community management, of which 14 leases had been issued by 2003 (Rozemeijer, 2003:28).

and it has become mired in political controversy that has led to policy reversals in the form of recentralization of the benefits of natural resource management. It is now viewed with skepticism and, at worst, outright antagonism, having attracted opposition from powerful political economic elites, technocrats and local level leadership. Support within DWNP is limited to a few dedicated but relatively junior individuals while senior managers are either overtly hostile or indifferent. Interest and support from NGOs and donors has waned, whilst the majorities in the influential private sector have become vocal in their opposition. The encompassing narrative has shifted from generally positive to overwhelmingly negative, moving from support of community management to the competing conservation paradigm of 'protectionism'. The following Chapter explores in greater detail that, even within participating villages, there is little evidence of what Murphree (2000a) describes as a 'politically salient constituency' emerging. Given the weak influence of CBNRM implementers in broader policymaking and in directing strategic political dialogue with policy makers and politicians, it seems CBNRM is now at the mercy of the whims of political economic elites.

This chapter explores the key components, linkages and effects of the policy making process in Botswana. In doing so, it demonstrates the interaction of different, sometimes competing, interests and illustrates how narratives are used to advance particular interests. This enables the identification of locus of power; an assessment of how these have shifted over time and the effects of different interests and power upon 'policy spaces'.

5.2 National Context
5.2.1 Economic Status

Since independence in 1965, the Botswana economy has undergone a transformation from poverty to relative affluence with an annual growth rate of 5-6% per annum since the 1990's (UNDP, 2005). During this period it has graduated from one of the poorest countries in the world to being classified by the World Bank as a middle-income country

with a per capita GDP of US$9 200 in 2005 (Ibid). Despite this, there are huge disparities in wealth, and 47% of the population continues to live below the poverty line and unemployment remains high at 25%. Whilst Botswana's growth in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was the highest in the world for the period 1970–97, the country actually experienced a drop in its Human Development Index ranking, from 95th to 131st place, between 1991 and 2004. This makes it the only country in the world to suffer a fall during a period of rapid economic growth (Good and Taylor, 2005). Diamond mining has fuelled much of the growth and currently accounts for more than one-third of GDP and nine-tenths of export earnings. Tourism and cattle are other key sectors, and it is on the promotion of these three sectors that government policy focuses (Government of Botswana, 2003).

5.2.2 Political Characteristics

For many years, Botswana has been upheld as a beacon of democracy and good governance in Africa (Thumberg-Hartland, 1978, Samatar, 1999). However, the ascendancy of Ian Khama to the Vice Presidency and then Presidency in 2008 has, because of his autocratic tendencies, raised questions about possibilities of classic 'big man' rule and political dominance (Rotberg, 2007, Good and Taylor, 2005, Makgala, 2007) characteristic of many African countries (Chabal and Daloz, 1999). This is accompanied by growing concern that 'Botswana is governed by a small elite whose political and business interests are mutually reinforcing' (Swatuk 2005:1).

The political and economic interests of these elites are interconnected and historically rooted in the 'cattle culture' (Peters, 1994) and in mineral exploitation, particularly diamonds (Good and Taylor, 2005). There are also indications that senior politicians are becoming increasingly involved in the tourism industry (Swatuk, 2005), often as members of the boards of directors of the larger international tour companies, such as the Okavango Wilderness Safaris, the Botswana affiliate of Wilderness Safaris, the largest

tourism operator in Africa (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). This has profound implications for CBNRM policy development. In order to understand how and why CBNRM policy is developing in a pro-elite manner, it is necessary to understand its implications for these governing elites.

Inasmuch as all the trappings and institutions of a liberal democracy are in place in Botswana (Obeng, 2001, Rotberg, 2007), Good and Taylor (2005) argue that these are manipulated by the ruling elites through the constitution and contemporary practices of the ruling party, which are based on the inherited political culture. They identify the shortcomings of democracy in Botswana, which include the centralization of constitutional and political power in the office of the President, the lack of free speech and curtailment of the freedom of the media, the pervasiveness of secrecy and non-accountability in government decision making, and the inability of government to accept or engage with criticism. Whilst Swatuk (2005) states that:

> *Politics in Botswana resembles African village democracy, where the kgotla (public gathering) allows for the illusion of inclusion and open (though limited) expression of opinion by the citizenry, but where the agenda is set and key decisions are taken by the ruling class.* (Swatuk, 2005:12)

Such political characteristics do not increase public participation in the policy-making process and public debate. A further interesting development of concern to many in Botswana has been the change in nature of Cabinet Ministers under Khama. A third of the Cabinet are now ex-military personnel, including the President and Vice, and the Minister for Environment and Tourism, Captain Kitso Mokaila (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007).

5.2.3 Civil Society[28]

The autocratic nature of government in Botswana is facilitated by a weak and relatively disorganized civil society. Even prior to the withdrawal of donors from the country in 2003,[29] capacity was already limited in comparison to other countries in the region in terms of numbers, financial and human resources, skills and specialization (Molutsi and Holm, 1990). Civil society is/was dependent upon donor funding and the withdrawal of donor funding weakened civil society further. Compounding these problems is the tendency of civic groups to court government favour by actively seeking representation of senior political figures within their governance structures, thus weakening their ability to represent independently alternative perspectives to government. For example, President Khama is a patron of all remaining environmental NGOs operating at a national level in Botswana. This weakness of civil society has direct and significant implications for CBNRM and for policy space in Botswana.

5.2.4 Policy and Legislative Context

In order to understand CBNRM in Botswana, an examination of the policy context within which it operates is essential. Local-level implementation over the last 15 years has outpaced policymaking and legislation (Jones, 2007). Whilst attempts to draft a comprehensive policy had been ongoing since 1996, these became mired in controversy, and the draft policy document was overturned in April 2008 and a new policy recentralizing natural resource management passed in its place. The draft had promoted a devolutionary approach to natural resource management and had been agreed upon by

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[28]Civil society refers to the arena where public debate on issues is conducted, and this is known as the 'deliberative' or 'public sphere' perspective on civil society; and/or existence of non-market organisations between the household and the state, commonly known as the 'associationalist' view of civil society. The non-market organisations may include NGOs, social movements, informal organisations and other associational organisations (membership organisations, etc.). I use both interpretations of civil society to avoid 'splitting hairs' given the cross-cutting nature and dynamism of non-market organisations' engagement in public debate.

[29] In 2003, Botswana was reclassified by Bretton-Woods institutions as a 'middle-income' country, resulting in the withdrawal of many donors from the country.

all stakeholders in 2004 (IUCN, 2004). The lack of a clearly defined and comprehensive CBNRM policy resulted in the operation and implementation of CBNRM largely influenced by fragmented pieces of policy associated with wildlife conservation and rural development such as 1986 Wildlife Conservation Policy (GOB, 1986), 1990 Tourism Policy (GOB, 1990), 2002 Rural Development Policy (GOB, 2002). This policy vacuum laid bare the implementation and operation of CBNRM to socio-economic and political manipulation and abuse, inconsistencies and accountability challenges, culminating in the 2008 policy reversal.

5.2.4.1 Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism Policy and Legislation

In the 1980s and 1990s, a number of policies and laws were developed to create an enabling environment and make general provisions for community involvement in wildlife use and management. These included the Wildlife Conservation Policy (GOB, 1986) and the Tourism Policy (GOB, 1990), which called for citizen involvement and participation in tourism and wildlife-related industries and provided for the acquisition of exclusive tourism concessions for communities and private enterprises for 15 years. The Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act (GOB, 1992) also facilitated community-based wildlife management through the creation of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's). These instruments related to wildlife and did not cover other natural resources nor did it contain specific provisions on how community involvement was to be achieved (Rozemeijer and Van der Jagt, 2000).

Despite these, until 2008, the 'Community Natural Resources Management Lease' or 'head lease' provided the legal basis for CBNRM and offered the administrative arrangement (Jones, 2007). This lack of an over-arching CBNRM policy document significantly hampered implementation over the last decade, creating competition and conflict between ministries and departments whose own mandates contradicted the spirit and method of CBNRM. The absence of integrated legislation meant that CBNRM

continued to be implemented primarily by DWNP, with limited co-operation from the Agricultural Resources Board (ARB), relevant Land Boards and district councils (DCs). As events relating to the 2001 SAVINGRAM[30] (detailed below) illustrate, this arrangement undermined the ability of CBNRM to achieve its goals. This resulted from limited implementation capacity of an agency whose premier rationale was wildlife management. Additionally, as rights were not entrenched in legislation, they were easily removed at the behest of senior politicians (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007).

5.2.4.2 Rural Development Policies

CBNRM operates within a rural context, and therefore, synergy between it and other rural development policies has to be created. Without this critical integration, CBNRM fails to buttress rural development strategies and vice versa. The mutual objectives of rural development and CBNRM would be strengthened by stimulating both community focus and development interests in CBNRM policy and weeding off inconsistencies, gaps and conflict. This research does not review these policies in any detail, but highlights the importance of creating synergies between CBNRM and other sectors that have a bearing on its success, direction and impact on democratic resource governance.

Twyman (2001) argues that, as recently as 1995, Botswana did not have a clear and coherent rural development policy, and that rural development was characterised by a set of overlapping and disparate programmes that hindered effective development in rural

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[30] A SAVINGRAM is a directive issued by the GOB. In January 2001, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government, Mr. E. Molale, raised government concerns relating to financial management in a SAVINGRAM, identifying the poor handling and use of funds earned from CBNRM projects, the lack of audited reports and the misappropriation of CBNRM funds by some trusts. As a result, the Permanent Secretary instructed that district councils – instead of safari operators dealing directly with participating communities – should manage all funds earned from community-based projects in trust. The CBNRM stakeholder group effectively blocked this SAVINGRAM at the time.

areas. The history of rural development efforts and policies in Botswana is strewn with a lengthy list of – often externally-driven – development 'failures' whose overall impact is generally considered to have increased rural poverty and inequality and created a culture of dependency and 'clientification' within rural areas, most notably among the Basarwa (Hitchcock, 2003, Hitchcock and Holm, 1993, Taylor, 2000, Saugestad, 1998, Twyman, 1998, Twyman, 2001).

In response to these shortcomings in earlier approaches, and informed by the international shift in development discourse, the GOB introduced the Community Based Strategy for Rural Development in 1997 (GOB, 1997). It marked the beginning of a shift in strategy away from an imposed top-down approach to one that is grounded in the rhetoric of 'empowerment' and 'community-led' development.[31] Whilst the launch of this policy was greeted by many within the CBNRM community as a significant success on their behalf and as a significant opportunity (Arntzen et al., 2003, National CBNRM Forum Botswana, 2004), there appears to date to have been little effort made to capitalise on these opportunities.[32] Other recently introduced strategies and policies mirror this shift in approach. These include the 2002 Revised National Policy for Rural Development (Government of Botswana, 2002) and the 2003 Poverty Reduction Strategy (Government of Botswana, 2003a). Consequently, the policy framework provided by both the environmental and rural development sectors appears strong and conducive to CBNRM.

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[31] This strategy explicitly recognizes the need to increase community involvement in initiating, developing and implementing rural development projects, calling for the devolution of development responsibilities and control to local communities.

[32] The degree to which the wildlife-focused CBNRM programme actually influenced these events, as claimed by them, rather than the broader shift in global discourses and the resulting impact on national development policies, is questionable given the lack of outreach from DWNP to other government departments and the limited involvement of sections of civil society (including NGOs and the private sector) in the programme prior to 1999.

However, there appears to be a chasm between the rhetoric of these policy documents and practice, a chasm that the controversy surrounding the CBNRM policy brought into sharp relief. Despite the apparently progressive policy framework, Arntzen (2004), Taylor (2000) and Hitchcock (2003) note that there has been a notable lack of progress in implementation of these strategies. Implementation is constrained by the inherent contradictions of these policies with others affecting the rural sector, such as land/resource tenure, decentralisation and grazing. As the following discussion indicates, these policies are influenced by and continue to support the economic and political aspirations and domination of the Tswana governing elite and bring into question the government's genuine commitment to community-based approaches.

5.2.4.3 Land Policies

Due to the prominence of tribal communal lands (covering 71% of the land area),[33] their use, productivity and management remain of central importance to the country and lie at the heart of rural development policy. The dominant form of land use in these areas is livestock farming, which has been at the centre of the Botswana economy for many centuries. Today the livelihoods of 80% of the rural population are dependent on this sector, and it is the third largest foreign exchange earner (White, 1998). Livestock also continues to play a central cultural role in that it is symbolic of the health of the agro-pastoral community and of the power of its dominant members (IIED, 2004).

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[33] Botswana's history as a protectorate of the British Crown, rather than a colony, ensured that it was less affected by colonial rule than any other country in southern Africa. This has led to various distinctions between Botswana and its neighbouring states, nowhere more so than in terms of its land tenure systems. Settlement by white farmers was never a dominant feature and consequently no more than 5.5% of the land was ever alienated for white-owned farms, compared to nearly 60% in Zimbabwe (Tshuma 1997).

The dominant policy approach remains that of privatizing grazing lands,[34] resulting in shrinking communal lands as fenced ranches (*de jure* private) and exclusive use of boreholes on rangelands (*de facto* private) expand.[35] This is driven in part by the belief within the powerful Ministry of Agriculture that communal rangelands were degraded, that degradation was caused by overgrazing, that overgrazing was caused by communal land ownership leading to open access, and that the solution was privatisation (IIED, 2004). This belief in a 'Tragedy of the Commons' (Hardin, 1968) scenario engulfing the communal areas still dominates within the Ministry of Agriculture, providing the scientific rationale for the ongoing push for privatisation within communal areas (Alden-Wily, 2003).

A further force for privatisation is overtly political. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has the support of and membership of many wealthy cattle owners and the links between government policy and benefits to this group appear clear (IIED, 2004). Peters (1994) notes that:

> *there is no doubt that some of the highly placed members of the government and party who promote the policy benefit directly as wealthy cattle and borehole owners* (Peters, 1994:218).

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[34] Leasehold farms were first established under the 1975 Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP) and were reinforced under the fencing component of the 1991 National Policy on Agricultural Development (NAPD). Leasehold farms are owned individually and inaccessible to non-owners (Peters, 1994).

[35] Whilst there have been efforts during the 1990s to promote tourism as an alternative land use in wildlife-rich areas, Mbaiwa (2004) and Hitchcock (2003) demonstrate that the bulk of these efforts have benefited the private sector rather than the communal sector. If the mounting evidence that senior political figures are becoming increasingly involved in the tourism sector is valid, it is perhaps not surprising to see increased political pressure to roll back the CBNRM policy and ensure greater privatisation.

This provides a strong incentive for driving government subsidy to the livestock sector and provides further incentives for national elites to expand their land accumulation for cattle pasturage. Whilst there is debate about the level of these subsidies (Alden-Wily, 2003), there is general agreement that 'government policies have made the livestock sector artificially attractive at the expense of other forms of land use' (IIED 2004:24).

Notwithstanding commitments in the National Development Plans (NDPs)[36], to the contrary, government efforts to boost economic growth and diversify the economy have to date focused on the livestock sector at the expense of the wildlife and tourism sectors.

5.2.4.5 Decentralization Policy

Despite the long history of decentralization in Botswana,[37] local government remains largely financially dependent upon central government and in most respects is subject to decisions made at the central level (Wunsch, 2003). However, there has been progress over the years. Picard (1987) characterised Botswana as an administrative state in which bureaucratic elites had control over processes of decision-making. By 2003, Wuncsh (2003) claimed that the last two decades had seen a considerable increase in the influence of local government because of expanded budgets, technical capability and responsibilities ranging from social service provision to land use planning.

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[36] Within the 7th, 8th and current (9th) NDPs, wildlife is recognised as one of the country's three main valuable natural resources, along with minerals and rangelands, and emphasis is placed on the opportunities it provides in diversifying the economy, and its importance for rural development (Government of Botswana, 2003b:71).

[37] This dates back to the Tordoff Commission of 1970 whose recommendations that DC staff and finance be substantially improved, were adopted (Tordoff 1988).

Despite the ongoing debate concerning the political commitment of central government to decentralisation of authority to DCs rather than to local line ministries, there is a general agreement that local government has an excellent record in delivering key services such as water, education and health, and that local political processes are well developed and democratic (Tordoff, 1988, Wunsch, 2003, Hitchcock, 2003, Molutsi, 2005). Wunsch's (2003) comprehensive comparative study of local government in South Africa, Swaziland and Botswana concludes that local autonomy is limited, and there are personnel and operational weaknesses in local government. Nevertheless, Botswana has made great progress in the last 20 years and remains the best of the three countries in providing quality local governance which responds to local needs. However, despite the relative strengths of DCs, the implementation approach adopted by the Botswana NRMP (BNRMP) and its adherence to devolution in opposition to decentralisation, effectively marginalised DCs from CBNRM implementation.

5.3 Implementation Approach and Challenges

As discussed in Chapter 3, an important dimension in understanding the policy process driving CBNRM is an examination of the philosophy, science and data underlying such an approach. There is growing recognition that decisions around natural resource management policy ultimately depend on the relative political influence of different interest groups (Keeley and Scoones, 2003, Hyden, 2008), which will be determined in part by the science and knowledge base by which it is underpinned. CBNRM entails social and political commitments, and relies on particular audiences, knowledge/science and practices to support it. Various scholars (Jones and Murphree, 2001, Duffy, 2000, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007, Rihoy et al., 2007) have documented that CBNRM in southern Africa relies upon effective and influential actor networks, and incorporates bureaucrats, local and national politicians, national and international civil society organisations, private sector actors in the tourism industry, and, to varying degrees, grassroots constituencies as critical factors in influencing the direction of CBNRM.

To be effective, these networks have to transcend disciplinary, ideological, racial, ethnic and political boundaries, and unite diverse interest groups to derive benefits from the policy. Keeley and Scoones (2003) note that the relative influence each group brings to bear on policy development is dependent on a range of factors such as their economic power, political influence, the political climate and the issues being debated. The following section explores those factors affecting the development of a policy network in Botswana, and in doing so identifies factors that have effectively prevented the development of a strong and cohesive policy network supportive of CBNRM.

5.3.1 The Emergence of CBNRM in Botswana

Without understanding the contextual dynamics and conditions of CBNRM emergence, it is possible to overlook the political and social complexities of natural resource governance and policy in the country. The origins of CBNRM in Botswana are foreign and expatriate driven. My research indicates that this has affected the nature of the policy-network supporting the policy process by determining how it has been integrated and received nationally. CBNRM was introduced in Botswana by USAID in the form of the BNRMP, implemented from 1989 through 1999. After the end of the BNRMP, The World Conservation Union/Netherlands Development Organisation (IUCN/SNV) CBNRM Support Programme assumed centre stage, followed by the European Union-funded Wildlife Conservation and Management Programme (WCMP) from 2002-6. One of the most striking elements characterising these programmes is the lack of continuity between them. Two examples suffice to illustrate this. The NRMP devoted considerable time and resources in developing comprehensive training tools, none of which were used by subsequent programmes. Both SNV and the WCMP developed alternative approaches. Meanwhile, the valuable documentary records of the BNRMP (amounting to hundreds of documents) are no longer available in the DWNP library or elsewhere in Botswana.

While each of these programmes was/is embedded within and worked together with DWNP, the lead government institution, CBNRM remains identified with donor agencies and the expatriate personnel who managed the programme.[38] It is perceived to be an imported environmental paradigm[39], thereby compromising its relevance and legitimacy locally. Consequently, the philosophy, science and data underlying CBNRM approaches in Botswana lack 'indigenous' conceptualisation and development.

Evidence from other southern African countries demonstrates that CBNRM approaches have taken years to develop and involve diverse individuals and institutions. They also reflect unique national social and political realities and commitments in those countries (see Jones & Murphree 2001 for a comprehensive discussion). However, in Botswana's CBNRM, there is a lack of cultural understanding, relationships, identities and connection to social and political networks, arising from the difficulty of embedding foreigners in the local institutional landscape. Foreigners lack 'agency' as they are unable to strategically influence others through the manipulation of a network of social relations (Long and van der Ploeg, 1989). Therefore, attempts to develop actor-networks that spread or maintain narratives are compromised. Consequently, CBNRM in Botswana faces immense implementation and operational challenges.

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[38] Bolstering this perception still further is the fact that the primary architects of the enabling policy framework that facilitated the introduction of the NRMP, the director of DWNP and several of his key staff, were also expatriates.

[39] This is in sharp contrast to the CBNRM programmes in Zimbabwe, Namibia and elsewhere, which have strong, locally conceived conceptual roots, as discussed in Chapter 7, the development of which created a dedicated, cohesive and influential network at national and local levels. In Botswana these networks are largely absent.

Foreign dominance is reflected in the term informally used to describe CBNRM within DWNP, '*Dilo tsa Makgoa*', which translates as 'Something for the white people'. The following quote succinctly illustrates the commonly held view:

> *CBNRM is just one more approach introduced by well-meaning donors who are following fashions. The history of development here is full of them and, like those, it will fade away when all the donors and foreign experts have gone* (Senior DWNP official – name withheld on request - Gaborone, interview on 16 February, 2005).

This lack of 'indigenous' roots, compounded by the lack of continuity in its implementation, has translated into limited legitimacy locally and nationally, compromising the development of a strong CBNRM actor-network. This manifests itself in the remarkable absence of a politically salient constituency at any level, and there is a notable lack of community representatives, politicians, local NGO 'personalities', leading academics and senior managers and conservation practitioners in DWNP among its supporters. Therefore, CBNRM is largely bereft of effective 'champions' or policy entrepreneurs who can influence policy making. This failure to develop an influential network has made it relatively easy to discard once donors withdraw their support.

The perception of CBNRM as an externally imposed approach at the national level is mirrored also at the local level, where the 'imposer' is perceived to be the DWNP and NGOs. As expressed by one Member of Parliament (MP):

> *In theory, CBNRM is a great idea and just what we need. It promotes self-reliance and self-sufficiency and makes people value and conserve resources. But it is being imposed on people. The participatory elements are being ignored as they're too difficult to implement. And this destroys the whole purpose* (MP Buteti, Gaborone, interview on February 17, 2005*).*

Such perceptions de-legitimized the national and local authenticity of CBNRM and alienated many potential supporters. They prevent implementers and advocates from drawing upon the CBNRM narrative of sovereign rights and anti-colonialism that they have used to great effect in ensuring political support in other countries. As detailed in Chapters 4 and 7, in Zimbabwe one of the most powerful arguments in terms of mustering political support has been the cry of 'African solution for African problems'. The dominance of a narrative disparaging CBNRM has prevented what Duffy (2000) terms 'the depoliticisation of internal environmental politics'. Indeed, it has done the opposite and effectively politicized environmental politics in Botswana. This is compounded further because the discourse, narrative and rhetoric relating to conservation in Botswana never shifted from the earlier paradigm of 'protectionism' in the comprehensive manner that it had done so elsewhere in the region. There may be a variety of reasons for this but the primary driving factor is that of the effect of a single highly influential figure, President Ian Khama.

5.3.2 Undermined from Above: CBNRM and Political Leadership

President Khama's dominance and influence extends into many social and economic areas, as well as the political. Not only is he President, he is also Paramount Chief of the Bamangwato[40] and eldest son of the nationally revered Sir Seretse Khama, securer of independence and first President of Botswana. Thus to paraphrase from Mamdani (1996), Khama is simultaneously the representative power in civil society whilst also the despotic power over Native Authorities. A senior government official succinctly captures Khama's role:

> *…to understand what's going on you have to understand about Khama and the affect his name has on people. He is feared like a lion. No Batswana will contradict him. Now he has made his position known everyone, whether they*

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[40] Wylie (1990) writes persuasively about the 'god-like' status of a Tswana chief in the 20th century. Good (2005) notes that this was an idea echoed by Khama himself recently in a statement before his Bamangwato constituency 'I am not God, but I am your chief'.

agree or not, will fall in line. (Senior DWNP official – name withheld on request – Gaborone, interview on February 19, 2005).

While this statement may be exaggerated, the influence that Khama wields within the conservation sector in Botswana cannot be overlooked. He is upheld and revered as the 'Father of Conservation in Botswana' (Daily News, 2001), in which role films have been made (e.g. Wildlife Warriors) and much media space devoted to him. This dominance of one individual on conservation within a country is unique throughout the region to Botswana. Khama's reputation stems from his days as Commander of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) when he deployed BDF personnel on anti-poaching missions to curb poaching of 'endangered species', primarily elephants (Henk, 2006). For this act, he received many international awards, e.g. the Endangered Wildlife Trust 'Conservation Statesmen of the Year Award, 2001' and acclaim both nationally and internationally. This included 'mass' recognition and accolades from private sector tourism operators, the vast majority of whom independently recognise Khama on their web sites as 'the unsung hero of conservation' – a significant serenade for one 'unsung'.
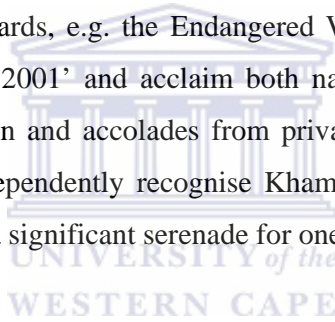
Currently, Khama remains the dominant figure behind all significant conservation institutions and initiatives within Botswana. He is the Chairman of Botswana's premier conservation NGO, the Kalahari Conservation Society; President of the Khama Rhino Sanctuary and of the Cheetah Foundation, and Chief Patron of Mokolodi Nature Reserve. He is on the board of the world's best financially endowed NGO, Conservation International (CI) - one of the few international conservation NGOs operating in Botswana and he is also active in the board of the Peace Parks Foundation. He is widely rumoured to be a shareholder in Wilderness Safaris and has personal relationships with many of the larger safari operators.

Khama's open adoption of coercive conservation tactics in using the army to engage in anti-poaching activities and public anti-hunting statements that he has made leave no

doubt as to his belief in a protectionist conservation paradigm. Statements such as 'no country can ignore poachers crossing their borders… we took on the poachers aggressively…and actually shot a few of them' (Bauer, 2004) sum-up his approach to conservation. The conservation organizations with which he is associated adopt a 'protectionist' approach to conservation, and it is these influences and networks which he interacts with as a result of his relationship with CI, Peace Parks and Wilderness Safaris. Providing a clear illustration of Khama's personal interest in and commitment to conservation was his controversial decision in November 2008 to attend a board meeting of CI, rather than attend an Extra Ordinary Meeting of SADC Heads of State to discuss the political and security issues in the region in arising from the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe Guardian, 2008).

As one ex-senior DWNP official noted:

> *Khama will probably get another international conservation award if he undermines sustainable use in Botswana, including CBNRM, and returns us to exclusively protectionist conservation. He is working towards that* (ex-DWNP official – name withheld on request – Gaborone, interview on February 23, 2005).

As demonstrated below, Khama has played a direct personnel role in the development of the new CBNRM policy which has resulted in recentralization.

5.3.3 Constituency Building by Donors

Since its introduction into Botswana, DWNP has been the lead agency in terms of policy development and technical support for CBNRM. Other government departments and ministries, including the ARB, Land Boards and DCs play a limited role. There is a consensus among analysts that CBNRM implementers largely failed to engage and be integrated with sectoral initiatives in other ministries or departments (Taylor, 2000,

Arntzen et al., 2003, Jones, 2004). The role played by other government agencies, notably the DCs, was determined by the BNRMP to be that of 'facilitators of a process and guarantors of a fair an honest process' (Winer, N; personal communication, 2006). It was a well-meaning attempt to avoid what was perceived to be the primary pitfall of the CAMPFIRE programme:

> [D]ecentralising to councils, as in Zimbabwe, was seen by us as using wildlife to provide a subsidy to local government which then passed on a percentage, under imposed terms and conditions, to communities (Winer, N; personal communication, 2006).

However, from 2003 onwards, this response has been acknowledged as a tactical error by implementers and communities alike. The National CBNRM Forum agreed in 2004 that proscribing the role of DCs has effectively marginalised them from the programme and had proven a handicap in promoting local governance and accountability (National CBNRM Forum Botswana, 2004). As illustrated by the OCT case study in Chapter Six, community leaders themselves are now making attempts to address this situation by developing strategies to ensure greater involvement and responsibility be assumed by DCs.

The failure of the BNRMP to develop a strong and diverse implementation base among local institutions early on has compounded problems of marginalization from mainstream policy-making processes. It was not until the late 1990s that Botswana begun to witness the diversification and strengthening of the CBNRM institutional landscape. Only when the BNRMP was terminated in 1999 was it recognized that there was need to ensure continuity and to create national-level institutions that would represent the interests of the growing number of CBOs. At this point, USAID was instrumental in the creation of a national umbrella and networking organisation for CBOs, the Botswana

Community-based Organisation Network (BOCOBONET) (Chapayama, O; personal communication, 2005).

During the period 1999–2003, implementers made concerted efforts to develop an influential constituency that would overcome the political isolation of CBNRM as well as create a well-organised, cohesive stakeholder group. The IUCN/SNV CBNRM Support Programme was established with the objective of:

> *providing a platform for broad stakeholder dialogue on issues of common interest, identify constraints and ways forward, and enable members to share experiences and exchange information* (IUCN/SNV, 2000:5).

It was primarily responsible for and oversaw the creation of a cohesive local interest group representing all stakeholders, including local communities. In 1999, this network consisted of a total of 35 institutions, and by 2003, it had grown to 83 CBOs, 8 government departments (local and national); 10 local and international NGOs; 58 private sector and NGO 'service providers'; 12 private sector companies and their representative association, HATAB; and various international donors (National CBNRM Forum Botswana, 2004). From 2000 to 2003, regular national CBNRM conferences involving all stakeholders were held, as well as bi-annual forum and steering committee meetings. In the formal 'CBNRM Review' of 2003, the evaluation team concluded that:

> *through the efforts of BOCOBONET and the CBNRM Forum Structures, a significant proportion of wildlife-based CBOs have participated in the policy dialogue and have played an active role in lobbying and advocacy on issues of importance to CBNRM. Stakeholders have become a movement with different interests but a common goal* (Arntzen et al., 2003:12).

5.3.4 Recentralisation

The extent of the political influence of this network in the short term was clearly demonstrated by the effective manner in which it could block the Ministry of Local Government's SAVINGRAM of 2001. This SAVINGRAM represented the first overt signs of opposition by government to the devolutionary processes inherent within CBNRM. Its aim was to overturn devolution of control of resources to CBOs and create an alternative process of decentralisation by vesting authority with DCs. The justification for this decision was that:

> *These funds are earned from natural resources and as such there is a strong feeling that there shouldn't be a departure from the policy of these resources benefiting the whole nation, as is done for diamonds and other revenue earning natural resources* (Molale, 2001).

The swift and well-choreographed response from the National CBNRM Forum, steering committee and individual institutions, notably BOCOBONET, led to the eventual withdrawal of the SAVINGRAM (BOCOBONET, 2001).

However, following these initial 'successes', a series of events began to undermine the ability of the stakeholder group to function as a lobby/advocacy group. By 2005, the seemingly strong CBNRM constituency that had thrived in the early 2000s was no longer functional or supportive of CBNRM, and this significantly undermined the political strength of its constituency. In comparison, the reaction of the government to the demands from the CBNRM Forum in 2001 and 2005 reflects a dramatic shift in political influence and the narrowing of policy space.

In 2001, the government welcomed input from the Forum into the process of finalizing the draft policy, and the outcome wholeheartedly reflected the Forum's

recommendations. The Permanent Secretary (PS), Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism (MEWT) noted at the time that the policy framework must explicitly address the management of the proceeds from the programme as lobbied for by the forum. However, its position shifted dramatically in 2005 with the PS for MEWT explicitly stating that policy-making was government's prerogative:

> It must be understood **that policy is developed by government**, taking the views of all stakeholders into consideration not just those of a special interest group such as the National CBNRM Forum might represent (Gakale, 2005; emphasis added).

This dramatic shift in the government's position was brought about by corresponding shifts in the interests, intentions and resources of actors, and their influence on the levers of power. A scrutiny of the process, by which the April 2008 CBNRM Policy was developed, illustrates clearly the narrowing of policy space over the period.

Efforts to draft the CBNRM policy in Botswana have been ongoing for almost a decade. Initial signs were that the drafting process was to be relatively inclusive, participatory and transparent. An early draft of what was then the 'Joint DWNP and ARB CBNRM Policy' was translated into Setswana and discussed in detail at workshops comprised of representatives from relevant affected communities and the concerns they raised incorporated (Cassidy, 2003). Consultations culminated in 2004 in a national workshop involving all CBNRM stakeholders, at which the draft was reviewed, inputs sort and the final product endorsed by all (IUCN, 2004). The revised draft was agreed upon by relevant departmental directors in June of 2004 and submitted to the PS, MEWT. The PS requested various minor changes, although non-affecting its substance.

At this point, the process of policy development changed from being transparent and consultative to one characterized by suppression of information and secrecy, and hence, contravening government's own procedures and protocols. In early 2005, the PS and key

personnel met (then Vice President) Khama, who expressed concern with the draft policy and expressed his desire to see unspecified changes. In March 2005 the PS, MEWT issued a confidential SAVINGRAM noting that:

> *the VP directed that we redraft the CBNRM policy in such a way that the management of revenues from leases is removed from communities given the fact that such communities do not have the capacities to manage funds* (Senior DWNP officer, name withheld on request: interview September 2005).

DWNP then revised the policy, developing a compromise mechanism for financial distribution aimed at accommodating concerns expressed by the PS but maintaining devolved financial responsibilities. At the same time, the CBNRM Forum submitted their recommendations, which the PS declined to accept as detailed above.

In June 2005, DWNP were informed by a senior government figure that their revisions were not acceptable and were given precise instructions on what changes needed to be made. These included the removal of references to devolution of financial authority and to participation. Amendments were made as requested, with the drafting team taking the unusual step of expressing their concern with these amendments in a memorandum submitted with the revised document. The process concluded with the passage of new legislation recentralizing financial authority in April 2008, ignoring advice and inputs from both technocrats within DWNP and the CBNRM Forum.

5.3.5 A Shifting Macro Context: Changes in Political Priorities and Perceptions

The shift in government's attitude and approach to policymaking described in the previous section can be attributed to a series of events seemingly unrelated to CBNRM itself. However, these events enabled the political elite to justify their actions and undertake them largely unopposed.

5.3.5.1 The 'Diamond Debate'

CBNRM has drawn attention to the question of wildlife as a 'local' or 'national' resource. This question has political ramifications for the way the GOB deals with the controversial 'diamond debate.' The Constitution of Botswana states that all natural resources are national assets, and the proceeds from their exploitation should be managed centrally through national coffers to ensure transparent and equitable distribution. The ruling BDP has built its broad electoral coalition and retained control since independence in part by adhering to this position (Poteete, 2007). CBNRM however, 'localizes' benefits from wildlife resources to local communities since they bear the cost of wildlife management within their local jurisdiction. By delineating membership and rights in CBNRM to an individual community, it effectively de-emphasizes the constitutionally implied 'national citizenship' that entitles all citizens to benefit from mineral, land and other natural resources. Therefore, CBNRM appears to contradict a key national principle upon which the Constitution is based. Viewed from this perspective, CBNRM represents a divergent political strategy which invites controversy since it reinforces local political identities and also localizes CBNRM benefits (Poteete, 2007).

Politicians and communities from diamond-rich areas are taking advantage of the alternative perspective offered by CBNRM and since 2000 many have been arguing for exemption from the constitutional rule that all natural resources are national resources so that they could benefit directly from diamonds in a similar manner to which CBNRM communities are benefiting from wildlife. As a matter of principle, they argue, their communities should have similar rights to benefits as those accorded wildlife-rich communities involved in CBNRM (MP Buteti, personal communication, interview on February 17, 2005).

This 'diamond debate' has exacerbated conflict, and raised questions about the policy choices for managing natural resources in the context of CBNRM. Inevitably, it has

brought to the fore political dynamics and contested claims to resource management in the country. The GOB has been forced to re-examine the implications of devolution of wildlife resources and benefits vis-à-vis decentralization and/or recentralization of CBNRM benefits in line with the principle of all natural resources being 'national resources.' Decentralization of natural resources and partial devolution of management responsibilities seemed to fly against government's professed commitment to the principle of natural resources being national resources. This principle had formed an integral component of Botswana's nation-building approach, which stressed the political imperative of projecting the primacy of national over local, especially traditional, identities (Poteete, 2007).

The 'diamond debate' brings sharply into relief this policy contradiction concerning natural resources. It turns the CBNRM principle of local beneficiation upside down, and makes a politically compelling case that all revenues from natural resources should be pooled in a national coffer and then redistributed for community development nationwide as well as cross-subsidize communities living in resource poor areas. The distributional struggles and claims that emerge in the 'diamond debate' have to be understood in terms of their political implications, and the political stance of the ruling party. The BDP government's call for centrally managing CBNRM funds is an attempt to address questions raised about its coalition building strategy (Poteete, 2007) and discrepancy in the treatment of mineral and wildlife resources. It has used the 'diamond debate' to recentralize CBNRM benefits and dictate the future based on its political agenda.

In Botswana, clearly, politics frames the trajectory of CBNRM, and [re]shapes boundaries within which activities and outcomes occur. The 2008 CBNRM Policy successfully managed to recentralize funds, allocating 65 percent of the revenue generated to a National Environmental Fund, which would ensure the community projects nationwide are financed. Under the leadership of President Khama, the BDP government seems to have succeeded in 'nationalizing' CBNRM funds in ways that

address the 'diamond debate,' making all natural resources benefit the 'nation' rather than the 'local.'

This recentralization of funds fails to recognize that wildlife and minerals present different management challenges. It removes the incentives for effective local management of wildlife. Local control of benefits flowing out of resource management is necessary for efficient management of wildlife resources, which does not necessarily hold true for mineral resource management. As pointed out by the CBNRM Forum 'diamonds do not eat goats' (Mmegi, 2002) while wildlife does destroy local communities' livestock. Therefore, different management regimes are required.

5.3.5.2 Alienation of Donors and the Private Sector

In previous sections, I have highlighted the weakening of civil society's influence and ability to create independent, alternative perspectives to government. This situation was compounded in 2003 when Botswana was officially reclassified by Bretton-Woods institutions as a 'middle-income' country, one result of which was the withdrawal of many donors from the country. This withdrawal served to undermine many of the donor-dependent NGOs active within the policy network of CBNRM through their membership of the National CBNRM Forum. For example, SNV withdrew its financial support of the 'CBNRM Support Programme' and BOCOBONET. BOCOBONET has subsequently had to refocus its activities on 'rural development' in general and since 2003 has played a marginal role in CBNRM (A. Mabei, personal communication, interview in Gaborone February, 23, 2005). In addition, several NGOs formerly active in the CBNRM Forum, such as the Forestry Association of Botswana, collapsed while others withdrew from the country, including the Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD). The net result was a weakened stakeholder group and increasing problems of accountability within CBOs.[41] Without a voice and forms of political leverage, civil

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[41] CBOs traditionally relied on external capacity-building inputs, which, when withdrawn, weakened their institutional support base.

society organizations' influence on CBNRM policy outcomes was limited. Government intolerance of the National CBNRM Forum's expectations of having strong input into the policy-making process clearly demonstrated the waning of civil societies influence.

Meanwhile, the private sector continues to alienate itself from CBNRM, and has collectively become a vocal and influential critic because there is a prevalence of incidents of misuse and abuse of funds by CBOs and lack of reinvestment in the resource base by communities. Narratives and 'stories' of mismanagement by communities abound among the private sector. These perceptions culminated in 2006 with the withdrawal of the influential private sector representative association, the Hotel and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB), from the CBNRM Forum. An analysis of the discourse dominant in the private sector marketing and promotional efforts reveals that generally they are hostile to the concept of sustainable use, which underpins CBNRM, and are active within an influential actor-network supportive of an alternative conservation paradigm based upon a protectionist approach and narrative of conservation.

5.3.5.3 San Controversies

The controversy over the relocation of the San from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) has alienated this already marginalised ethnic group even further from mainstream political and social discourse and public sympathies. One result of the CKGR controversy is a growing national tendency to 'blame' the San for the international condemnation of Botswana's human rights record as they draw international attention to their plight in a country used to being fêted as the standard-bearer for democracy in Africa. Confronted with increasingly hostile international attention, politicians, government officials and the media have unwarrantedly instituted a social and political backlash against the San.

Despite lack of official acknowledgement, the majority of the beneficiaries of CBNRM in Ngamiland are San. The lack of public sympathy for the San is reflected in the deficiency of public outcry over the prospective loss of benefits that the San receive from wildlife management under CBNRM.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter offers a review and analysis of the CBNRM policy process in Botswana with the objective of illustrating that natural resource policy and governance depend on the relative political influence of different interest groups. This relative influence shifts over time. Failure to understand these contextual dynamics and conditions of CBNRM emergence may result in overlooking the political and social complexities of natural resource governance and policy.

The interests of the political economic elite have largely determined CBNRM outcomes. Despite rhetorical commitment to community-based approaches in rural development and natural resource management policies, lack of progress in implementation brings into question GOB's commitment to community-based approaches. Scrutiny reveals that policy in Botswana is generally geared towards supporting the economic and political aspirations of the governing elite and the economic interests of the political elite are not necessarily served by CBNRM. These interests are related to several key processes such as resource accumulation - particularly land and livestock - privatization in rural Botswana among the country's elites, the overwhelmingly influential President Khama's preferences for a 'protectionist' conservation paradigm and his reservations on the concept of sustainable use, and the 'diamond debate' over national versus local control over natural resource revenues.

The Botswana experience further demonstrates that the lack of a strong, politically salient constituency compromises the social and political sustainability of CBNRM. CBNRM entails social and political commitments, and relies on particular audiences and practices to support it. Sustainability requires having appropriate actor networks in place at a national level – with links to the local - which can function as constituencies championing the interests of rural communities, thus shaping and maintaining appropriate policy outcomes in the face of fluctuating political circumstances. The development of such an actor-network was hindered by the perceived foreign origins of CBNRM. This undermined its legitimacy and it failed to develop an indigenous identity. While donors did belatedly create a CBNRM stakeholder group and this did play a key role in the short term as a political counterweight to demands from the political elite for recentralization, this ultimately proved unsustainable. This group was largely marginalised from political processes, whilst CBNRM was becoming increasingly embattled in controversy. This was due to problems of mismanagement, abuse of funds and shortcomings in implementation as well as other factors outside its control. These included the 'diamonds debate', weakening of civil society and the political alienation of San communities. Further light is shed on the lack of a political constituency amongst the supposed CBNRM beneficiaries in rural areas by a review of local-level devolutionary dynamics, which is undertaken in the following Chapter.

CBNRM became intertwined with the politics of national development and nation building, and the political leadership used these discourses to present a compelling argument for recentralization and appeal to 'national' identity. What emerges from this finding is that CBNRM should be understood within the wider context of national politics and development policy which subject questions of rural livelihoods and local resource governance to their dominant imperatives. The shift in response by government to accept civil society inputs into the policy making process from 2001 to 2005 represents a closing of democratic and policy space. The 2008 CBNRM Policy emerged in the context of limited resistance since the government has succeeded in restricting space for rural communities and civil society to participate in the policy process. With

central authorities currently having prevailed in the struggle over wildlife governance and benefits in Botswana, the future ability of locally based natural resource governance regimes to contribute to conservation and rural development goals will depend largely on the ability of actors at local, national, and global levels to construct more influential constituencies for CBNRM.

CHAPTER 6

LOCAL LEVEL OUTCOMES IN BOTSWANA – A CASE STUDY OF THE OKAVANGO COMMUNITY TRUST

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the implementation and outcomes of CBNRM in the villages involved in the Okavango Community Trust (OCT) in Botswana. It explores the social and political contestations over natural rights and benefits affecting CBNRM in this area. This highlights the dynamic relationship between processes at the local level and the national level and the impact of local level outcomes on policymaking processes. The linkage between local and macro is an important intersection as it sheds light on the opportunities and shortcomings of CBNRM in changing power relations, strengthening democratic space, creating accountable local governance institutions and empowering communities to direct their destiny and livelihoods.

Successful CBNRM outcomes depend on local-level institutions, which are genuinely accountable to and representative of the interests of their members (Ribot, 2002a, Murphree, 2000a, World Resources Institute et al, 2005). In Botswana, there is consensus that CBOs generally are marked by low levels of accountability and poorly represent their local constituents (Arntzen et al., 2003, Habarad, 2003, Zuze, 2004, Mbaiwa, 2004, Thakadu, 2005, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Habarad (2003) and Thakadu (2005) note lack of accountability as particularly evident in CBOs with concession-based joint venture partnerships (JVPs). Given the huge amount of money and influence generated by these ventures, of which there are only six in the country, the stakes are high for those who would control them particularly when mechanisms for ensuring accountability are absent or flawed. Consequently, the high-value resources involved in those CBOs with JVPs create unique problems that not prevalent in other

CBOs focusing on veld resources with relatively little economic value.[42] Wildlife-related CBOs are the high profile 'flagships' of CBNRM, and it is these which are determining policy outcomes.

Given the significance of these 6 CBOS for policy development in Botswana, I selected one of them as a site for in-depth field level research for this thesis. The objectives were: (a) to determine whether the CBO was representative of and accountable to its constituency, and what factors affected this; (b) to identify what strategies were being developed by various stakeholders to improve accountability if this was deemed necessary; and (c) to determine what influence local events were having on the national CBNRM policy making process.

Research was carried out in three of the five villages of OCT, Seronga, Gunotsoga and Gudikwa, during 2007-8 by a research assistant and myself. I initiated the research in 2005/6, and used information gathered through interviews with key stakeholders, secondary sources and grey materials to develop a semi-structured interview format for use by my research assistant and for briefing and training of my assistant. The assistant then spent 3 weeks living in the three villages in 2007 to familiarize himself with day-to-day lifestyles, concerns and aspirations of the inhabitants. He held formal semi-structured interviews with at least 20 general members in each village, as well as interviewed local leaders and held informal discussions with many more. A

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[42] CBOs established under the auspices of CBNRM in Botswana are involved in activities encompassing a broad range of different natural resources, including veld products such as thatching grass, herbal teas, medicinal plants collection and marketing, handicraft production and tourism-focused ventures such as the management of community campsites and photographic and hunting safaris in partnership with the private sector. Whilst CBOs are fairly evenly spread throughout the country, direct financial benefits for communities from joint venture agreements (JVAs) are concentrated in Ngamiland and Chobe. The total income from 12 JVAs in 2002 was estimated at P8.45 million or P735 772 per CBO, a substantial increase in revenues from the mid-1990s, which were on average below P200 000 per CBO.

representative mix of people was interviewed, taking into account gender, age and class. Members of the OCT board, traditional leaders and others in positions of authority, government employees (e.g. teachers and health workers) employees of lodges and operators, private business people as well as subsistence farmers were also interviewed.

Accompanied by my assistant, I undertook a week's visit to the three villages in June 2008, during which the initial research was verified and additional 34 interviews conducted in the villages. Findings were triangulated to ensure the credibility of information shared by interviewees. When specific facts or incidences were revealed, every effort was made to verify these while paying equal attention to understand why people perceived and interpreted events in particular ways, how these events had affected their lives, what information they had, from where/how it was obtained, and what mitigating actions were planned. Field level research was complimented by interviews with relevant government officials, politicians, donors, NGOs, academics and private sector representatives at both district and national level who are either currently (or formerly) involved in CBNRM implementation, analysis and policy development.

6.2 Okavango Community Trust: Description, History, People and CBRNM Evolutions

OCT represents five remotely located villages in Ngamiland, in the northern pan-handle of the Okavango Delta, east of the Okavango River and north of the buffalo fence. By Botswanan standards the area is relatively ethnically diverse, being home to the Hambukushu, Bayei, Basarwa and Baxeriku. Of the five villages, Beetsha, Gunutsoga and Eretsha are dominated by Hamukushu whilst Godikwa is settled almost entirely by Basarwa and the Bayei are in the majority in Seronga. The population of the five villages is approximately 7,000, with village size ranging from 3,600 in Seronga, to 800 in Godikwa[43].

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[43] This ethnic diversity, relatively large population size and inclusion of five individual villages is the result of an arbitary decision made by the NRMP on the grounds that they were all in the

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The people practice diversified livelihood strategies to meet their basic needs, adapting to the constraining environmental conditions in which they live. These multi-stranded livelihood activities include rain-fed arable agriculture, livestock rearing, basketry, fishing, hunting, gathering of wild foods, medicines and building materials, beer brewing and in an increasing number of cases, formal employment in the tourism sector. A 2008 study by the University of Botswana indicates that the most significant source of cash income for households in the five villages was that from the formal employment offered by the CBNRM related activities of the tourism operator, although this is given little weight by the majority of inhabitants as an important source of income. The same study confirmed that all households relied upon utilization of the natural resource base to a significant degree to meet their basic livelihood needs, e.g. 93% for firewood, 85% for poles, 84% for thatching grass, and similar figures for food plants, reeds, palm leaves, medicinal plants and papyrus (Lapolang, 2008).

6.2.1 History

OCT was the first CBO registered in Ngamiland in March 1995 with the objective of representing the interests of the five villages on issues relating to the concession areas NG 22 and 23. NG 22 was to be used for multi-purposes, hunting and photographic, whilst NG 23 was exclusively photographic.

The establishment of the CBO was politically motivated from the start, setting the tone for the future of the trust. Political interference resulted in a hasty process that prohibited any community participation, ensuring that there was no consultation in determining the constitution (ACORD, 2002). Following the establishment of the first CBNRM initiative

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vicinity of the two NG areas and it contradicts one of the five guiding principles of CBNRM (Murphree, 1991) - that of a small, cohesive membership. This is the root cause of many of the problems with which OCT is beset.

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in Chobe in 1994, the MP for Okavango North, in collaboration with a local safari operator, approached DWNP with a demand that CBNRM projects be established in his area, following which the NRMP staff were directed to proceed immediately and undertake community briefing and mobilization meetings (Interview with Winer, N; Geneva, May 2005. Interview with a former NRMP field officer, name withheld on request; Maun, July 2005). The MP and representatives of the safari operator then accompanied the NRMP team through the initial awareness raising stages of the mobilization process. On returning to the area one month later to complete the process and prior to the registration of any CBOs, OCT had already signed a contract entering into a Joint Venture with the safari operator, Robert Bates, and a constitution had been drawn up for the trust by a lawyer in consultation with the MP but with no consultation with community members (Hartley, 1995). ACORD (2002) note that this represents a weak foundation upon which to build a community driven initiative:

> *it was, as it were, driven to them... locals did not readily accept the trust as theirs, neither were they fully aware of its functions, nor did they participate in its activities* (ACORD, 2002:9).

Other interpretations of the process are less circumspect. As one of those involved in the implementation process at the time noted:

> *the establishment of OCT trust was for two purposes and driven by two individuals. The purposes were to gain votes for the MP whilst lining his pocket along with the operators because of the favourable terms of the agreement with the operator, and not surprisingly the individuals pushing it were the MP and the operator, who got on board a few powerful local residents. Local participation and needs had nothing to do with it* (Interview with former DWNP field officer - name withheld on request - Maun, July 2005).

The local MP, the safari operator and a lawyer exclusively drew up the constitution and established the OCT trust. The OCT board became the de facto owners of the wildlife

resources in their area with 'unlimited powers' in determining what to do with benefits accruing from them. Since its inception, it has been widely perceived as an institution that mismanages and abuses funds derived from natural resource management for the personal enrichment of a few board members (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Enabling this situation has been the weak and easily bypassed mechanisms that should have ensured that the process was participatory, representative and accountable to the people of OCT.

6.2.2 Institutions and Economic Incentives

Since its establishment, the OCT board of trustees, of which there are eleven members, has made all decisions relating to OCT. These include the five person Executive Committee (EC) consisting of the Chairperson and vice, Secretary and vice, and Treasurer. Ten of the trustee's are the Chairpersons and Secretaries drawn from the twelve members of each Village Trust Committee (VTC), which are the village level institutions representing each of the five villages and which report to the OCT. The eleventh trustee is a nominated representative of the JVP or any other individual the board wishes to co-opt. No provision is made for any ex-officio members. All residents of the five villages, who have been resident in the area for more than one year, are citizens of Botswana and are over the age of eighteen, are deemed to be general members of the OCT VTC members are elected every three years at a general election. The eleven OTC board members nominate the five EC members from amongst themselves (Notorial Deed Of Trust, 1995). Since its establishment the EC of the OCT has been dominated by the same small group of individuals - except for a three year period from 2004-7[44].

The operations of the board are in theory governed by a 'Notarial Deed of Trust', commonly referred to as 'the Constitution'. This stipulates how decision-making and benefit distribution should be carried out. The OCT constitution is unusual in that it explicitly gives all decision-making powers to the board rather than to the general

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[44] Following a controversy surrounding the refusal of the original OCT board members to tender the concession areas, the board members were all unseated during elections in 2004 and a second board elected. However, a further controversy in 2007 once again revolving around the need for a tender process saw this second board unseated. The majority of those returned to this third board, including all of those assuming EC positions, were members of the first board.

membership. These powers include the right to hire and fire personnel, including the general manager; take decisions regarding all Trust income, assets and financial activities; decide on new trust appointees; and determine who the JVP shall be. The constitution also details mechanisms to ensure accountability to members, including frequency of elections and AGMs in each village. Once again, the constitution is unusual in that the requirements are negligible. For example, a VTC AGM, which is held under the auspices of village *Khotla* meetings, and considered to have a quorum if a total of 10 general members and 6 OCT members are present. In Seronga, this means an AGM is considered to have been held if only 0.3% of the population attend. Despite such minimal requirements, even those that do exist are generally ignored, such as the requirement to report to AGMs on OCT finances or to advertise meetings 21 days in advance. Such mechanisms tend to be manipulated by the EC and used as instruments to increase their own power by spreading false and misleading information. The current situation is that there are no democratic procedures in place to ensure accountability, or as summed up by one interviewee:

> *they [the board] have unlimited powers and can get away with anything they want. We [the people] have chaos.* (OCT employee – name withheld on request – Seronga, interviewed on June 16, 2008).

6.2.3 Financial Situation

The OCT acquired the head lease over NG22 and 23 from the Tawana Land Board in 1995. This head lease is for a period of 15 years, renewable every five years. The head lease empowers the trust to sign sub-leases with the private sector through a tender process. The private sector operators submit their tenders to a district level technical advisory committee (TAC) consisting of district officials from relevant line ministries. These officials advise the board on which JVP to choose. This advice is not binding and can be, and in the case of OCT always has been, ignored, with the decision being made exclusively by the OCT board. The time frame for the OCT contract is 15 years, consisting of 1+1+3+5+5 where OCT has the opportunity to review their relationship with the JVP at the end of each period and decide whether they want to re-tender

(Notorial Deed Of Trust, 1995). It is noteworthy that every decision that has been made by OCT to date regarding the tender has been surrounded by controversy and contested by both the general members and the TAC.

The original concession holder and operator was the safari hunting operator, Micheletti-Bates Safaris (MBS) who obtained the lease for NG 22 and NG 23 in 1996 (Joint Venture Memorandum of Understanding, 1996). In 1999, MBS sub-leased NG23 to the photographic operator Okavango Wilderness Safari's (OWS) but continued to hunt in NG 22. As of 2004, OWS subleased the whole area from MBS and it has been the exclusive operator since this time. No further contract negotiations are due until 2011. Despite the contractual clauses outlined above allowing for re-tendering to ensure maximum competition and income to OCT, and a desire on behalf of the general membership that this takes place, at no point has a new tender been called for by a sitting OCT board. The third board, as explained in Footnote 44, also decided not to re-tender the concession in 2006. The rationale for this decision was that OWS provided an interest free loan to OCT of P180,000 to enable them to pay off outstanding lease fees owed to the Tawana Land Board. This debt had accumulated over the years as the first board had never paid the annual rent to the Land Board. Without this loan from OWS, OCT would have had to default on their debt and lose their concession areas but OWS made the loan conditional on their being no re-tender process required. The decision not to re-tender arose then as a direct result of mismanagement by the first board, leaving the second board with no other economically viable alternative but to agree to the conditions of OWS. However, despite this and somewhat ironically, the second board was unseated at the next elections on the grounds that they too had failed to competitively tender the concession. The outcome is that OWS has never had to competitively tender for the concession area, this gives them a significant financial advantage, which is discussed in greater detail below.

The income from OWS that accrues to OCT every year is Pula 2.5 million. P166,000[45] of which is paid on a monthly basis and P508,000 as a lump sum (Interview with OCT accountant, Seronga, 2008). Of this, the general running costs of the trust average between P160,000-170,000 per month in 2008 - the first year in which such figures have been available - or 80% of the income from concession fees (OCT, 2008a). The most significant expenditure items include salaries for the 54 staff equalling approximately P80,000 per month, vehicle running costs of approximately P50,000 and costs associated with VTC and OCT meetings. These include sitting allowances of P900 per person for each of the four mandatory OCT meetings per annum, P400pp for each of the mandatory 4 VTC meetings per annum and P100 per person for each of the 4-5 special meetings by VTCs held each month and related food and accommodation costs. To put these sitting allowances into some perspective, full-time unskilled DC personnel, such as cleaners, earn P800 per month. Such expenditure can amount to P30,000 per month. Additionally EC members make monthly all expense paid trips to Maun, costs for which amount to several thousand Pula (OCT, 2008a).
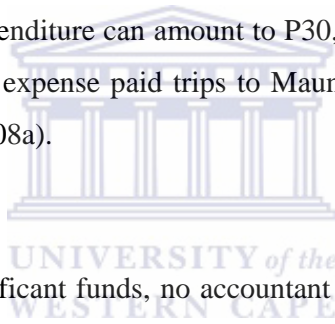
Despite OCT dealing with significant funds, no accountant was employed until January 2008. Prior to this, financial records were theoretically kept by the elected treasurer, the previous incumbent of this post had no financial management experience or training and very limited formal education. The result has been considerable problems over the years in accounting for income and expenditure. 2006 provides a typical example. According to the draft auditors report P1,595,768, over 65% of total income, could not be accounted for (DSVG, 2007). The auditors concluded:

> *There were several missing records including vouchers for major expenditure items. There was no fixed assets register and no records on inventory held, no cash account to substantiate balances. There was excessive use of cash for payments without any supporting documentation or control system in place…We cannot therefore express our opinion in respect of the financial position of the OCT.* (3)

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[45] US$1 was equivalent to 6.5 Pula as of June 2008.

As of January 2008, a qualified accountant had been employed but within six months into her job, all her written recommendations as well as those of the auditors regarding the need for introducing basic financial procedures such as budgeting were ignored by the EC.

The total income for OCT between 1995 and 2007 is estimated at approximately P13, 500,000. From this P6,000 has been disbursed to each VTC on two occasions, totaling only P30,000 over 12 years. Funds have, however, also been used to support various village level projects, which have not proven sustainable. These include projects requiring significant capital expenditures, such as 'supermarkets' in each village, boats for transport and construction of a funeral parlour, on which millions of Pula have been spent. However, the majority of such projects were abandoned mid-way during construction and none remained operational as of June 2008. In early 2008 the board decided to disburse P100,000 annually to each village. This has been achieved by issuing the Chairperson of each VTC with a personal cheque for P100,000. In the three case study villages, these funds still remained with the VTC chairperson as of June 2008.

A brief review of the situation regarding vehicle management illustrates further how OCT funds and assets are managed and the primary beneficiaries from this. OCT funds have been used to purchase each of the five villages their own vehicle[46]. All running costs, including drivers salaries, fuel and maintenance, are provided by OCT. The vehicles are available for hire by members of each village from the VTC chairperson and treasurer. Villagers are informed that the hire charges are to recover the vehicle running costs and are returned to OCT accounts. However, OCT does not receive these funds from the VTC and no records exist as to where these funds can be located. Essentially, these vehicles have been privatized by the VTC elites who are now operating personal taxi services, with all expenses being met by the supposedly communal funds of OTC.

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[46] Currently only 4 of the 5 vehicles are running following the involvement of Gudikwa in an accident in 2007. The EC have refused to repair this vehicle, maintaining that they do not have sufficient funds.

This brief review of the financial situation makes it clear that OCT has been characterized by mismanagement and abuse of funds, and significant financial benefits have accrued, from the outset, to a few powerful individuals within the villages and their external allies. There is no income or budget transparency. No general member interviewed perceived OCT as having provided them with any benefits nor did they consider OCT playing any role in natural resource management.

6.3 Stakeholder Narratives

There are many competing interest groups contending for the power and benefits emanating from control of OCT and *de facto* ownership of the concession areas that this affords. Each of these groups has different interests, differing levels of access to information and networks, and adopts different narratives or 'stories' to support their positions and explain ways forward. These stakeholder groups are both local and external. Very broadly defined, local groups fall into four categories, although within these, there is an overlap and constantly shifting alliances and networks. These groups are OCT board members, OCT staff, general members and 'other local leaders'.

External agents who are directly involved are the Ngamiland DC, DWNP, private operators and, formerly, the local MP[47]. Through the networks and agency of these groups, the influence of external interests extends to senior national level policy makers. Thus the linkages between local and national are strong, influential and clearly defined. This section relates the stories that each group shared with me, highlighting the concerns and issues dominant within each group.

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[47] The former MP, (now deceased) Kavindama, was unseated in the 2004 elections. His successor, Vista Maruti, appears to have no direct links to or specific interest in OCT.

6.3.1 OCT Board Members

As already described, the OCT board consists of two members from each of the VTCs and therefore theoretically has equal representation from each of the five villages. However, the board itself is dominated by the Executive Committee (EC) consisting of individuals from the three villages of Eretsa, Seronga and Beetsa. Most of these individuals have been on the EC since the inception of OCT, with the two-year interlude explained in Footnote 44 above. The representatives from Gunotsoga, and in particular Gudikwa, do not have the authority, access to information or lengthy tenure as the former, and it is necessary to differentiate board members based on their membership of the EC.

The narrative adopted by the EC to describe events surrounding OCT is one of a successful rural development initiative that has brought development and empowerment equally to the communities within the villages but which is being undermined by others. They recite the number of people employed, the different projects and the participation of the people in decision-making as evidence of success. Problems are acknowledged and openly discussed but these are blamed entirely on the three different general managers that the Trust has employed over the years. All of whom have been accused of dishonesty and incompetence and have been terminated by the EC. The other group who the EC hold culpable is the private operators. They accuse them of manipulating the tender process so that they can exploit the OCT and communities. An elaborate 'story' has been developed by board members concerning the managers, private operators and tender process which has been widely spread by them throughout the villages and which has dominated the AGM's which have been held in each village this year.[48] This story, underlain by few if any facts, lays the blame for the financial problems of OCT firmly at the feet of others. They have co-opted development rhetoric in their attempts to defend

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[48] For example, the general manager of OCT was fired by them in June 2008. This followed the holding of AGMs in each village at which the primary agenda item presented by the board was the dishonesty and incompetence of the general manager and the need for his dismissal. An alternative interpretation as to why he was dismissed was his refusal to accept the increase in the sitting allowances that the board had awarded themselves.

the existing constitution and their actions, claiming that the constitution represents a 'participatory process' as this comment by Sarkozy, OCT secretary, indicates:

> *The current constitution is good, the people made it, only they have the right to change it. Attempts by others to change it are stopping people from participating and taking away their rights and our development. Only the people can change it* (Sakuzi, *Kgotla* meeting, June 20, 2008).

6.3.2 OCT Staff

The OCT currently employs 54 staff members, including management, escort guides, cleaners, radio operators and drivers. Following the firing of the general manager in May 2008 on what are considered by the remaining staff as unfair grounds, interviews revealed that OCT staff members are demoralized, intimidated and concerned for their own futures. The story they tell is one of one a failed development initiative that has been corrupted by the 'unlimited power' of the OCT board and its limited capacity, leading to mismanagement and misappropriation. However, they have developed their own strategy in an attempt to address the situation. This is based on an overt appeal to external authorities to intervene through a campaign of letters to officials within DWNP and the DC noting that:

> *the trust is not far from closing down due to mismanagement, ignorance and dishonesty of the Board of Trustees* (OCT, 2008b).

The letters go on to elaborate their accusations and appeal for intervention from external authorities. The general perception amongst staff members was summed up as follows:

> *the board misused the total authority given by the constitution, now things are out of control and get worse. There are no checks and balances we can put in place, we've tried things here. Our only choice is to look outside for help, we have written letters and asked them to come and see for themselves* (Senior OCT employee – name withheld on request – Seronga, interviewed on June 18, 2008).

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6.3.3 General Membership

The membership of OCT in the three villages where research was conducted had extremely little information about any aspect of OCT. They did not perceive themselves to be beneficiaries, had no knowledge of their rights in relation to the trust and did not see any link between OCT and natural resource management. Of the 70 general members interviewed, no general member had any accurate information concerning the income or expenditure of the trust or had ever been to an AGM or any other meeting where this information had been accurately presented[49]. Thirty percent had attended at least one *Kgotla* meeting in the previous 6 months at which OCT was discussed and at which they had been informed, incorrectly, that the trust had no income due to the lack of a tender process and abuse of funds by the general manager. Therefore, people who are generally identified as responsible for the problems with OCT are the JVP – OWS - and the general manager. However, the situation in each village did vary, and it is worth briefly exploring these differences as the dominant 'story' and resulting strategies are revealing of local communication strategies and power dynamics and the way these are manipulated by the EC members.

6.3.3.1 Seronga

Seronga is the largest of the 5 villages, the headquarters of OCT and the home of the majority of its staff. It is also the location of the *Kgotla* of the senior Chief, Chief Maeze, a critical source of information in the 5 villages. The majority of people interviewed in Seronga were aware of OCT and that it was intended to bring development to the area. However, there was a high level of dissatisfaction with its achievement, with the

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[49] A study by Mvimi et al (2003) indicates that this situation remains largely unchanged from earlier years. Mvimi et al highlighted that only 14% of interviewees had had any relationship with the project since its initiation; only 2% thought the community had benefited from social or infrastructural developments, whilst 80% of respondents indicated that their expectations of the project were not met and that this was due 'to poor leadership, mismanagement and misappropriation of funds' (Mvimi et al, 2003:92).

exception that it had created some local employment[50]. The most commonly cited reason for the lack of achievements of OCT was that it had no income because the concession had not been tendered due to the incompetence of the previous (second) OCT board[51]. Those perceived to be accountable for the problems were former board members, the general manager and the private sector. The current (third but with same membership as first) board bear responsibility for the situation regarding the tender process as outlined above, although they are not considered responsible by general members. Where general members could identify solutions to problems, these were related to ensuring that the concession was tendered.

6.3.3.2 Gunotsoga

In the village of Gunotsoga, which lies 24km west of Seronga, whilst once again all those interviewed had heard of OCT, 33% were unaware that there was a VTC, whilst nobody could identify any way in which the village had benefited or had accurate knowledge of the financial situation.[52] Twenty five percent of respondents had attended a *Kgotla* meeting in the last 6 months at which OCT board members had been present and informed them that OCT had no money because of fraud on the part of the manager and because the concession had been awarded without a competitive tender. As those that do have information in Gunotsoga have been informed that the problems lie with managers and JVP their strategy to address the problems is to replace the manager, ensure the concession goes to tender and replace the current JVP.

6.3.3.3 Gudikwa

This village, which lies 74Km from Seronga, is exclusively inhabited by Basarwa (Bukakwe sub-group) who have historically been marginalised from development in

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[50] The majority of interviewees was better informed about and had a higher regard for the Polars Trust. This was established in the late 1990's by Seronga residents disillusioned by OCT but who believed they could benefit from the natural resource base in the area.
[51] Footnote 44 explains why the boards had changed.
[52] Although several respondents noted that the presence of the JVP had brought employment to the village and that OCT had constructed a supermarket in the village but that this had never operated.

Botswana (Taylor, 2000, Hitchcock and Holm, 1993). In Gudikwa the OCT and its activities are universally known, but not only do people consider that it has brought no benefits, it is regarded by all as having increased poverty in the village and has become a symbol of their marginalization. The village had been reluctant to join OCT from the start, as it meant giving up their hunting licenses, which formed an important component of their livelihoods, but eventually were persuaded on the grounds that it would bring development and employment (Personal communication: interview with Nkosi Divere Ndando, Gudikwa, June 2008). Initially this loss was compensated for by meat provided from safari hunting but as this was replaced exclusively by photographic tourism in 2004, access to protein, as well as a traditional way of life, is now severely curtailed. Neither has the village benefited from employment opportunities from OCT as nobody from Gudikwa is employed there[53]. The one benefit that people recognized was the vehicle, but following an accident in 2007 the EC of the OCT board (on which Gudikwa is not represented) refused to have it repaired, and it is no longer functional. The dominant perception within Gudikwa towards OCT and the JVP, OWS, is one of resentment, summed up by one interviewee as follows:

> *the other villages get jobs, projects and money but they keep us out though we are the only ones who paid for it with our way of life, hunting. It has brought us nothing but crowds, conflicts and poverty, we will leave* (Interview with VDC vice chairperson in Gudikwa, June 22, 2008).

There was a consensus among those interviewed as to the solution to this problem. Gudikwa wants to withdraw from OCT and instead establish their own trust with rights over NG 13 and 14. Letters have been written to this effect to various authorities, including DWNP, DC and the office of (then) Vice President Khama. As yet there has been no response, although the Chief and VDC continue to pursue opportunities to take this forward.

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[53] Approximately 15 people are employed in OWS camps.

6.3.4 Traditional and other Local Leadership

Interviews were conducted with the chiefs of each village, members of the VDC's and the District Councillor. Due to invited attendance at some OCT board meetings, this group was well informed about OCT, its intended objectives, history, management, financial status and problems. Their story and perspective is one of a process beset with problems but there is a consensus among them that these stemmed from the constitution which gave the board members 'unlimited powers' and did not provide any mechanism to ensure accountability to either state or community. Frustrations among local leaders – in collaboration with various external agencies - culminated in action to introduce checks and balances. A workshop was convened in Seronga in February 2008, attended by local leaders, representatives from the DC, DWNP, TAC, BOCOBONET as well as OCT board members, the aim of which was to amend the OCT Deed of Trust to ensure accountability. The outcome of this was agreement by the majority of participants that the VDC's would take over the role of the VTC's. This fundamentally changes the nature of the OCT from an independent devolved institution, to a decentralized one accountable to the DC. However, the OCT board opposes this move and as of September 2008 it remained unclear what the outcome of the power struggle it has unleashed between the OCT EC and other local leaders will be.

6.3.5 District Council

As already documented, the DC plays no formal role within CBNRM initiatives in Botswana and as such has no legal rights to intervene within the operations of CBOs. Despite this, Ngamiland DC has made attempts, at the behest of community representatives, to intervene in OCT in the past. These interventions resulted in rebuffs, which affected the attitude of the DC and its willingness to intervene in recent years.

Lack of accountability and management skills and abuse of funds by the OCT executive has been well known by the DC for a decade, and they have made various attempts to address this at the request of community representatives. For example, in 2001, ACORD, in partnership with DWNP and Tawana Land Board and partly financed by OWS, began

a programme of institutional strengthening. This process led to increased awareness of their rights by general members and the questioning of decisions of the OCT board, culminating in a delegation of disaffected community representatives to the District Commissioner to express their dissatisfaction (ACORD, 2002).[54]. The Commissioner sought the support of the Minister of Commerce and Industry (at that time the Minister responsible), who wrote a Directive instructing OCT to opt for an open tender. The response from the OCT board, advised by their lawyer, was to invoke their legal rights as stipulated in the constitution to make decisions on behalf of their community (ACORD, 2002). In the face of this legal interpretation of the constitution and status of the CBO, the Minister withdrew her Directive. Soon after, in 2003, ACORD withdrew from the country, leaving the OCT board intact and once again in control of the local process (ACORD, 2002).

The response from the DC is one of resignation. Representatives from their constituency had approached the local authorities - as their legitimate, democratic representatives - in an attempt to elicit their support in resolving issues of non-accountability and misappropriation of funds. The DC, in collaboration with local DWNP staff, had responded appropriately, undertaking a comprehensive consultative process and negotiations in all five villages lasting several months (ACORD, 2002). Armed with considerable insights and knowledge, they then invoked the support of the Minister in addressing the problem, only to be rebuffed on legal grounds and informed that they had no rights to intervene. This situation was summed up by one DC Officer:

> *Members of the OCT trust were in alliance with national politicians and local councillors and formed a power block. They are in control.   They've shown they can beat the Minister and tell her to stay out of their affairs so all government personnel now stay away. We are only allowed to advise through our role on the TAC, if the trust chooses to ignore our advice they can and do* (Interview with senior DC officer – name withheld on request - Maun, July 2005).

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[54] Prompting this delegation was the trusts decision to renew the JVP with the existing safari operator, ignoring the wishes of the broader community for an open tender process (ACORD, 2002).

In 2006, the DC once again attempted to address problems by supporting an investigation into alleged corrupt activities of the OCT board by the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC). This investigation came about at the request of the second board that replaced the original incumbents in 2004. However, once again their efforts have been thwarted as the DCEC investigation requires follow-up, which will only be undertaken at the request of the OCT board. However, as the board has since 2007 been dominated again by the original incumbents, such a request has not been forthcoming as it essentially means they would be requesting an investigation into their own activities.

6.3.6 DWNP

Likewise, DWNP have been aware of the problems in OCT for many years, noting in 2000 that:

> *…there is apparently strong private sector and political influences over the board activities and decisions and in the process of establishing this, members have been excluded from any meaningful participation in the trusts activities* (DWNP, 2000:3).

As discussed above, the impact of the situation in OCT, coupled with similar situations in several other CBOs (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) has had a significant impact on DWNP policy, resulting in the reversal of earlier CBNRM legislation and the recentralization of resource management throughout the country. However, how this will play out at the local level is as yet unclear. Implementation guidelines have yet to be developed, leaving local level technical staff unclear on how to proceed. In the absence of these guidelines, and with a similar history to the DCs of rebuffs behind them, local DWNP staff members are currently reluctant to become involved. For example, the Assistant Wildlife Warden in Maun noted that:

there's been no sign of any improvements but when we have complaints we and the rest of the TAC just tell them to see their lawyers. They are CBO's and must sort out their problems, it's not us to do it (M Maphorisa, Assistant Wildlife Warden: Interviewed in Maun, June 2008).

Despite DWNP being responsible for and having oversight of OCT, in the short-term, local staff on the ground appear to have washed their hands of the matter. This should change when policy guidelines are in place.

6.3.7 Private Sector

Currently, OCTs only Joint Venture Partner is the photographic operator, OWS, who sublease both NG22 and 23 through MBS. The history and role that MBS played in the original politicization of OCT and its co-option by a local elite acting in collaboration with national level politicians has been documented by Rihoy and Maguranyanga (2007) and Hoon (2004) and will not be described further here. The nature of OWS involvement differs from that of MBS but is proving equally influential both locally and nationally in determining CBNRM outcomes and policy.

OWS dominates the photographic safari industry within Botswana with over 40% of market share. It has four other concessions within the Okavango Delta alone, containing 22 camps, or over 60% of the tourism beds available[55]. The company has institutional and personnel connections with senior policy makers. It is a leading member of HATAB, whose input is actively sought at the tourism policy making fora by the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, and has close relationships with various Ministers

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[55] Economic impact of tourism in 2007, industry accounts for 10.6% of employment and 9.7% of GDP (WTTC, 2007) with projected growth exceeding 5% per annum.

and the President[56]. The dominance of OWS in the tourism sector and the powerful actor networks with which it is involved locally and nationally gives it significant agency within the national policy making process as well as at the local level.

The narrative that OWS adopt concerning OCT is very different from other stakeholders, not surprising given that the nature and objective of its involvement is fundamentally different. One of the primary marketing strategies adopted by OWS is to portray itself as an environmentally responsible company, drawing heavily upon the rhetoric of community conservation to achieve this:

> '[Okavango] Wilderness Safaris is first and foremost a conservation company...we believe that the future of conservation in Africa depends on the attitude of the communities living next to wild areas. For too long the needs of these communities were neglected by people involved in conservation work. The twin benefits to the community of tourism ventures and employment create a true appreciation for the value of the land and its wildlife' (OWS, undated:1).

OWS also single out its support of OCT to highlight its achievements in this regard:

> In Botswana we are particularly proud of our partnership with the OCT (ibid: 76).

In view of the well-known mismanagement of OCT, it is surprising that OWS should publicly uphold this project as a symbol of success. However, a closer analysis of long-term priorities and perspectives of OWS provides some indication as to why it promotes OCT as a success story in the face of strong evidence to the contrary. The narrative that OWS has developed for itself and for public consumption in Botswana, and which underpins its business model and corporate image is based upon a protectionist conservation paradigm. This involves strong anti-hunting rhetoric stemming partly from

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[56] It is a widely held belief throughout Botswana that Khama is a shareholder in OWS. However, as it is not a public listed company, verification is not possible.

ethical beliefs but also supported with claims that photographic tourism provides greater community benefits than hunting as well as offer more employment opportunities. This claim is unsubstantiated by any data or research and is contradicted by comprehensive studies undertaken elsewhere in Botswana (Martin, 2008). The economic claims of OWS in relation to the relative economic merits of photographic versus safari hunting have never been put to the test in OCT as they have never had to tender for the concessions for reasons explained above. If a competitive tender process was to go ahead, it is far from certain that they would be able to compete with bids from the safari hunting industry. This threatens their business model not just in OCT but throughout Botswana, but they have developed a long term strategy to remove the threat by giving strong support to efforts to ban hunting throughout the country.

Executives based in Maun are aware that there are problems of accountability within OCT and have taken some steps to address these, e.g. support to an institutional strengthening process, hiring and funding of a (previous) general manager and local recruitment of a 'community liaison officer'. However, the executives do not appear to be aware of the extent of the problems or aware that, in the villages of OCT, it is OWS that is perceived to be the root cause of problems as it has not submitted to a competitive tender process and has also stopped the supply of meat to the villages. Nevertheless, both for marketing purposes and in achieving its goal of influencing policy towards a protectionist conversation approach, OWS needs to call upon community success stories to support its position and narrative. Thus, OWS uphold OCT as a 'success' despite all the evidence to the contrary.

As the financial backer of OCT, OWS could apply significant pressure to improve accountability. However, their efforts to do so have proven insufficient. This arises partly because the rationale and priorities for their community conservation and engagement lie in influencing national policy in a protectionist direction and the portrayal of positive outcomes from their community initiatives are essential in achieving this. This is

compounded by a lack of knowledge of the extent and nature of problems in the OCT villages.

6.4 Discussion
6.4.1 Networks, Patronage and Power

The situation in OCT clearly attests to Turners' (2004) statement that 'money does not automatically unlock rural development'. A minimum estimate reveals that at least P15,000,000 has been realized over the last decade and yet the villages have very little to show for this in terms of development, there is extremely limited accurate knowledge of community rights and responsibilities or other information concerning OCT within the villages and there is no evidence of any improvement in the management of the natural resource base.

This research reveals the wealth of opportunities offered to those gaining formal control of OCT, enabling them to strengthen the existing relationships of patronage and clientelism within the villages. OCT illustrates how control of a CBNRM trust in Botswana leads ultimately to control of transport and vehicles, the allocation of valuable employment and training opportunities, allocation of meat derived from hunting concession activities, village level development projects and determination of who should benefit. In addition, it influences the provision of executive control over the expenditure and accounting of considerable sums of money. Lastly, it offers the position of broker with outside agencies and the multiple opportunities this brings.

Not surprisingly, various factions have competed for control, ensuring in the process that other groups have been marginalised. Clearly, the manipulation of those mechanisms developed by the DWNP to ensure democratic decision-making and accountability - such as constitutions, general meetings and financial reporting mechanisms – is a straightforward process for those experienced in local politics, particularly when the checks and balances which external institutions introduced could legally be ignored.

OCT provides an example of how financial devolution can be manipulated by local elites as a means through which they contend for power and extend their political and financial domination within their villages and beyond. It illustrates how those mechanisms that do exist, such as AGMs, can be co-opted by elites to serve their own purposes - in this case through the spreading of (mis)information that justifies and upholds their own positions whilst misleading general members.

It also illustrates how those external government agents who could assist in providing checks and balances are rendered powerless - from the local to Ministerial level - by a well meaning implementation process that has created untouchable 'decentralised despots' (Ribot, 2004) through its dedication to a model of fiscal devolution. Meanwhile, the role of the private sector is determined by the long and short-term strategies that they must adhere to in order to ensure business viability. Such strategies will not always coincide with prioritization of community level concerns and issues.

6.4.2 A Representative Process?

Within Botswana there are many CBOs involved in CBNRM activities. This makes it extremely difficult to generalize about the programme based on events in only one CBO. Nevertheless, I do so because a review of evidence from other sites (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) indicates that the case study material is representative of wider processes. This indicates that in the Botswana context devolution has frequently delivered financial decision-making powers and benefits into the hands of small village elites, rather than into the hands of community members in general. This has resulted in relatively high levels of mismanagement, and misuse and abuse of funds and financial powers devolved to CBOs. For example, in Ngamiland, the heartland of CBNRM in Botswana, as of 2004, there were 17 CBOs, 6 of which had JVPs (Mbaiwa, 2004). Allegations relating to mismanagement or abuse of funds have been made against each of these since they were established, and considerable variations in the degree of abuse

exist. Inasmuch as independent auditors have substantiated most of these allegations, no prosecutions have been embarked on to date**.**

Despite the hype and rhetoric around these cases in Botswana, the problems of accountability cannot be construed to mean that CBNRM has failed to contribute to the improvement of rural livelihoods. Mbaiwa (2004) notes that most CBOs have used funds to operate grocery stores in their villages, acquire vehicles for transportation, and provide financial and transport assistance to community members in case of death. Therefore, they offer important services for remote areas that would not otherwise be available. CBOs and their private sector partners have also generated significant local employment. According to Zuze (2004), approximately 175 locals are employed directly by the six CBOs, whilst several hundred more are employed by the JVP. A further positive sign is that surveys carried out by Mbaiwa (2004) on community perceptions of wildlife indicate that throughout Ngamiland attitudes towards wildlife have been improving since the introduction of CBNRM.
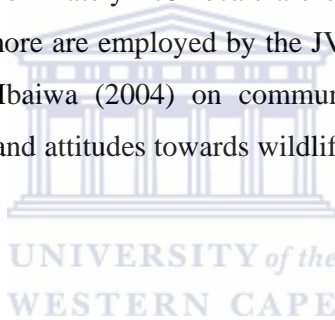
Additionally, there are now several examples of CBOs that, after a few difficult years, are responding to the needs of their members and demonstrating both accountability and representation. These CBOs include the Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management Trust and the Mababe Zokotsama Community Development Trust (MZCDT), both of which have early years that resemble those of OCT[57]. Sankuyo provided cash handouts of P500 to each household since 2004, and constructed a community hall and a locally owned and managed lodge. It has provided piped water to every household and built houses for its destitute community members. In addition, it provides a burial fund of P3 000 per adult and P1 000 per child. All those interviewed in Sankuyo were broadly supportive of the trust and its activities. Meanwhile MZCDT is undertaking similar projects and

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[57] The important factor in turning around both of these CBOs appears to be quality local leadership and external facilitation and capacity building.

demonstrating that it is accountable to its constituency (Mbaiwa, 2004). Perhaps of even greater significance and indicative of impending changes is the example provided by OCT, where the community is clearly exercising its own agency in reaching out to external agents in an effort to bring about constructive change.

6.4.3 National to Local Links and Influences

Given the significant amounts generated within villages with total populations numbering only a few hundred, CBNRM is frequently critiqued within Botswana as have shown too little, too late. CBOs that have been subject to serious allegations of misuse, fraud and mismanagement, such as OCT, have entered into CBNRM 'folklore' and arm critics with evidence of the 'failure' of CBNRM. Such cases are advanced as the reason why communities should not be entrusted to manage CBNRM initiatives. This evidence of 'failed' CBNRM has had a profound impact at the policy level, and these 'stories' feed into the CBNRM policy process resulting in the perception of CBNRM as inevitably entrenching corruption and leading to elite capture of benefits at the expense of the majority. Problems of mismanagement, capture of and manipulation of CBOs by elites have undermined the legitimacy of CBNRM among communities themselves. The situation in OCT demonstrates how local political processes can become distorted, creating and strengthening local political and economic elites at the expense of the marginalised members of the community. Such problems reflect the shortcomings of transferring financial powers without mechanisms to ensure accountability and representation are in place. Despite these problems, limited positive examples of CBNRM are emerging, but these are receiving little attention. Positive 'stories' do not contribute to the interests of the political elite for whom it is more valuable to exploit failures.

However, the 'story' of OCT continues to unfold. OCT illustrates how local communities can exercise agency and play a clear role in determining outcomes of CBNRM initiatives through their resistance to appropriation of their resources by local

elites or external agents. In OCT, the exercising of agency by the general membership is rendered impossible, as they do not have access to information or mechanisms to enable them to do so. However, there are others in positions of authority, in this case led by the traditional leadership, with access to information and with extensive external networks who are able to exercise agency on behalf of the community. They have recognized the need to develop mechanisms that tackle the practical governance arrangements between the first and second tier institutions that can progressively break down the current socially and politically constructed stalemates. Attempts by the traditional leadership to develop a new constitution are focused upon forging for the first time a legal relationship between the OCT and local government structures which they consider will build accountability both to the DC and to the community. The outcome of this struggle for power has yet to be determined.

6.5 Conclusion

The lack of accountability that characterizes CBO's engaged in CBNRM activities clearly indicates that the problems besetting CBNRM cannot be ascribed to the national context alone. Problems have arisen largely due to the inappropriate and politicized implementation process rather than from the inherent flaws within the approach or the inability of communities to manage the process. The OCT case study demonstrates that outcomes are largely determined by political economic interests and power dynamics at local as well as national levels. The implementation approaches and strategies adopted by the DWNP have created problems that compound the already difficult political context in which to undertake implementation described in Chapter 5.

At the local level, unaccountable governance structures have facilitated the concentration of benefits in the hands of local elites and inhibited local attempts to address mismanagement of revenues. Some national politicians and bureaucrats have used problems of accountability and mismanagement to justify the recentralization of wildlife revenues. It should be pointed out that rather than focusing on the problems and using

visible 'stories' of fraud, mismanagement and abuse of CBO funds to recentralize those funds, it would be plausible to build the organizational capacity of CBOs as well as investing institutionally in accountability and governance structures. The 2008 CBNRM Policy recentralized control over revenue as an ostensive response to local corruption and mismanagement. However, this does not deal with the organizational capacity deficit and poor governance mechanisms on the part of CBOs. Politics prevailed and favoured the transfer of financial power to the centre. While Ribot's (2002b:3) argument that "transferring power without accountable representation has proven dangerous" might be plausible, the problems of mismanagement of CBO funds have to be understood within the context of CBO organizational incapacity and institutional design flaws, which facilitate elite predation. The politicized nature of CBNRM implementation ensures that such teething challenges receive scrutiny from national politicians and elites opposed to the concepts of sustainable use and devolution.
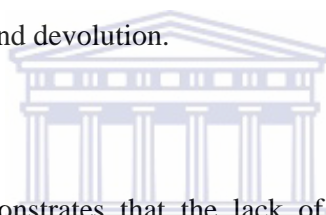
The Botswana experience demonstrates that the lack of a strong, politically salient constituency compromises the social and political sustainability of CBNRM. As explored in the previous Chapter, sustainability requires having appropriate actor networks at a national level, which function as constituencies. The critical component of these networks will be communities themselves. A community-level constituency has not mobilized behind CBNRM in Botswana as elite co-option has affected the flow of benefits to the broader community. Ironically, the marginalisation of rural people from the policy process seems to have occurred largely unopposed by them. Evidence from OCT and elsewhere (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) indicates that never having significantly benefited, most rural dwellers are disinterested when financial autonomy and the authority of CBOs are taken away and many are indeed supportive of recentralization as a way to stop abuse and mismanagement. Thus, the process is a cyclical self-perpetuating one. Lack of political will to ensure appropriate policies should be anticipated when there is little if any constituency calling for such policies, a situation which will inevitably arise when CBNRM fails to deliver its anticipated outcomes due to implementation shortcomings.

CBNRM practitioners and policy-makers have sought to create strong feedback between local investments in wildlife management and benefit capture through devolved institutional arrangements. As noted earlier, one of the main lessons regional practitioners took from Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme was that insufficient devolution of property rights over wildlife to local communities, in contrast to upwardly accountable district councils, undermined local incentives and returns on natural resources. In Botswana, such concerns contributed to a focus on devolving control over wildlife benefits and led to the marginalization of district councils in CBNRM implementation. With the benefit of hindsight, this was a tactical error since district councils could have bridged the gulf between local communities and central government, and could have brought natural resource governance closer to democratically elected local government structures. Instead, district authorities viewed CBOs as rival single-purpose authorities, and such perceptions undermined opportunities for collaboration between CBOs and district governments to challenge national politicians. This prevented local CBOs and other CBNRM advocates from bringing district governments into collaborative efforts to contest national government's preferred policy directions as reflected in the 2008 CBNRM Policy.

CHAPTER 7

POLICY PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION IN ZIMBABWE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the process of CBNRM policy development and implementation in Zimbabwe. It explores the way the macro context influences the process of natural resource management reform. This national context has profound implications for policy processes, natural resource governance reforms, and ways in which CBNRM policy unfolds. The single most outstanding characteristic in Zimbabwe over the last twenty years has been profound shifts in the macro-level political, economic and social context, which have in turn led to dramatic changes in the policy environment and natural resource governance reforms. This chapter examines these shifts, investigates whether CAMPFIRE implementation strategies and approaches have evolved to accommodate changes at both national and local levels, and if so how this has been achieved. It also discusses the implications and lessons for natural resource governance reforms and democratisation within Zimbabwe.

CAMPFIRE has provided much of the impetus for the replication of CBNRM approaches throughout the region and offered the arena through which the basic principles and concepts of CBNRM were established (Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Child, 2004, Swatuk, 2005, Wolmer et al., 2003). Adapted versions of these concepts and principles have since been introduced in other countries in the region in the wildlife sector, and within Zimbabwe itself throughout the natural resource management sector. Given the central role that CAMPFIRE has played in the conceptual development of CBNRM, it remains an instructive case study to reveal why certain assumptions and approaches are dominant within CBNRM regionally.

The chapter demonstrates how the development of CAMPFIRE policy - like that of CBNRM policy in Botswana – has accommodated different actors with power

differentials and interests shifting over time. Such changes in the balance of power, or in the interests of key actors, have stimulated various changes in implementation strategies. Once again, the three overlapping and mutually supportive 'lenses' of my analytical framework – actor networks, structured political interests and discourse analysis – are used to analyse changes in the policy process and their outcomes. Furthermore, reflecting the approach adopted for Botswana, an in-depth analysis of the outcome of CAMPFIRE at the local level - in this case the village of Mahenye – is provided in the following Chapter. This serves to demonstrate progress and constraints in CAMPFIRE's ability to increase democratic space through the creation of accountable local governance institutions and empowerment of communities in their relations with external agents, government and others.

However, it was not relevant to conduct a direct comparison with a fixed set of variables and identical methodology across both countries. The specifics and complexities of the policy process in individual countries do not accommodate such an approach. Instead, the research has followed the histories, contexts, networks and discourses surrounding the specific CBNRM policy stories in each location. Therefore, the methodology used has had to be qualitative and adaptive in order to accommodate the different locational specifics. The result is that quite different variables are highlighted in the different countries. The research outcome presented in this Chapter for Zimbabwe, as for Botswana, illuminates those factors which have affected policy making and outcomes in the specific location. This reveals strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.

The analysis offered here indicates that despite profound shifts in the context in which CAMPFIRE is unfolding, it remains a robust initiative embedded in the local rural landscape of many, though by no means all, districts in Zimbabwe. Whilst it may no longer maintain the high national and international profile of the 1990s, it does continue as an entrenched component of Zimbabwe's conservation and local government strategies, retaining political support at all levels. The pragmatic and politically astute approach to implementation and policy development which has characterized

CAMPFIRE from its inception has enabled it to accommodate the concerns and perspectives of various competing interest groups and this has been a significant contributor to its success. The outcome of such pragmatism was a process and programme that created decentralised rather than the originally intended devolved resource management institutions. While this has led to the common critique by implementers and analysts that CAMPFIRE represents 'aborted devolution' and has been 'co-opted' by the Rural District Councils (RDCs) (Hammar, 2003, Bond, 2001, Murombedzi, 2003b, Katerere, 2002, Shackleton and Campbell, 2001, Dzingirai and Breen, 2005), this study provides evidence that brings into question these assumptions of the negative impacts of decentralisation.

7.2 National Context

This section examines those external factors relating to the historical and current national context, which has affected CAMPFIRE's progress. Zimbabwe has undergone significant and far-reaching political, economic and social upheavals since the mid-1980s when CAMPFIRE was introduced. However, since 2000, Zimbabwe has descended into an ever deepening 'crisis'[58]. Its relatively strong economy has collapsed, its once stable political conditions are now characterised by civil unrest and political repression, a previously well-functioning bureaucracy is in tatters, and basic democratic principles and human rights are trampled upon (UNDP, 2008, Harold-Barry, 2004, Human Rights Watch, 2008). Zimbabwe, once a 'darling' of the international donor community, has become a pariah.

During the same period, CAMPFIRE like Zimbabwe itself has seen dramatic fluctuations in its fortunes and in the way in which it is perceived. During the 1990's it was embraced as a holistic approach to environment and development, endorsed by the Government of

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[58] The year 2000 is identified as the critical year here as it was in February 2000 that the constitutional referendum took place which marked a particular watershed in Zimbabwe's post independent political history. This event catalyzed dramatic shifts in the country's political, economic and social context, which is widely considered to have led to 'Zimbabwe's crisis'.

Zimbabwe (GOZ), local and international conservation NGOs, academic research centers and the media. It was drawn upon as a source of inspiration for natural resource management internationally (Fabricius and Kock, 2004, Jones and Murphree, 2001, Western and Wright, 1994, Wolmer et al., 2003). However, since 2000, CAMPFIRE has frequently been portrayed by analysts as the archetypal example of CBNRM in 'crisis' (Dzingirai and Breen, 2005, Katerere, 2002, Hughes, 2006, Balint, 2005, Hutton et al., 2006). It has witnessed the growth, followed by the demise, of a coordinated, multi-skilled and expert group of institutions and individuals committed to the implementation of the programme, collectively known as the CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (Child et al., 2003, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). It has grown from an initiative affecting two districts, to one in which 52 of the 57 districts in the country were involved (Child et al., 2003), before shrinking back again to its current presence in 37 districts (Frost and Bond, 2008). During the period 1990-2003, it was the recipient of approximately US$30 million in donor funding from a variety of international donors (Balint and Mashinya, 2006) all of which have now withdrawn, leaving the programme largely unfunded by donors.
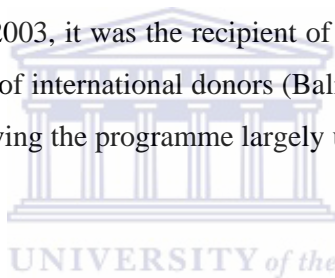
Yet, despite this extremely difficult operating environment and its diminishing reputation and support regionally and internationally, CAMPFIRE continues to show remarkable resilience both at local and national levels. The following section briefly traces political, social and economic developments in the country over the last 20 years, examining how these have affected the development and outcomes of CAMPFIRE and providing the context for the more detailed discussion on CAMPFIRE implementation that follows. This discussion focuses on the history and current status of Zimbabwe's political and economic situation; its policy making processes; and its land tenure system, natural resource management policies and other rural related policies, including decentralization.

7.2.1 Political Characteristics

The extreme social, economic and political problems besetting Zimbabwe over the last decade can best be analysed and understood in the context of its history (Raftopoulos, 2004). In 1980, Zimbabwe emerged from almost a century of white rule, following a protracted, violent liberation war, fought in part over land. Since 1980, the political priorities of the government have been dominated by reversing decades of racially biased inequalities in land, resource and asset distribution (Raftopoulos, 2004, Jones and Murphree, 2001). However, the strategy for achieving equality and redistribution of resource ownership has changed dramatically over the last two decades.

When the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) took over national government and power in 1980, it had strong rural support (Bratton, 1987). A *de facto* one party 'socialist' state was created, which embraced a vision of 'national reconciliation' seeking to combine continuity of existing production structures with policies to improve conditions for the majority that had been neglected during colonialism (Raftopoulos, 2004). A cornerstone of this approach was equity and redistribution of wealth and income, and the GOZ set itself ambitious development targets through its five year development plans to achieve its vision. At the forefront of the new policy priorities and strategies, at least rhetorically, was rural development. This was to be realized through the creation of a decentralized system of local representation through village, ward and district development committees, (although there are more political explanations for the establishment of RDCs as discussed in detail below), a process which marginalised traditional authorities as undemocratic and co-opted and corrupted by the colonial system (Makumbi, 1998, Conyers, 2001, Hammar, 2003). The early 1980s witnessed a period of social welfare expenditure, political unity and slow land reform but there was limited economic growth or redistribution of wealth (Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003). It was this relatively encouraging and positive context that enabled CAMPFIRE to emerge.

However, the veneer of national unity, and concern for rural development was soon torn aside with the violent repression of Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) loyalists in Matebeland in mid-1980s. This exposed for the first time the states tendency to invoke force and create a culture of fear and intolerance in the face of any opposition, a characteristic that has become increasingly evident in the last decade (Raftopoulos, 2004). The 1980s witnessed the emergence of an authoritarian state. For example, in 1985, legislation creating politically appointed governors in the provinces was introduced with the aim of consolidating the ruling party's power in rural areas. Raftopolous (ibid) sums up the emerging situation in the 1980s:

> *there was a strong element of 'command' reflecting the continuing influence of the often militarist politics of the liberation movement. Such politics emerged in the context of the struggles against a colonial regime embedded in repressive politics and offering few opportunities for democratic participation ... This style of state management soon became apparent in many spheres of Zimbabwean politics.* (Raftopolous, 2004:5)
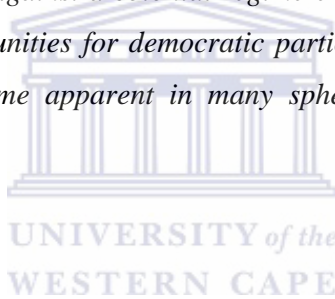
By the early 1990s, it was clear that the redistribution, equity and welfare aims of the state were going unrealized and many of the significant gains of the 1980s, - notably the expansion of public services and basic infrastructure such as health and sanitation, water supplies, education and roads to the formerly marginalised rural areas - had slowed down or reversed due to macro-economic and fiscal constraints. Facing increasing economic pressure the government designed and adopted an Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) at the behest of western institutions, the negative effects of which were to prove long-term and damaging (Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003).

As poverty levels increased, the economy contracted and inequalities persisted, the state came under increasing criticism (Makumbi, 1998). By the late 1990's the political legitimacy of ZANU-PF was coming under increasing scrutiny, culminating in significant

and escalating electoral challenges and civil unrest. In 2000, the government lost the Constitutional Referendum, representing the first defeat of the ruling ZANU-PF party in 20 years. The opposition had campaigned against the new constitution which, among other things, made provisions for large scale appropriation of white-owned farmland. Immediately, the government backed invasions of commercial farms as an alternative approach to redressing the land issue and to divert attention away from the declining economic situation. The farm invasions significantly cut agricultural output and exports, worsening the fiscal pressures on the government and resulting in the loss of foreign capital and skills (Mapedza, 2009). The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) withdrew their support to the government. The cumulative effect was that Zimbabwe entered a period of sustained hyper-inflation and economic contraction (Bond and Manyanya, 2002).
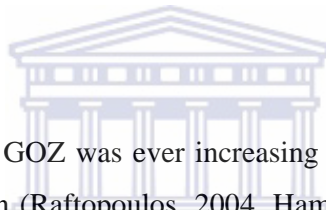
The response on the part of the GOZ was ever increasing authoritarianism, violence and repression of political opposition (Raftopoulos, 2004, Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003). The outcome of this process has been that Zimbabwe no longer exhibits the attributes of an ordered political polity (Chabal and Daloz, 1999). The decline has seen the country reduced from a constitutional democracy to a political system based on patronage and cronyism, inherently opposed to local initiatives or self-sufficiency. The result has been a dramatic shrinking of political space for all forms of democratic expression or political opposition (Raftopoulos, 2004, Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003). Zimbabwe is now a 'gatekeeper state', with politicians acting as middlemen[59] rather than regulators (Logan and Moseley, 2002). This middleman role is playing out across all sectors of the economy, including wildlife management. Under such circumstances, decentralisation can enable rule making, decision making and rule enforcement powers to be usurped by the elite from the majority previously managing wildlife resources (Mapedza, 2009). It is too early to judge whether the outcome of the 2008 election culminating in the formation of the

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[59] Middlemen facilitate business for a profit. For example, in the wildlife sector politicians who are supposed to regulate the sector facilitate hunters' access to wildlife for a fee instead.

coalition government will significantly change this situation, although the evidence to date does not look encouraging.

7.2.2 Economic Status

The dramatic decline in the economy of Zimbabwe has reflected the decline in its political fortunes. This has direct and immediate implications for CAMPFIRE. The realisation of CAMPFIRE-related financial revenue and economic incentives is linked to macroeconomic dynamics, and whether these allow for continuation or improvements in revenue generation, encourage revenue 'capture' by RDCs and political economic elites, or constrain opportunities for growth. The economic climate is equally important for the generation of revenue through private sector participation, concession leases and investments in tourism. The negative macroeconomic and political environment in the post-2000 period presents major challenges for CAMPFIRE revenue generation and Zimbabwe generally.
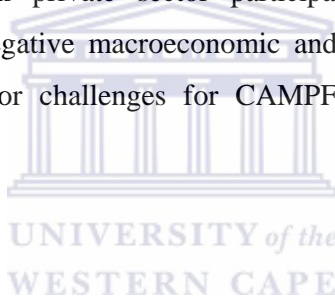
At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited what was by the standards then prevalent in Africa, a highly developed economy with a large and relatively diversified formal sector - dominated by agriculture, manufacturing and mining - which between them accounted for almost half the GDP and over 50% of formal employment (Kanyenze, 2004). The following decade saw significant social expenditures but a shrinking economic base, concerns over which culminated in the adoption the ESAP in 1990. Whilst there is debate over the overall impact of structural adjustment programmes in Africa, Kanyenze (2004) concludes that the deregulation of the economy delivered net economic losses to the economy and to the majority of Zimbabweans. For example, estimated levels of those considered poor rose from 62% in 1995 to 75% in 2000. ESAP triggered a number of processes in the mid to late 1990s. These included a trend towards increased corruption, a decline in economic growth and employment opportunities and an increase in the rate of inflation (Ibid).

This escalating economic turmoil resulted in catastrophic economic decline from 2000 onwards and an economy today that widely perceived to be on the verge of collapse. This resulted in a staggering and unprecedented 231,000,000% official inflation rate as of July 2008[60] and a current unemployment rate of approximately 94% (AFP, 2009). Meanwhile Zimbabwe's GDP plummeted to 37% between 1998 and 2006, and averaged -5.9% between 2005 and 2007 (UNDP, 2008) with all major sectors of the economy – agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and mining – seeing progressively steeper declines since 1998. As of February 2009, the UN estimated that approximately 7.5 million people, or 75% of the population of Zimbabweans remaining in the country, would be in need of food aid during the year. This in a country that only a decade before had commonly been referred to as the 'breadbasket' of Africa.
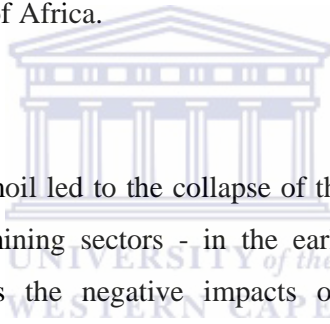
The political and economic turmoil led to the collapse of the tourism sector – along with the commercial farming and mining sectors - in the early years of the 21st Century. Nemarundwe (2005) highlights the negative impacts of this economic climate on CAMPFIRE. CAMPFIRE's income-generating potential through tourism is compromised and community investment projects are undermined as the fluctuation of prices makes a mockery of budgeting. Hyperinflation compromises the financial activities and economic viability of CAMPFIRE projects, erodes financial benefits and value, and, given that payments of household cash dividends from CAMPFIRE revenue activities take place six months to a year after activities have occurred, the losses to inflation of cash benefits renders them worthless, as the following case study from Mahenye illustrates. It also undermines the private sector's ability to provide the capital injection that is required as the economic driver of community based activities. Finally, in the absence of many other income or taxable options, the current situation is further increasing the dependence of RDCs on CAMPFIRE wildlife revenue for survival (Frost and Bond, 2008). Thus, the

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[60] As of 2009 the real inflation rate is generally considered to be in the 'quadrillions' but no official data has been made available by the CSO since mid-2008 so it is not possible to confirm this.

current hyper-inflationary macroeconomic environment is extremely disruptive. This is compounded further as the difficulties experienced by urban dwellers in securing employment contribute to urban-rural migration, which increases pressure on the resource base and places additional demands on revenues and local-level governance systems.

7.2.3 Civil Society

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Zimbabwe witnessed the growth of a plethora of well-funded NGOs and a strong and vibrant civil society. However, the dominance of the state could be seen in civil society throughout this period, with NGOs adopting a low profile and complementary approach to the state, supporting the social welfare policies of government (Raftopoulos, 2004, Duffy, 2000). CAMPFIRE exemplified this with the CAMFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG), a joint facilitating structure of government agencies, NGOs and academic institutions, playing a key role in advocacy and implementation until 2000 (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007, Child et al., 2003) as detailed below.
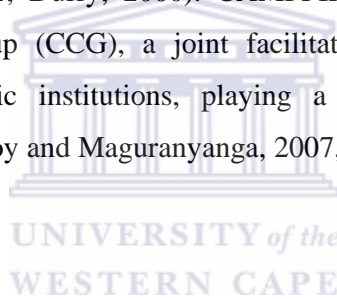
However, the shift in the political landscape immediately prior to 2000 resulted in civil society organizations' opposition to government-led constitutional amendments. From 1999, some segments of civil society began to challenge the government on land, electoral and human rights issues. This challenge was treated by the ruling party as a sign of political defiance warranting the repression of NGOs, and the GOZ introduced the 2005 NGO Bill, which curtailed NGO functions and independence (Rihoy et al., 2007). The result was open conflict between the government and civil society. Thus the volatile political climate translated into a difficult operational environment for civil society, particularly in any area of governance and in rural development, both of direct relevance to CAMPFIRE. Notably, those components of civil society and associated social movements (such as the War Veterans) that are ideologically/politically aligned to the ruling party were given, and continue to receive, ad hoc audience and platforms to express

their views and deliberate on issues within the public arena (Raftopoulos and Savage, 2005).

The impact of this marginalization of civil society on CAMPFIRE has been profound. Throughout the 1990s, members of the CCG had played a key role in capacity building at grassroots level (Child et al., 2003) and fulfilled a critical role as 'honest-brokers', providing neutral arbitration in instances where community-level polarisation stalled progress in programme implementation, as explored in greater detail in the following section. As of 2003, because of the political backlash against civil society, NGOs and research institutions have been prevented from playing any significant role in CAMPFIRE implementation (Rihoy et al., 2007). Compounding this marginalization of civil society in implementation was the loss of access to donor funding and withdrawal during the political crisis in Zimbabwe.
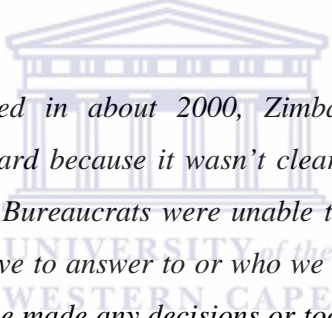
7.2.4 Policy and Legislative Context

As with the political dynamics, Zimbabwe's policy environment can only be understood within the context of Zimbabwe's colonial past and post-independence reactions. Colonial land and natural resource management policies were developed to ensure that access and rights to land and resources were skewed in favor of white settlers and were based on the assumption that traditional resource management practices degraded the resource base (Keeley and Scoones, 2003). The outcome produced the dual land tenure system which political and economic developments since 2000, notably the 'Fast Track' land reform process, have ostensibly aimed at addressing. Despite the equity and development ideals of the state in the 1980s, much of the colonial legislation and bureaucratic structures were inherited unaltered by the post-colonial state (Mandondo, 2000), and this represented a highly centralized and powerful state ill suited to accommodate popular demands. The result was that many aspects of environmental policy making and the assumptions on which it was based remained largely unchanged from colonial times through the 1980s and 1990s (Keeley and Scoones, 2003, Murphree,

1997b). As a result the policy process during the 1980s and 1990s was technicist and modernist in its approach, leading to planning and implementation approaches that marginalised local involvement and participation and were ill-suited to accommodating popular demands. The result of this continuation in colonial policy making practices within the new overarching policy framework focused on deracialisation, was described by Mandondo (2000) as 'amendments…which have largely de-racialized the colonial acts and policies without democratizing them' (Mandondo, 2000:1).

Notwithstanding these legitimate concerns relating to the nature of the bureaucracy, the country had a relatively well-functioning and effective bureaucracy until 2000. After this period, the situation changed dramatically, as described by one former senior government official:

> *Since the turmoil started in about 2000, Zimbabwe's bureaucracy hasn't functioned across the board because it wasn't clear who was in charge, where power or authority lay. Bureaucrats were unable to function because we were unsure who we would have to answer to or who we would offend in the process. The result was that no one made any decisions or took any action* (Former senior government official – name withheld on request – Interviewed in Harare, September 2005).

Once again, this has had a profound effect on CAMPFIRE. CAMPFIRE is based on principles of sustainable use (SASUSG, 1996). The discourse that underlies sustainable use has solid scientific and rational underpinnings. It is primarily a technical exercise, with the key goals of economic productivity and maintenance of the natural resource base. The resulting implementation approach assigned key regulatory and monitoring functions to technical arms of the state, in the form of the DNPWLM – now the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA) – to ensure environmental sustainability. However, the scientific approach that drove environmental policy making has now been replaced by a

racially charged and politically biased populist moral discourse about the return of 'African soil to Africans' adopted by the ruling party (Wolmer et al., 2003). The clearest example of this was government's revitalization of the land reform process under the fast-track approach, which pushed aside many of the standard planning approaches in favour of the populist mobilization of 'land invaders' (Keeley and Scoones, 2003) with the aim of boosting the ruling party's waning popularity.

This radical shift in how policy is developed and implemented in the environmental management context has largely undermined PWMA's ability to regulate, monitor resource use, and provide programme oversight. Enforcing regulation and monitoring resource use could lead to retribution from powerful political forces. The leading role that powerful ruling party politicians have assumed within the wildlife management industry in Zimbabwe (a major source of scarce foreign exchange) has been the subject of much national and international media coverage (Hammer, 2006, Mapedza, 2009). Wildlife management, like so much else in Zimbabwe, has now become a political issue, in contrast to the technical issues of the 1980's and 1990's, as clearly articulated by a senior member of the CAMPFIRE Association:

> *People's contribution to the debate and their expertise is not as important as their political persuasion. If you do not have the correct political persuasion you become irrelevant. It is politics which is limiting or opening up the debate, depending on how you look at it* (Member of the CAMPFIRE Association board – name withheld on request – interviewed in Harare, September 2005).

For the last ten years, issues of land reform and redistribution have dominated the policy and political context in rural areas. This presents a very different context, dominated by political discourses that are rooted in different models of development, contrary to the traditional wildlife management discourse that provided the background for CAMPFIRE policy development. As Wolmer et al. (2003) comment:

the land reform exercise emphasises direct redistribution, equity and land for crops; whilst the wildlife management discourse tends to stress the neo-liberal goals of maximizing foreign exchange earnings, encouraging public-private partnerships and trickle down. Wolmer et al. (2003:1)

This shift in the policy-making environment, rationale and priorities, from one dominated by linear and science-based technical arguments to one driven by political expediency, racial bias and a host of competing political interests, represents a fundamental shift in the context in which CAMPFIRE is being played out. A further factor that is now dictating wildlife policies in Zimbabwe is the use of wildlife as a means to dispense patronage. Gibson (1999) argues that central government and elites' control over wildlife ensures that wildlife becomes:

another source of goods which an incumbent party could distribute… Political actors… regarded the primary benefits of wildlife policy to be distributive goods and not the collective good of conservation. Gibson (1999:5)

The same situation is now common in Zimbabwe with senior government officials able to capitalize upon the disarray and dispense wildlife and land as a means to cement their political relationships. This has been clearly demonstrated by a variety of acts by senior government officials over the last six years, one example of which serves to demonstrate the effective manner in which wildlife is now used as a means to dispense patronage. In 2003 the then Provincial Governor of Masvingo Province, J.D Hungwe, in a letter addressed to 'All Conservancies' provided clear directions as to who should be rewarded with partnerships in the lucrative wildlife conservancies, stating:

As previously discussed and agreed, I now forward to you the following names of persons to be partners in your organizations (J.D Hungwe, letter dated 7 January, 2003).

The letter goes on to llist individuals to be included as partners in Conservancies, among them the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIO), the Assistant Police Commissioner and various ex-army combatants.

7.2.4.1 Land Policies

As the ruling party slogan 'The land is the economy, the economy is the land' implies, struggles over land have been, at least rhetorically, at centre stage throughout the colonial and post-colonial period[61]. The violent colonial heritage of land dispossession ensured that 'the land question' 'has engraved itself deeply into Zimbabwe's inter-related physical, political and psychic landscape' (Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003:18), thus appealing to the racially based, nationalist narrative adopted by the State since 2000. However, despite such politically emotive slogans and broad appeal, the GOZ's approach to land reform prior to 1997 was based on cautious, market based reforms using 'willing-seller, willing-buyer' procedures laid down in the Lancaster House Conference (Moyo, 2000, Sachikonye, 2002). This achieved limited success in terms of reversing the racial land imbalances created by colonization. In 1997 approximately 4660 large-scale commercial farmers, primarily white, continued to own 11.2 million hectares while approximately 6 million black smallholder farmers occupied 16.4 million hectares, primarily in areas with low agricultural potential (UNDP, 1998).

Since 2000, the mix of political discontent, land and race has formed a volatile political cocktail dominating all aspects of economic, political and social life in the country (Murombedzi and Gomera, 2005). A central component of the GOZ's reaction to the

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[61] Under the dual land system introduced during the colonial period, commercial lands were allocated to white farmers or companies as private or 'alienated' land, whilst black inhabitants were removed (often forcibly) to 'native reserves', later known as 'communal lands'. This land policy culminated in the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which also recognized a third category of land, that of 'state land', which was managed directly by state forestry and wildlife authorities (Tshuma, 1997).

growing political challenges and civil unrest prior to 2000 was the revitalization of the land reform process under the fast-track approach. This saw a nation-wide campaign of land invasions onto mainly white-owned commercial farms, using violence and intimidation against farm owners and workers alike. This represented the sidelining of what had formerly been the standard technical planning approaches to land reform in favor of a populist and racially based mobilization of 'land invaders' (Alexander and McGregor, 2001).

This historical struggle over land and its resources is central to understanding the political dimensions of natural resource management in Zimbabwe today, and it explains why it receives such a high degree of political prominence. In the years following independence, land redistribution was construed as a bureaucratic technical exercise, in which the goals of productivity and maximizing returns on investment held a central place. The policy environment was driven by science, and it was such an environment that enabled the conception and provided the initial impetus and implementation context for CAMPFIRE. This environment has now shifted dramatically to one dominated by a nationalist narrative, political imperatives and racially charged appeals. Therefore, wildlife management is intimately woven into issues of land management and land reform, and generally viewed with suspicion as it was considered to be 'a ploy of whites to forestall land acquisition and justify multiple and extensive land holdings' (Wolmer et al., 2003:8).

7.2.4.2 Wildlife, Environment and Tourism Policy and Legislation

CAMPFIRE is philosophically premised on sustainable use of natural resources, which was formally endorsed in Zimbabwe by the 1975 Parks and Wildlife Act which aimed to 'confer privileges on owners or occupiers of alienated land as custodians of wildlife, fish and plants' (Government of Zimbabwe, 1996). The Act effectively makes freehold farms and ranches into proprietory units for wildlife management. In 1982, an amendment gave the Minister power to designate RDCs as 'appropriate authorities' (AA) over wildlife on

communal land. The 1989 Policy for Wildlife consolidates the GOZ's endorsement of sustainable utilization (Murphree, 1997b).

The institutional framework for CAMPFIRE and rural development, in general, was provided by the prime minister's directive of 1984, which established structures for development at provincial, district, ward and village levels. At a sub-district level, Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) were created, neither of which can be constituted into legal entities. The RDC itself is the only elected body at the district level that has a legal identity. Therefore, the RDC was/is the only institution within which AA can be legally vested.

Despite the transformed policy environment and process described above, government continues to promote CAMPFIRE, at least rhetorically, as the 'flagship' of environmental policy and its underlying concept of sustainable use and decentralization has been integrated into environmental policy in general. For example, the National Environmental Policy (2004) and Environmental Management Act (2004) specifically invoke the principle of sustainable use as developed in earlier legislation in their efforts to establish a general legal foundation for all environmental laws based on sustainable development. They also address inconsistencies, overlaps and duplication in environmental and natural resource legislation. Both the Policy and Act contain repeated references to devolution and decentralization. The National Environmental Policy (2004:12) specifically calls for 'promoting the CAMPFIRE concept', extending it into new geographical areas and to cover additional resources, including minerals. It also prioritizes the need for participatory policymaking and for communities to benefit from their environmental assets, stating as a 'guiding principles':

> *the participation of all interested and affected parties in environmental governance must be promoted and all people given an opportunity to develop the understanding, skills and capacity for achieving equitable and effective participation* (Government of Zimbabwe, 2004:3).

It goes on to identify as one of its 'strategic directions' the need to 'expand devolution to give local communities greater authority to manage their environments more effectively' (Government of Zimbabwe 2004:19). The Act takes this further and lays out mechanisms to enable this by specifically endorsing devolution and recognizing and providing opportunities for establishing sub-district level institutions. This goes further in empowering sub-district level institutions than previous legislation as it represents the first time that village based sub-committees have been provided with the opportunity to replace Natural Resource Committees at District level (Charles Jonga, CEO CAMPFIRE Association, interview in Harare, September 2005). Similarly, the 2002 Integrated Conservation Plan for Fast Track Land Resettlement and the 2003 Wildlife Based Land Reform Policy were based on the same concepts and philosophies as endorsed in the 1989 Act and specifically endorsed CAMPFIRE and wildlife utilization as an approach to be emulated in under different tenurial regimes. Clearly, the discourse and networks catalyzed by CAMPFIRE - what might be termed 'CAMPFIREs legacy' - continues to influence emerging policy in Zimbabwe despite the changes in the broader national context. However, to date all evidence indicates that such commitments remain purely rhetorical.

7.2.4.3 Decentralization and Rural-Related Policies
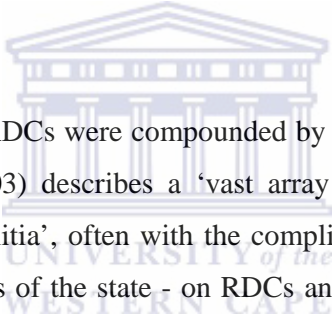
At least rhetorically, rural development has been one of the priorities of the Zimbabwean government since independence, and decentralization was seen as a key means to achieve this (Hammar, 2003, Makumbi, 1998, Conyers, 2001). Consequently, natural resource legislation in Zimbabwe concentrated considerable power in the hands of RDCs. Child et al. (2003) note that in addition to the Parks and Wildlife Act, a number of other laws (e.g. Natural Resources Act, the Communal Land Act and the Rural District Council Act) give the RDCs control over natural resources. The Natural Resources Act enables RDCs to establish highly interventionist conservation committees and bylaws on the use of natural resources. The Communal Land Act vests ownership of the land with the state and its

administration in the hands of the RDC while the Rural District Council Act gives RDCs powers to take measures to conserve natural resources, permit grazing and cultivation and develop land use plans (ibid).

Many analysts (Hammar, 2003, Makumbi, 1998, Alexander, 1993, Conyers, 2001) concur that since the creation of independent Zimbabwe, District Councils have been highly politicized structures of fundamental importance to the ruling party in its attempts to control the country. Makumbe (1998) notes that whilst initial administrative changes in RDCs were ostensibly aimed at introducing integrated and coordinated rural development planning, they also had an alternative political agenda, and he concludes that decentralisation was primarily promoted for the purposes of creating the one-party state. Hammer (2003) elaborates further, detailing the critical role that RDC's have historically played in the territorial and political strategies of state and ruling party attempts to order, control and develop spaces, resources and populations in Zimbabwe. However, Alexander (2003) and Conyers (2001) both note that, despite this central political significance, post-independence decentralization efforts were largely ineffective due to the lack of resources and any real decision making authority.

Conyers (2001) identifies three distinct phases of decentralization. The first phase, stretching from 1980 to 1992, is characteristic of 'deconcentration'. Newly elected representative institutions at the district level were given neither decision-making authority nor substantial control over resources and were largely ineffective (Alexander, 1993). Conyers' second phase spans the period 1993 to 1999 when there was renewed pressure to decentralize as a means not only to give effective powers to local institutions but also to rationalize public services. The focus was on decentralization to elected local RDCs rather than appointed development committees as before. However, once again little was actually achieved in terms of transferring functions to RDCs due to reluctance of line Ministries to share responsibilities.

Conyers (2001:4) describes the third phase, from 1999 to 2002, as 'government trying to pass the buck of its financial and political problems.' From 1999, the line ministries became more interested in decentralization but this was due to increasing financial pressures on government having reduced ministries' ability to deliver services (Conyers, 2001). They seized upon decentralization as a means to save themselves and the ruling party from the embarrassment of being unable to deliver basic services. This decentralization of functions without financial resources to execute them, combined with a withdrawal of donor support in the early 2000's and the declining national economic situation, is detracting from rather than empowering RDCs and reducing the quality of services provided (Conyers, 2001; Hammar, 2003; Frost and Bond, 2008).

Since 2000, the difficulties for RDCs were compounded by politically motivated violence and intimidation. Hammer (2003) describes a 'vast array of attacks' - either by 'war veterans' or Zanu-PF 'youth militia', often with the complicity or participation of senior politicians and bureaucratic arms of the state - on RDCs and their associated institutions, which have served to radically alter the landscape of government in Zimbabwe. These attacks are essentially attempts on behalf of Zanu (PF) to 'recapture the frontiers of rule' (Hammar, 2003:144) that the space of local government represents. This violence, coupled with the overall impacts of 'political disorder', served to make the position of RDC's precarious. Nationwide 'political disorder' has resulted in a growing conflation of party and state roles. Decentralization and the role of RDC's is then also a highly politicized and complicated arena in which contests and power struggles over land, and ultimately the country itself, are being played out.

CAMPFIRE was one of the first practical attempts at a decentralization strategy in Zimbabwe, although it developed relatively independently of the wider decentralization debates and processes (Conyers, 2001). Whilst it was not the original intent, political

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compromises by CAMPFIRE policy makers ensured that natural resource governance reforms decentralized authority to manage wildlife resources to RDCs in contrast to the original intention of devolving authority to natural resource management cooperatives at the village level (Martin, 1986). Consequently, the situation of the RDCs is of fundamental importance in determining CAMPFIRE outcomes, and conversely, CAMPFIRE funds are becoming fundamentally important in determining the future of RDCs.

As soon as CAMPFIRE was introduced these funds immediately became an important source of revenue for RDCs as even at this time, as discussed above, central government was seizing the opportunity to shed its fiscal responsibilities. Bond (1999) notes that between 1989-1993 income from wildlife constituted up to 24% of local revenue, and in several districts, it exceeded all other individual sources. These figures have escalated throughout the 1990s as responsibility for the provision of services has increasingly been decentralized to RDCs without financial resources to execute these. Bond's (2001) figures demonstrate that as of 1999, in RDCs with Appropriate Authority (AA), central government grants accounted for only 35% of total revenue with 65% being generated locally. In 10 districts with AA, income to the RDCs from wildlife management exceeded all other locally generated revenue. Whilst accurate figures are not available from this date, given the deteriorating financial situation of the RDCs and the increasing demands upon them, it can be assumed that dependence on CAMPFIRE revenues has become ever more pronounced. Anecdotal evidence would bear this out as the following quote from a Chiredzi RDC officer indicates:

> *The Zimbabwean economy is getting worse every day and there's less money for us to deliver services to people. We have problems with CAMPFIRE money because of inflation, it's not worth what it used to be, but still Council would have a real problem without it and that means people here wouldn't get any of our services* (J Sambo; Human Resources Officer, Chiredzi RDC; interviewed in Chiredzi, October 2005).

The above discussion indicates that, since independence, RDCs in Zimbabwe have played a critical role in the ruling party's strategies to control and develop spaces, resources and the population in rural Zimbabwe. Decentralization was conceived by ZANU-PF as a means to create and maintain the one-party state, and as such had the full political backing of the state. From this perspective, CAMPFIRE can be seen as a strand of this government strategy, and one that became increasingly important after 1999. After this date, central government increasingly decentralized responsibility for delivering basic social services to RDCs without providing the financial means to deliver services. Given the deteriorating financial situation of the RDCs and the increasing demands upon them, dependence on CAMPFIRE revenues has become ever more pronounced. Given also the central role that RDC's play in the ruling parties overall strategy for penetration and control in rural areas, this explains why central government continues to support decentralisation of natural resource management through CAMPFIRE. For ZANU-PF, CAMPFIRE provides the financial means by which RDCs are able to continue delivering services and retain their influence in rural area, at no cost to central government. This support extends in some districts to financing of the fast-track resettlement programme (Dr Chitsike, University of Zimbabwe, interviewed in Harare, October 2005). In other words, CAMPFIRE revenues provide financial support to ZANU-PF in its attempts to rule the rural frontier. Support for CAMPFIRE is then very much in the interests of the state. However, Hammar (2003) also points out that local government is not simply a front for the state for national processes of states making. They also possess their own local dynamics and demands specific to their situated histories and broader relations of power and accumulation. Thus, they occupy a unique space and role in determining future democratic outcomes. What happens at this level is crucial given the closure of democratic space at the macro level. This issue is returned to in Chapters 8 and 10.

Decentralization – the institutional framework of CAMPFIRE – is a highly politicized and complex arena but one which ultimately ensures that CAMPFIRE maintains support from

the political elite within the country. Understanding this arena is essential to understanding the political and policy pressures facing CAMPFIRE. At the macro level, whilst the political climate may remain conducive to supporting decentralisation of wildlife benefits within CAMPFIRE, the same cannot be said for devolutionary approaches that place more power in the hands of local communities. Since the early 1990s, the tendency of government has been to centralize or decentralize authority and control. For example, proposals to provide local communities with proprietorship over land and natural resources by the Rukuni Land Commission Report (Rukuni, 1994) were either ignored or severely watered down. CAMPFIRE itself is another example of this as discussed in more detail below. Whilst the original intent of CAMPFIRE's advocates had been devolution, this proved controversial and hence the 'pragmatic compromise' (Murphree, 1997b) of decentralisation. Since 2000, this tendency has been enhanced, with authoritarianism becoming a normal political practice in what is now a deeply polarized state (Raftopoulos, 2004).
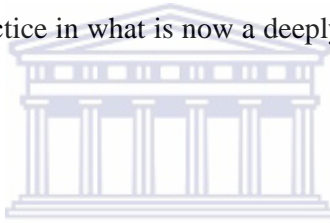
The Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) of 2001 has significant, if unclear, implications for both RDCs and CAMPFIRE. As discussed above, until this date policy had focused upon strengthening the role and legal legitimacy of the RDCs as the democratically elected structures at village, ward and district levels at the expense of traditional authorities. The TLA is a significant shift in direction, restoring powers to chiefs, headmen and *sabhukus* in terms of natural resource management. It provides for Ward and Village Assemblies and mandates the demarcation of their borders, that would 'consider and resolve' all issues relating to land, water and other natural resources. Crucially though, the Act does not provide land rights to the Assemblies and it does not give them any legal status beyond being sub-committees of RDCs. The Act can potentially have problematic consequences for rural communities, especially where traditional leadership views values of democracy and governance as western ideals. The TLA is essentially a replica of colonial strategies pertaining to traditional leadership, the aim of which was (is) to co-opt traditional leadership to ensure political penetration of the state and ruling party into rural landscapes. The profound influence that this newly formed alliance of party and traditional institutions

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can have on local power dynamics and how this reverberates within local CAMPFIRE institutions is illustrated by the Mahenye case study in the following Chapter. The TLA can be viewed as a product of the 'failed state' and 'retraditionalisation' thesis (Herbst, 2000, Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Kyed and Buur, 2006) discussed in Chapter 2. As such, it can be viewed as an attempt by the state to (re)gain control over territories and people in rural areas by capturing the authority of traditional leaders to replace that which it has lost through the demise of formal state institutions. The introduction of the TLA may then have significant implications for the ability of CAMPFIRE to open up political and democratic space.

7.2.5 The Political Appeal of CAMPFIRE Discourse and Narrative

Whilst the discourse upon which CAMPFIRE and sustainable use were based had solid scientific and rational underpinnings and appealed to the technical and scientifically driven policy-making process of the 1990s, there were also other important elements to the CAMPFIRE narrative that appealed to a range of other political agendas. Such elements included participation, racial equity, promotion of African traditional practices and values and above all national sovereignty. Both the government and its civil society supporters used such politically resonant and emotive rhetoric to good effect to bolster the image and political popularity of CAMPFIRE at home and internationally throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Whilst sustainable use may have been an accepted approach nationally, it was still controversial internationally in the 1990s. As discussed in detail in Chapter 4, CAMPFIRE played an important strategic role in regional and international debates about sustainable use, most notably in those related to CITES and the CBD, putting Zimbabwe at the forefront of conservation initiatives globally. During the 1990s, it achieved what Wolmer et al (2003:5) refer to as 'iconic status…rapidly becoming the most famous exemplar of CBNRM.' It was the recipient of many international conservation awards and accolades.

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Considerable international media attention was devoted to CAMPFIRE and it attracted generous donor support to the country, as well as researchers from all over the world and thousands of workshops, conferences and publications were generated. The acclaim and recognition generated by CAMPFIRE for Zimbabwe cemented its political and social popularity in the country.

The international profile that CAMPFIRE achieved also made it possible for the government to play to populist political agendas and adopt populist stances at high-profile international events in ways that resonated with the electorate at home. Arguments concerning sovereignty over national resources, 'African solutions to African problems', and anti- eco-imperialism (the new form of colonialism) were all commonly put forward as arguments in support of sustainable use and CAMPFIRE at international meetings by the government and CCG. The following comment by the PS Ministry of Environment and Tourism when discussing the role of CAMPFIRE in relation to CITES is representative of the rhetoric employed by government officials:

> *Our message is: sovereign countries must be free to decide what to do with their*
> *own resources rather than leaving a group of people to impose their own ideas* (J
> Moyo, ANC daily news briefing, March 1, 1997).

Such comments received wide media attention, in which CAMPFIRE was seen as a vehicle through which the government was upholding the sovereign rights of Zimbabweans and Africans internationally. Thus, CAMPFIRE met a wide range of political agendas throughout the 1990s. Alexander (2003) argues that such high profile appeals to politically resonant issues of redistribution of resources enabled the government to masquerade as addressing pressing political issues, whilst doing nothing about the far more significant issue of land reform.

Wolmer et al. (2003) note the 'ostensibly antagonistic discourses' of wildlife management and land reform in Zimbabwe that has developed in the last eight years. These two discourses emanate from opposing models of development; with land reform emphasizing equity, redistribution and agriculture; whilst wildlife management emphasizes neo-liberal goals encompassing the private sector, foreign exchange earnings and trickle down economic theory. However, despite this apparent antagonism, the GOZ continues to advocate both nationally and internationally CBNRM and CAMPFIRE approaches as a policy priority:

Community based natural resources management and wildlife based land reform policy are the key instruments to foster better land management … in this regard for sustainability to be achieved there is need for full participation of local communities in the planning and management of their environment and natural resources. A Programme like Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) is a good example (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, 2006:4).
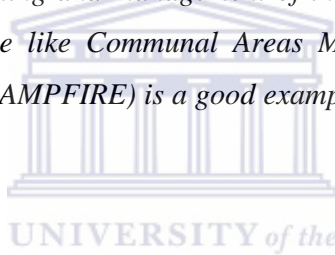
Why does the GOZ continue to espouse CAMPFIRE and CBNRM approaches despite the apparent contradictions in the discourse pointed out by Wolmer et al. (2003)? The political incentive of financing the RDC's as a means of retaining control in rural areas has already been discussed. In addition, the narrative upon which CAMPFIRE relied was used to good effect by government when promoting its sustainable use policies in the 1990s. There are also remarkable similarities with the narrative that the ZANU PF government has used over the last decade when explaining and justifying its actions in relation to land reform. For example, the issue of national sovereignty, which played centre stage in CAMFIRE rhetoric internationally, has also formed the centerpiece of the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist rhetoric used by Mugabe and Zanu (PF) to counter critics of their revived land revolution and new brand of authoritarian nationalism. For example, in 2002 Mugabe heralded the Fast-Track Resettlement Programme as an unqualified success, adding:

We need to put all this land to productive agricultural use ...it is also our way of ensuring that no one takes advantage of our stomachs to get to the soul of our sovereignty (The Herald Newspaper, 2002).

The discourse and rhetoric employed by government officials when responding to criticism and issues from the international community in relation to CAMPFIRE does then bear a striking resemblance to that used when responding to international criticism over its land reform process. From a purely discursive perspective, CAMPFIRE can be viewed as serving as a precursor for the position of the Zimbabwean government on land reform on the international stage. While from a technical and implementation perspective, the discourse may differ, from a political perspective, they are complimentary and synergistic.

The above review of the national context of CBNRM reveals that, policies affecting CBNRM extend far beyond just environmental policy making to impact rural development processes as a whole. As this discussion has illustrated, the experience in Zimbabwe highlights the framing of CBNRM in terms of attempts to address racial inequalities, policies affecting land/resource tenure, processes of decentralization and poverty alleviation as well as those specific to environmental management, conservation and tourism.

7.3 Implementation Approach and Challenges

A large number of researchers and analysts have exhaustively discussed and analysed the history and origins of CAMPFIRE. This analysis has been undertaken both by those involved in implementation (Child, 1995, Metcalfe, 1994, Murombedzi, 2003a, Murphree, 1997b) as well as external, independent commentators (Adams and Hulme, 2001, Wolmer et al., 2003, Duffy, 2000). Adams and Hulme (2001) caution that much CBNRM literature is written by people involved in project development and therefore, possibly lacking in 'sufficient critical distance to provide a complete review' (Adams

and Hulme 2001:19). They note that the analysis of those involved may reflect what Chambers (1983) refers to as 'project bias', by which evaluations and analysis of a programme look repeatedly at the same project, reports and statistics without properly questioning the nature of local level changes. In order to avoid this pitfall, and in acknowledgement that I was involved in project implementation, whilst the following discussion does draw heavily upon the existing CAMPFIRE documentation, it balances this by ensuring that this material is primarily drawn upon for 'data' rather than analysis. The analysis offered here has been informed by the analytical framework employed throughout this research and as such is 'original'.

As discussed in Chapter 3 and elaborated in the corresponding discussion in Chapter 5, an examination of the philosophy, science and data that underpins CBNRM is important in understanding the implementation of CBNRM. Decisions around natural resource management policy ultimately depend on the relative political influence of different interest groups. Policy processes are influenced by the existence of actor-networks, the relative political influence of which will determine their ability to promote their desired policy approach. As the following discussion illustrates, the history, origins and implementation approach of CAMFPIRE encouraged the development of a strong, united and cohesive policy network which has proven flexible and robust enough to withstand collapse in the face of the current crisis in Zimbabwe.

7.3.1 The Emergence of CBNRM in Zimbabwe

Two of the features that distinguish CAMPFIRE from CBNRM in Botswana are, firstly, those of its local origins, and, secondly, the gradual process of policy development and implementation. This section explores how these two factors have contributed to the development of a robust programme and policy framework in Zimbabwe.

Until the 1950s, the history of wildlife policy in Zimbabwe was much the same as that of other British colonies, detailed in Chapter 2, where government appropriated control and provided some use rights to settlers and visitors. The first experiments with Community Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe began after independence in 1980, when discriminatory laws, which had been enacted in the 1960s to allow only white commercial farmers to benefit from wildlife on their land, were amended to enable black communal farmers to realize similar benefit. The conceptual origins of CAMPFIRE date back to the early 1960s when influential studies on game meat production were conducted in the South-East Lowveld in Zimbabwe by three visiting Fulbright scholars, Riney, Dasmann and Mosmann (Metcalfe, 1994). These studies, later verified by others conducted under the auspices of the WWF (Child, 1988, Cumming, 1990, Jansen et al., 1992) led to development of the hypothesis that, in certain ecological conditions, wildlife ranching could economically outperform cattle ranching and was more ecologically stable (Cumming, 1988).
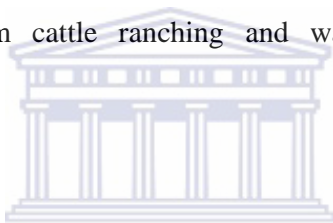
Zimbabwean policy makers concluded from this that the future of wildlife could only be ensured in a policy context where wildlife could be made an economically competitive form of land use (Child, 1995). The outcome was a radical shift in conservation paradigms – away from protectionism to sustainable use. This shift was formalized as policy under the 1975 Parks and Wildlife Act. The following years saw a remarkable expansion of wildlife on commercial farms (Child, 2004), which established an important precedent and influenced future policy development to emphasize the replication of resource rights in communal areas.

A further hypothesis underlying the development of CAMPFIRE was that proprietorship and the ability to earn direct economic benefits from wildlife would provide a more effective incentive for wildlife conservation. Whilst this could be easily put into practice on privately owned commercial farms, applying the principle in areas with communal tenure systems would be more complex. Efforts to resolve this resulted in a core group of

DNPWLM officers, the research Branch of Terrestrial Ecology, working in the Sebungwe and Nyaminyami areas. This group consisted of Graham Child, David Cumming, Rowan Martin, Russell Taylor and others who were aware of the administrative and management problems associated with transferring this approach from private to communal land context. They had also worked with the local District Councils to develop an implementation approach that could effect the transfer to communal lands (D Cummings, personnel communication, interview in Harare, October 2005).

As an interim measure, Project WINDFALL was initiated in 1978. Its major goals were to reduce soil degradation in communal areas and improve community attitudes to wildlife (Derman, 1997). Poverty alleviation goals were clearly subsidiary to environmental concerns and specific to minimizing conflict between wildlife and agriculture by providing meat from culls in National Parks available to their communal land neighbors and returning revenue from safari hunting to the appropriate DC (Murphree, 1997b). Whilst WINDFALL was largely unsuccessful in meeting its goals, it represented a critical step in the development of the conceptual basis of CAMPFIRE because of the instructive lessons that came out of it. WINDFALL highlighted that conservation is as much a socio-economic as an ecological issue, and that successful rural resource management approaches must be designed and implemented with local participation (Moore, 1997). Logan and Moseley (2002), Metcalfe (1994) and Derman (1997) consider that the initial process of WINDFALL and the consultative interactions with RDCs and communities that took place during the late 1980s (Metcalfe 1994 provides an in-depth description) did, in the words of Logan and Moseley (2001) 'aspire to true bottom-up planning with a focus on community input and autonomy' (Logan and Moseley 2001:2).

A further proto-type CAMPFIRE initiative undertaken by Clive Stockil, a professional hunter, with the Shangaan people of Mahenye village in Chipinge District also provided valuable lessons (Peterson, 1991). This initiative highlighted that the mechanism by which funds from wildlife management would be returned to communities from the Treasury was

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too time consuming. Therefore, it was ineffective as a conservation incentive for communities. Alternative mechanisms were required.

In addition to local level consultations, DNPWLM policy makers also sought advice from economists and social scientists, as they recognised the need to integrate institutional and economic issues with ecological concerns. This initial dialogue eventually led to the formation of the CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG) (CASS/WWF/Zimtrust, 1989), which in these early years served as an informal 'incubator', generating the conceptual underpinnings of CBNRM and providing the means through which a diverse network of actors and policy entrepreneurs was established. Thus the core group of individuals from which the actor-network would develop, whilst having environmental roots, did encompass others from different backgrounds and government departments, with broader expertise and networks.
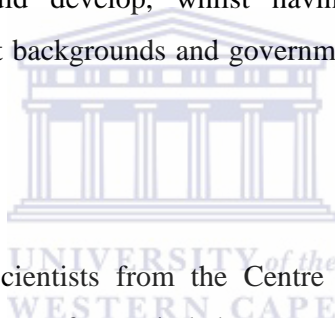
Encompassing leading social scientists from the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS), rural development experts from Zimbabwe Trust, ecologists from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and economists from the Ministry of Finance, this group had regional and global networks, knowledge and experience that they could draw upon to incorporate experiences and concepts. Consequently, the underlying conceptual basis of CAMPFIRE was informed by experiences from India in the field of cooperative management; from Switzerland, it borrowed ideas of participatory management of natural resources; and from the US emerging theories of common property management and an economically instrumentalist approach to wildlife resources were built upon (D Cumming, personnel communication, interview in Harare, October 2005). Martin's (1986) original CAMPFIRE concept document was revised by key members of this group, including Murphree (CASS) and Reynolds (Ministry of Finance) which ensured that their international as well as local experiences were incorporated (Metcalfe, 1994). However, while being informed by global experience, CAMPFIRE was grounded in the realities and

experiences of wildlife management in Zimbabwe in both the communal and commercial sectors.

It was this group that developed the second conceptual root of CAMPFIRE, the identification of communal property regimes with strong tenurial rights as the appropriate management unit in communal land contexts (Murphree, 1997b). Murphree then articulated the five 'principles' guiding policy formation (Murphree, 1991). These principles have since informed policy development and guided implementation of CBNRM initiatives throughout the region (SASUSG, 1996, Jones and Murphree, 2004; Steiner and Rihoy, 1995).

So whilst the original reforms were drafted by a small technocratic elite within the bureaucracy, the gradual, locally-led process of trial and error led to the development of a strong and effective actor and policy network within Zimbabwe. This shift had been made possible at this time by the shift in the national context after 1980 towards a democratic system with emphasis on racial equity. Key to the strong influence that this actor network could exert was its several influential 'policy entrepreneurs'. These individuals, by virtue of their professional positions and influence, could introduce policy at 'the stroke of a pen'. Foremost amongst these, as already mentioned in Chapter 4, was Rowan Martin, then Deputy Director of the DNPWLM, and Professor Marshall Murphree, Director of CASS and Chairman of the Parks Board. These two individuals, working in conjunction with others, were responsible for laying out the conceptual basis upon which CAMPFIRE was to be based. The 'landmark' documents in this regard were Martin's 1986 'CAMPFIRE' policy document, and Murphree's 1991 articulation of the five 'principles' for policy. The role of other policy entrepreneurs is explored further in the following section.

The process of policy development in CAMPFIRE was then a gradual one, spanning many years, involving people from local level to the international arena, and drawing upon concepts from a range of different disciplines. This process has proven essential in shaping the robust programme that CAMPFIRE remains today. The process ensured the development of a strong policy network, which proved influential in determining the outcome of policy decisions both nationally and internationally, and was flexible in adapting to the changing political context. The ultimate political endorsement came when CAMPFIRE was claimed as a party innovation by ZANU-PF in their manifesto in the run-up to the 1990 General Elections. Duffy (2000) argues that the adoption of sustainable use policies served to negotiate a political settlement between potentially competing domestic interest groups. Commitment to sustainable use enabled diverse groups from government, civil society and the private sector, to work together as each group gained some advantages from the policy. This effectively depoliticized environmental politics within Zimbabwe, allowing the presentation of a united front internationally by articulating a political and ethical standpoint on sustainable use, thereby actively repolititicising environmental politics to meet its own agenda. This is explored further below.

However, the long process of trial and error within the DNPWLM that led to the development of an influential actor-network and the key role played by a handful of policy entrepreneurs, all with conservation links and aims, has proven to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it ensured a strong supportive actor network within Zimbabwe, which in the early years could pragmatically steer CAMPFIRE policy and implementation in a politically strategic manner and which over the last decade has been able to adapt and evolve with the changing national context. On the other hand, as explored in Chapter 4, it has led to CAMPFIRE being 'black boxed' within the narrow confines of environmental policy process's internationally and nationally, with the resulting disconnect from mainstream discourses and networks relating to decentralisation, democratisation and politics.

7.3.2 An Evolving Institutional Landscape

While the local roots of CAMPIRE within the DNPWLM provided its institutional home, diverse institutions were involved in implementation of the programme from the outset and throughout the 1990s at the national level. However, the last eight years have witnessed a marked contraction in the institutions involved. This has been brought about largely, if inadvertently, by donors. This shift has witnessed the transformation of CAMPFIRE from a programme led by a technical government agency but supported by a strong group of civil society organisations – manifested as the CCG – to one in which civil society organisations and even the technical government agencies have largely been sidelined. Over the last five years, the programme has become dominated exclusively by the CAMPFIRE Association[62] (CA) and through it, the RDCs. This shift has had some negative impacts, such as a loss of implementation expertise, innovation and capacity (Child et al., 2003). However, given the accompanying shifts in the political, economic and social climate of Zimbabwe, and the implications that this has had for policy-making processes, it has been a significant factor in ensuring the survival of CAMPFIRE during this volatile period. The ownership by CAMPFIRE by RDCs through the CA, and the income that it generates for RDCs have ensured the RDCs' continued commitment to CAMPFIRE.

Originating within the DNPWLM, CAMPFIRE – through the CCG – brought together from the beginning a coalition of agencies with complementary objectives and areas of expertise. Based on recognition of the need for an institution that would represent the interests of the producer communities, the CCG facilitated the creation of the CA. In 1991, the CCG passed the leadership of the programme to the CA, with the intention of building its capacity as the legitimate representative of its rural constituency. Throughout the early 1990s, the CCG continued to expand to include Africa Resources Trust, Action Magazine, SAFIRE and belatedly the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MILGRUD).

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[62] The full name of which is the CAMPFIRE Association of Rural District Councils.

A distinctive feature of most of these implementing organisations was that they were dominated by highly committed and technically expert individuals, who had comprehensive networks and contacts, which to some degree cross-cut sectoral, scale, racial and ethnic boundaries. Nevertheless, they were predominantly white NGOs and represented a close-knit professional community. A further distinctive feature of this network is the degree to which certain key individuals played crucial roles by virtue of their professional positions.

The pivotal role of Murphree and Martin in creating and driving policy has already been discussed in Chapter 4, but other individuals such as Cummings and Taylor, originally with DNPWLM and then with WWF, Monro and Metcalfe from Zimbabwe Trust and later Maveneke from CA and Hutton from ART, also shared and disseminated the same vision. They were to play key roles in the conceptual development, implementation and advocacy of CAMPFIRE. These individuals were principally technical experts, who could call upon and share a scientific, technically based discourse.

This domination by whites was politically accepted during the 1980s and 1990s as government policy espoused racial reconciliation as a priority. Moreover, CAMPFIRE was ostensibly an effort to promote racial equality in accessing natural resources. Furthermore, the racial make-up of this group reflected that within the conservation bureaucracy in general, which was virtually alone in terms of government ministries after independence in retaining its personnel from the pre-independence period (Duffy, 2000). This reflected the widely held belief at the time that conservation/environmental management in general was a technical and apolitical, issue, best left to scientists and technocrats (Buscher and Whande, 2007). This period was characterized by a positive relationship between government and civil society, which created space for civil society to influence policymaking.
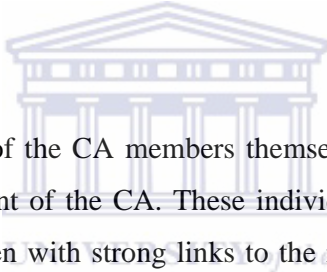
While these policy entrepreneurs were predominantly white, they were nevertheless all Zimbabweans and embedded in the social fabric of society, including its social and professional networks. Therefore, they could effectively exercise 'agency' in this period through their networks, strategically influencing others, sharing their vision and bringing them into 'their' projects (Long, 2001).   Consequently, individuals such as Nduku (Director, DNPWLM) and Pangeti (Deputy Director), who had greater political appeal even at this time, were strong supporters and advocates, playing critical roles in its promotion within government circles, despite not being intimately identified with it outside of these (George Pangeti, interviewed in Harare, October 2005). By virtue of their professional positions, reputation and credibility, such individuals had direct access both to policy fora within Zimbabwe: for example, as Deputy Director of DNPWLM, and Chairman of the National Parks Board. They had the means to influence policy internationally and nationally, through publications in journals, attendance at conferences, and membership in professional associations. With positions as Director of CASS or WWF-Zimbabwe, the policy entrepreneurs could extend their influence in policy circles. Equally, such positions provided the means to interact with donors and so gain the financial resources necessary for implementation. Consequently, these individuals were well placed to effectively popularize their perspective through their networks and professional credibility, thus gaining the human and financial resources necessary to carry it through, all factors which are critical to the popularization of a particular perspective (Callon, 1986).

At the macro-level, as social, political and economic conditions within Zimbabwe deteriorated towards the end of the 1990s, so too did the ability of this white, civil society dominated network to exercise agency and influence policy. However, this network was undergoing considerable changes, which were ultimately to work in its favour. As of 1989, CAMPFIRE began to attract financial support from donors, foremost of which was USAID, who was to provide over two-thirds of total CAMPFIRE funding

over the following decade (Frost and Bond, 2008). From 1995, USAID targeted the bulk of funding directly at the CA, which proceeded to marginalize other members of the CCG (Child et al. 2003). Following the withdrawal of funding for CAMPFIRE from USAID and most other donors in 2003, the CCG disbanded as a functional group. The organizations, which had originally played such a catalytic and central role, had become largely irrelevant within the context of CAMPFIRE as of 2005 (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). In this same year, efforts were made to reestablish a networking and support body through the WWF SARPO programme but this has neither the expertise nor scope of the CCG, whilst the shifts in the national context curtail its ability to exercise political or policy influence as it is associated with an international NGO.

The degree to which the role and influence of both the original institutions and individuals has waned over the last decade is illustrated by the way CAMPFIRE scholarship – once so influential both within Zimbabwe, the region and internationally – now largely fails to bear relevance to CAMPFIRE policy processes. For example, in the last six years, CAMPFIRE scholarship propelled as in earlier years by Murphree and Martin, has moved on to place CBNRM centrally in the context of applied democratic governance, operating within a political as well as the conventionally more emphasized technocratic context. This has encompassed an approach to devolution challenges that moves beyond the 'full devolution' focus or the observations of local elite distortions or the problems of accountability at the local level. This was propelled in a paper by Murphree (2000a) that tackled interaction between jurisdictional scales and institutions in natural resource governance. It pointed out that scaling down to be sustainable also requires scaling up. In this paper and elaborations on it (see Martin 2003 and www.sasusg.net) the emphasis is that devolution is not an exercise in isolationism, but a process of finding local regime inter-dependence within the larger setting of inter-dependence at many scales.

Given the shifting political dynamics, priorities and affiliations within the country, the CCG would have become a liability for CAMPFIRE. As the discussion in the previous section has indicated, the racially biased and party-oriented political and policy environment no longer favours, or even tolerates, interventions from whites or NGOs, and discourages rational, technical, science-based policy solutions such as those advanced by the CCG. The replacement of the CCG by the CA alone as the primary advocacy group for CAMPFIRE represents the replacement of what has become a politically impotent group by one that has a significant political voice with significant incentives to use it. Members of the CA are embedded within the social and political fabric of contemporary Zimbabwe and are able to exercise agency within the charged political context and racialized discourse and narrative in the same effective manner that the CCG were able to do during the 1980s and 1990s.

Reinforcing the political voice of the CA members themselves are the many individuals who are, or were, at the forefront of the CA. These individuals have become influential political figures themselves, often with strong links to the ruling party. For example, the now deceased Border Gezi made his political reputation with CAMPFIRE, going on to become the minister of the powerful Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment Creation. Several other leading CA board members have used CAMPFIRE as a stepping stone in their political careers and remain associated with it, including former MPs Chauke, Chafesuka and Mackenzie. Others, such as the former chairperson of the CA Board, Gotora, have moved on to other significant political roles, in this case as chairperson of the influential Association of Rural District Councils.

According to conventional interpretations and discourse prevalent within the CBNRM community in southern Africa, this presents CAMPFIRE with a real dilemma. For whilst it may have secured its political survival, it also appears to have reinforced the degree to which its benefits and authority are captured by RDCs at the expense of local communities. If this process goes unchecked, stresses the dominant narrative, it will

ultimately lead to the failure of CAMPFIRE. However, this narrative and the assumptions upon which it is based require closer scrutiny and this is undertaken in the following Chapter, drawing upon insights offered by processes that are unfolding at the local level, in this case in the village of Mahenye.

7.3.3 A Pragmatic Approach: Strategic Compromises

From its beginning CAMPFIRE policy making processes have been characterized by what Murphree (1997b) terms 'strategic compromises'. The result of which was that several of the basic principles around which CAMPFIRE was originally developed had to be compromised (See Murphree 1997b for a comprehensive description of the compromises reached, the implications of this and the processes of negotiation). Foremost among these was abandonment of the creation of strong communal property (tenure) regimes under state tenure, the introduction of which would have required significant changes to the land tenure system. Changes to the land tenure regimes would have laid way outside the mandate of the DNPWLM and would have met with significant opposition from an array of powerful political and economic interests, among them the RDCs. Murphree (1997b) recounts how recognition of its political and economic implications resulted in the pragmatic setting aside of a principle that was viewed as a conceptual cornerstone even prior to the publication of the original CAMPFIRE policy document. Murphree notes that this document already represented 'a strategic compromise between concept and policy' and that during the following years:

> *DNPWLM and its CAMPFIRE partners were involved in adjusting the Programme proposal to the views of political and bureaucratic gatekeepers and the demands of institutional and administrative detail* (Murphree, 1997b:11).

Murphree goes on to describe the three main accommodations as; firstly, the rejection of *de jure* devolution of wildlife management and revenue rights to those of *de facto* rights; secondly, rejection of self-defined local institutions, co-operatives, in favor of existing

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sub-structures of the RDC, WADCOs and VIDCOs; and thirdly, the introduction of tactics based on conditionality to ensure revenue distribution to sub-district levels through the CAMPFIRE Guidelines. These compromises have led to what are generally claimed to be the major weaknesses of CAMPFIRE.

However, as Murphree also points out in the same paper, such compromise created a level of political acceptance that allowed CAMPFIRE to emerge in the first place. Furthermore this initial compromise has ensured that CAMPFIRE has had critical political support without which it is doubtful that it would have survived the political turmoil of recent years, which has seen the political elite and their private sector allies successfully appropriating a higher value of public assets, including natural resources, through patronage and bureaucratic recentralisation. Thus one as yet largely unexplored perspective of CAMPFIRE in recent years is that it has prevented wildlife being exposed to the worst excesses of the existing situation (Anstey et al., 2009).
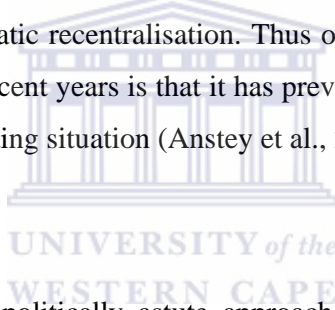
This pragmatic and inherently politically astute approach adopted by implementers in early years meant that the legal status and rights of self-definition of communities as originally envisaged were compromised. Distribution of revenues depends on the RDCs' adherence to CAMPFIRE policy guidelines, which state that RDCs are expected to distribute a percentage of income (as of 2002 this was increased from 50% to 55%) derived from wildlife use to producer communities and to allow these communities to be responsible for a number of wildlife management activities. In practice then, AA decentralizes authority and control over wildlife to RDCs, and CAMPFIRE confers on communities the right to share in the benefits from the use of wildlife by others but not to use it themselves.

As already discussed, given the cash strapped nature of most RDCs and the 'state's virtual collapse', RDCs face increasing pressure to retain financial benefits for general district development purposes[63]. There is a wide spread belief that poor fiscal devolution leads to a diminishing interest in the programme by communities co-existing with wildlife (Parker, 1993, Zimbabwe Trust, 2001, Child et al., 2003, Bond, 2001, Hill, 1997). This perception gains momentum as attempts over the years by technical advisors and bureaucrats, from the government and from NGOs, to persuade RDCs to devolve greater revenues have proven largely futile in the face of the fiscal pressures placed upon RDCs.

The Mahenye case study in the following Chapter explores whether there is evidence that locally emerging political and social pressures can prove more successful than bureaucratic pressure and technical argument in encouraging further devolution of fiscal responsibilities. Given that rights and responsibilities are legally vested with RDCs, the level to which individual communities are able to control and benefit from CAMPFIRE rests largely on the inclinations of individual RDCs[64]. Whilst CAMPFIRE activities generate substantial benefits the extent to which these benefits actually reach broader community members and improve individual household incomes remains questionable (Child et al., 2003, Bond, 2001, CAMPFIRE Association, 2005). The question that the next Chapter pursues is whether the nature and extent of these benefits are proving enough to generate appreciation of CBNRM by rural constituents resulting in the stimulation of demands from them for greater devolution. Further, if such demand does appear to be forthcoming, is there evidence that RDCs are responding to it? The research presented here, along with a further study by Taylor and Murphree (2007) indicates that some communities are grasping the difficult operating context as an opportunity to demand greater rights from the RDCs and have developed strategies on how to overcome both the economic and political turmoil.

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[63] The sanctions potentially imposed upon them for doing so and thus breaching WMA guidelines act as little real deterrent given that despite frequent breaching of these guidelines, the WMA has never exercised its right to revoke AA, and it is highly unlikely to do so.
[64] Frost and Bond (2007) estimate that, during the period 1989-2001, CAMPFIRE generated over US$20 million of transfers to participating communities.

7.4 Conclusion

CAMPFIRE has demonstrated a remarkable degree of robustness in its ability to survive in the face of the state's virtual collapse and recentralizing tendencies over the last decade. This robustness is due in large part to its ability to maintain political support at all levels. This chapter has in part focused on exploring and explaining how it has managed to achieve this. From the beginning, its implementation has been characterized by a series of pragmatic, strategic compromises aimed at accommodating the varied, and sometimes contradictory, positions of a variety of interest groups. One outcome of these compromises was that CAMPFIRE represented decentralized natural resource management, rather than the initially envisaged approach of devolution. Conventional wisdom over the last 20 years has maintained that this has led to CAMPFIRE's greatest weakness - decentralization rather than devolution. However, an equally valid alternative perspective is that such willingness to compromise not only ensured that it materialized in the first place but has also survived politically during the more recent crisis.
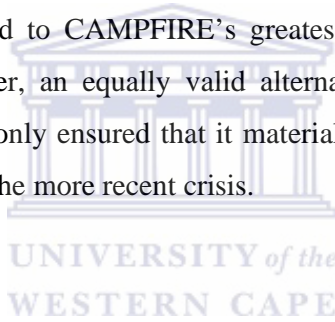
The review of the history and philosophy underpinning CAMPFIRE illustrates that it is a genuinely local initiative, which involved thousands of people and institutions at local, national and international levels and which drew upon a broad range of concepts and practical experiences with natural resource management rooted in Zimbabwean realities. It was this lengthy and inclusive process, which led to the development of a strong and effective policy network which has effectively evolved over the past thirty years from one dominated by whites, NGOs and donors to one in which the dynamics of national politics and power is at the forefront. This evolution has occurred in such a way that it has been possible for the policy network to maintain some effectiveness and influence despite the extreme changes in the social and political conditions and corresponding changes in the policy environment within the country.

CAMFPIRE gained political endorsement in part through the appeal that elements of its discourse - such as national sovereignty, racial equity and promotion of African traditional practices – held for a range of different political agendas and all of which government and CAMPFIRE advocates were able to use to good effect to bolster their image and political popularity. This is a discourse remarkably similar to and resonant with that adopted over the last decade by the GOZ when addressing land reform issues. Consequently, the CAMPFIRE discourse still remains compelling to GOZ and would be extremely difficult to reject.

Furthermore, characterizing CAMPFIRE from its inception has been the wide variety of different organisations with different areas of expertise, skills and implementation capacities that they were able to bring to bear. This has ensured an appropriate blend of skills and approaches and the mobilization of significant human and financial resources. Whilst this does not imply that implementation has been faultless or that efforts to establish representative institutions have always been successful, it did ensure that prior to 2000 basic oversights in implementation did not undermine community efforts to establish representative local governance structures. This is best appreciated when contrasted with the situation in Botswana, where efforts to establish local governance institutions were tied to the undemocratic institution of the Kgotla by the implementing agencies, which has significantly contributed to the creation of institutions accountable to no one.

However, these factors alone are insufficient to explain CAMPFIRE's endurance. This research indicates that one of the most significant factors contributing to the resilience of CAMPFIRE is that of its decentralized nature. Given the very specific situation now facing Zimbabwe, decentralisation, by ensuring that the relatively politically powerful RDCs are reliant on CAMPFIRE revenues and are therefore, outspoken in their support for it, has led to a situation whereby the government's recentralizing tendencies have been unable to come into force. More significantly still, it continues to uphold the interests of the central state through its provision of financial support to the RDCs, which in turn

provide the state with a key means to control rural areas. The role of the RDCs and local level outcomes and political dynamics is explored further in the following Chapter.

The research findings I present here indicate that CAMPFIRE as a conceptual and policy process has evolved to match the dramatically shifting context within which policy is being developed and implemented in Zimbabwe. Essentially, this represents an evolution from a technical, bureaucratic and management oriented approach to natural resource management to one in which political and power issues take central stage. Natural resource management is evolving from a technical process to a political one. This evolution has been key to CAMPFIRE's survival in Zimbabwe and also represents some hope for the country's democratic future as explored and explained in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 8

LOCAL LEVEL OUTCOMES – MAHENYE CASE STUDY

8.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the implementation and outcomes of CAMPFIRE at the local level in the village of Mahenye in Zimbabwe. It explores the social and political contestations over natural rights and benefits at the local level, focusing upon the struggles to control these between the local community and political economic elites and highlights the role that local government has played/can play in determining equitable outcomes. It also demonstrates the dynamic relationship between processes at the local level and the national level. This case study demonstrates the opportunities that CAMPFIRE provides to affect power relations, and create accountable local governance institutions, local government and empowered communities.

Throughout Zimbabwe, there are hundreds of CAMPFIRE-related institutions at a sub-district level. This makes it extremely difficult to generalize about the programme based on events in only one village. Nevertheless, I do attempt to do so because a review of evidence from other sites (Taylor and Murphree, 2007, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) indicates that the case study material is representative of wider processes.   As of 2006, there were increasingly widespread indications that RDCs were beginning to respond to demands from their local constituents for at least greater fiscal devolution[65]. These moves are steps towards greater devolution and appear to have been set in motion as a result of

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[65] Guruve RDC led the way in this regard with the agreement in 2006 that three wards within this district would receive funds directly from the safari operator (the direct payment system) rather than through the RDC as in the past (Taylor and Murphree, 2007). Also Chipinge RDC has in the past enabled direct payments from lodges in Mahenye to the local CAMPFIRE Committee (MCC) and has indicated willingness to facilitate direct payments from the safari operator to the Mahenye CAMPFIRE Committee (MCC) once the problems of fund misuse are resolved (chief executive officer, Chipinge RDC, personal communication 2005). Meanwhile, in 2005 in Chiredzi District, AA was granted direct to the ward level Wildlife Development Committee, bypassing the RDC altogether[65] (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Nine years ago, Chitsike (2000) identified similar strong demand for greater authority and rights at a sub-district level emerging in communities throughout the country.

demands from the RDC's local constituents. Most notably, as of 2008, the CA formally adopted direct payment systems as policy and now actively promotes this approach among its members (Interview with C Jonga, Johannesburg, May 2008). Precedents are being established and new challenges of local scale governance and elite capture have emerged that suggest a need for upward and downward delegation of certain functions (Murphree, 2000a, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007).

The following case-study is based on primary research and interviews. A research assistant who spent one month living in the ward in August 2005 initiated research in Mahenye. He focused on familiarizing himself with the day-to-day lifestyles, concerns, characters and aspirations of the people of Mahenye, holding both informal discussions and formal semi-structured interviews with people living and working there. This was followed by a one-week visit by myself in October 2005, during which I verified the initial research findings and undertook further interviews and analysis. Findings were also triangulated to ensure the credibility of the information shared by interviewees. Research in the village was complemented by interviews with relevant government officials, politicians, donors, NGOs, academics and private sector representatives at both district and national level who are either currently (or formerly) involved in CAMPFIRE implementation, analysis and policy development.

In total, over 100 semi-structured interviews were conducted over a four-month period. More than 50 of these were with people in Mahenye. Given the sensitivity of the information collected, I have withheld the names of most interviewees. In Mahenye a representative mix of people was interviewed. These included those who are currently and were formerly involved with the CAMPFIRE committee, men and women, young and old, traditional leaders and others in positions of authority, government employees (e.g. teachers and health workers), employees of lodge and safari operators, private business people and subsistence farmers. The research intentionally explores the situation of CAMPFIRE in Mahenye within the broader politico-economic context of Zimbabwe described above.

8.2 Mahenye: Description, History, People and CBNRM Evolution, 1982–2000

Mahenye Ward in the south-east periphery of Zimbabwe in Chipinge District covers only 210 km² and has a population of less than 1,000 households. However, its impact and reach over the past two decades in the history and practice of CBNRM nationally, regionally and internationally belies its size or remoteness. In the early 1990s Mahenye was the reference point for a widely influential publication, *The Lesson from Mahenye: Rural Poverty, Democracy and Wildlife*, that drew on the CAMPFIRE and pre-CAMPFIRE initiatives of the ward and its people to articulate the links between local democracy, development and natural resources (Murphree, 1995a). Murphree was not alone: many others throughout the 1990s also upheld Mahenye as one of the prime exemplars of CAMPFIRE as a successful sustainable development model (Borrini-Feyerabend, 1997, Child et al., 1996, Child, 1995, Peterson, 1991, Zimbabwe Trust, 1990b).

The lessons drawn from Mahenye since the early 2000s to the present have ranged from the ambivalent questioning of elements of CBNRM (Munyaka and Mandizadza, 2004), to direct critiques of the full devolution model. For example, Balint and Mashinya (2006) characterize the 'crisis' in CBNRM:

> *Our study reveals the decline of a promising CBNRM programme. We found that the Mahenye community no longer receives the flow of significant social and economic benefits reported in earlier studies'* (Balint and Mashinya, 2006:814).

They present a very different discourse about Mahenye, the key factors driving it and the lessons and questions to be drawn. It presents a completely contrasting view, to the point of being almost un-recognizable, of the same small ward, its inhabitants and their social dynamics, in a short space of five years.

8.2.1 Environmental Characteristics

Mahenye Ward is located at the southern end of Chipinge District, bordered on the east by Mozambique, to the west and south by Gonarezhou National Park and Chiredzi District, and to the north by Mutandahwe Ward, also in Chipinge District. It has a low average rainfall of 450–500 mm supporting dry land cultivation of grains only in good seasons, but its relatively low population density – 20 people/km or half the district average – has ensured that the lowveld habitat has remained relatively intact (Central Statistical Office, 1992, Booth, 1991).

8.2.2 Historical Context

The historical background of the ward has been extensively traced and documented (Child, 1995, Murphree, 1995a, Zimbabwe Trust, 1990b, Peterson, 1991, Stockil, 1987). The following account is compiled from these sources. The population of Mahenye is from the minority Shangaan ethnic group, for whom hunting was traditionally a major component of their livelihood strategies. Their culture had evolved well-defined regulatory practices to make off-takes sustainable.
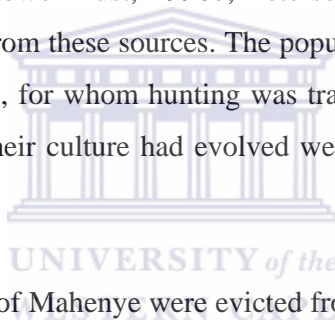
Many of the current inhabitants of Mahenye were evicted from their traditional lands prior and up to 1966 as these areas became incorporated into the Gonarezhou National Park. Following independence in 1980, strong hopes that their land would be returned to them were dashed when the new government indicated that its priority was to gain the foreign exchange brought into the country by tourists and the national park. This resulted in heightened resentment towards Gonarezhou and wildlife, manifested as increasing incidences of illegal resource use as people sought illicit ways in which to assert their traditional resource rights and livelihoods.

In the mid 1980s, an informal agreement between the DNPWLM, a local safari operator and the people of Mahenye enabled some of the benefits from elephant hunting in the area to be returned to the villagers. After long negotiations and having overcome many bureaucratic hurdles, DNPWLM eventually agreed to build a school and grinding mill in 1987, drawing on these hunting revenues. Throughout the early negotiations, the people of

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Mahenye showed remarkable social cohesiveness, patience and restraint in the face of a slow and bureaucratic decision-making process.

8.2.3 Socio-Political Characteristics

Murphree (2001) notes that the Mahenye's geographic position has contributed to its isolation. Neighbors to the east are in a different country; to the south is a national park, while those in the west are in a different province. Thus Mahenye retains administrative isolation from those in its immediate vicinity. Perhaps most significantly is that within Chipinge District itself, the people of Mahenye are ethnically discrete as they are the only Shangaan-speaking people in a district exclusively dominated by the Shona-Ndau ethnic group.

The people of Mahenye are culturally, politically and administratively distinct from their neighbors, which Murphree (ibid) concludes led to the development of a strong level of intra-communal cohesiveness – then largely manifested around the institution and individual occupying the role of chief – and a sense of collective communal interest.

8.2.4 Legal Status and Institutional Basis for CBNRM

The granting of AA status to Gazaland District Council (now Chipinge RDC) in 1991 provided the legal mechanism through which the people of Mahenye could benefit from natural resource management activities in their ward. In order to ensure effective management of the resource base and an accountable and representative local level management structure, the Mahenye CAMPFIRE Committee (MCC) was established in the late 1980s.

The operations of the MCC are governed by bylaws (commonly referred to as 'the constitution') which were developed following lengthy consultations with the general community, traditional leadership and local CAMPFIRE leadership (Silas Makanza, Zimbabwe Trust, interviewed Harare, May 2005) and are still frequently referred to in CAMPFIRE discussions today. While neither the MCC institution nor the bylaws have

formal legal status they are (or were) strongly legitimized by use, precedent and acceptance by the various CAMPFIRE-related bodies. These bylaws outline the objectives of the institution, roles, and responsibilities and terms of the office bearers and general members. They also stipulate means through which accountability to the broader membership is to be assured. They include:

- The holding of regular annual general meetings (AGMs) for transparent disclosure of management and financial activities by the MCC post holders to the community.
- The holding of annual elections (via secret ballot by Mahenye households) for post holders in the Mahenye CAMPFIRE Committee (MCC) such as that of chairman, vice-chairman, finance manager and others.

The bylaws are a written, widely known and understood representation of the standard to which the MCC should adhere. They represent an important benchmark against which to measure and exert accountability for the activities of the MCC, its post holders and the operation of CAMPFIRE at the producer community scales.

The institutional linkages and networks between authorities and across jurisdictional and functional scales were also well developed over this period and were broadly perceived to have ensured accountability. During the early 1980s, the primary decision-making institutions in the ward were those of the traditional authority (through the leadership of chiefs, headmen and *sabhukus*) working in a closely coordinated relationship with those of the democratically elected 'modern' political and development institutions' structures such as the Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) to the higher scale of the Rural District Councils. In the 1990s, by virtue of its elected basis and development importance locally, the MCC also became a powerful institution. The private sector, originally represented by one individual (who had also facilitated early CBNRM evolutions in the ward between the various bodies) also had significant influence (Murphree, 2001). There were also strong linkages between the MCC and national CAMPFIRE capacity building network, providing 'honest brokering' and technical wildlife management advice (WWF, Zimbabwe Trust, CASS-University of Zimbabwe), the national CAMPFIRE representative and advocacy body (CAMPFIRE Association) and the state wildlife sector

(DNPWLM).

8.2.5 Economic Basis of CAMPFIRE in Mahenye

One of Mahenye's progressive attributes during this period, in comparison to most CAMPFIRE wards, was its diversification in revenue from solely sport hunting incomes to joint enterprises in the eco-tourism sector. In the early 1990s the RDC, on behalf of the people of Mahenye, entered into a joint venture arrangement with a private tourist operator, the Zimbabwe Sun (now Rivers Lodges of Africa) for the construction of two lodges – Mahenye Safari Lodge and Chilo Lodge – catering to a high paying tourist market for game viewing and photographic safaris largely benefiting from easy access to the nearby national park. Under the terms of the 1996 agreement, land was leased from the RDC for a 10-year period. The lodge operator was paying 8% of gross revenue for the first three years, 10% for the next three years and 12% for the final four years. Initially, revenue earned was paid via the RDC, but in 2003/4 a more direct allocation was made to the MCC. In principle, this represented a significant step in fiscal devolution (albeit if undertaken in an informal way) but was a decision subsequently reversed at the request of the RDC.

The income potential from these lodges was considerable from the mid 1990s and by 1997 generated twice the income of sport hunting and was responsible for more than tripling the overall income for Mahenye CAMPFIRE between 1994 and 1997 (Ibid), yet the downturn in tourism in Zimbabwe since 2000 has meant that the real financial returns have become limited and sport hunting has returned as the largest revenue source. Despite this, the lodges have still brought considerable benefits, most notably in the form of employment. At the time of this research, out of a total of 37 staff employed, 32 are from Mahenye, including one in a management position. The construction of the lodges has also led to improvements in local infrastructure such as transport links, electrification, bore-hole construction and telephone connections.

For much of the 1990s and since 2000 the primary form of income generation for the MCC has been from the safari hunting concession in the Mahenye/Mutandahwe area.

CAMPFIRE revenue in the period 1992–1997 from sport hunting was around US$15-20,000 (largely from elephant hunting) with the total revenues achieved in the late 1990s from both hunting and lodge tourism reaching around US$ 40,000 (Ibid). On average in this period, the allocations from total revenue to household dividends were consistently around 50%, with around 20% allocated for RDC administration costs (essentially a tax)3, 2% for the CAMPFIRE Association and the rest roughly shared between MCC managed development projects (such as grinding mills) and wildlife management costs (drawing on data in Murphree, 2001).

The household dividends of about US$15-25 were better in comparison to other CAMPFIRE areas (median of US$4.49 – see Bond, 2001) and served as an important incentive for driving CAMPFIRE institutional change and supporting local household incomes. A number of interviewees in this current research had vivid memories of the cash dividends of the late 1990s as being key contributions to the family's ability to purchase goods and food in drought years or enable the payment of school fees.

The evolution of CBNRM institutions and economic arrangements during the period of two decades largely concurred by the late 1990s in practice (if not formal legal arrangements) with devolutionary principles. Namely, the MCC as a transparent democratically elected body with considerable if not fully devolved authority and a clear accountability to a constituency of local members. In addition, there was evidence of the equally important dynamics noted by Murphree (2000a) for CBNRM of linkages and delegated functions upwards from the producer community MCC scale to those scales and entities at district, national agency, NGO and private sector. If Mahenye Ward had been a precursor to the core values of devolution in CAMPFIRE, it could by the late 1990s also be characterised as a precursor to, and example for, the further evolutions of scholarship of the 'beyond devolution' views (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007) and to more nuanced recognitions of practical democratic politics in CBNRM through crucial upward linkages and networks between scales and institutions based on delegation and accountability.

Murphree (2001) notes that this resulted from a happy congruence of a number of

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disparate factors. These factors include local level features (such as strong leadership in local institutions, whether MCC or traditional authority); the incentives from the economic success of Mahenye CBNRM reinforced political investment and support by the RDC or economic partnership with the private sector; and a wider framework built from an 'ordered polity', political and economic environment that drew favorable reaction from state agencies, and a supportive NGO network. The background to how such positive, reinforcing dynamics could apparently reverse into stalemate, with the benefits of devolution being questioned – not least by the people of Mahenye – is examined in the next section.

8.3 Mahenye 2000–2005: Institutions, Management, Local Governance and Economic Incentives

8.3.1 Institutions, Management and Local Governance

Since 2000, there have been major shifts of power within and between institutions in Mahenye as well as in the macro-economic and national political context. Chapter 7 discusses these major shifts in the macro context. One outcome of these shifts has been the dramatic demise of CAMPFIRE in the view of the overwhelming majority of local inhabitants interviewed, and summed up as follows by one woman:

CAMPFIRE used to be for all the people, now it's a family business.

The demise of CAMPFIRE in Mahenye, its core local institution (the MCC) and dramatic falls in the value of household dividends coincides with and has been strongly influenced by four related local events:

- the death of the highly respected old Chief Mahenye in 2001 and replacement by his son,
- the complete change of MCC office bearers (on the explicit instructions of the new chief), following the flawed MCC elections of 2001, including the appointment (not election) of the chief's younger brother as chairman;

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- the election of a new councilor for the ward; and

- the re-tendering of the hunting concession which has led to ongoing conflict and the widespread belief among most local stakeholders that the operators currently bidding for the concession are blatantly competing among each other in their attempts to illicitly 'buy off' the chief and MCC to ensure preferential treatment.

These changes have effectively removed the strong local leadership, whose commitment and accountability was formerly such a distinctive feature of Mahenye. These included the chief, headmen and respected elders, the school headmaster and other teachers and an elected leadership including the councilor and members of the MCC. Collectively, these people provided a leadership structure that was balanced in its sources of traditional and popular legitimation.

Local power and authority have shifted away from the delicate balance established between traditional and elected democratic institutions and the leadership of these structures, and has become concentrated into the hands of core local elite focused around the traditional leadership. 'Honest brokers' in local dynamics, whether the private sector, NGO, state, RDC or other, have become rare, ineffectual or sidelined. As many people in Mahenye said, the result is that they have their own 'dictator'. An important point in the following discussion is the premise that it is not the institution (rules of the game) of either the MCC or customary authority that is causal, but the distortion of the rules of both by particular forces since 2000 that have permitted local elite capture and perpetuated stalemate, contrary to the delegation and accountability mechanisms that existed in the past. It is this stalemate, distortions to institutions and the 'particular forces' that have led to this that are at the core of many of the narratives from Mahenye in the next section.

8.3.2 Management of CAMPFIRE in 2005

The effect on CAMPFIRE of the shifts in the balance of power between institutions and distortion of the rules within institutions has been dramatic. The MCC, once viewed by the Mahenye people with pride as contributing to the overall development of Mahenye and to

the livelihood needs of individual families, is now widely perceived as an institution that mismanages and abuse CAMPFIRE funds for the personal enrichment of the chief and his clan. This has included the use of project vehicles for personal transport, the privatization of the general store, grinding mills and other CAMPFIRE projects, and access to scarce employment opportunities at the lodges being mediated by the chief's family. Enabling this situation has been the dismantling of those locally developed and mandated mechanisms that ensured that CAMPFIRE was a participatory process, representative of and accountable to the people of Mahenye.

8.3.3 The Demise of Democratic Procedures

Although it has no formal legal basis, according to its constitution, the MCC is responsible for carrying out management functions, employing local staff to monitor wildlife, poaching and hunting activities of the professional hunter. It sets budgets and is responsible to general community meetings for its activities and planning. Prior to 2000 MCC board members were democratically and transparently elected (once every two years) at open AGMs, and presentation of incomes and budgets openly made with all decisions regarding use of revenues collectively taken at these meetings.

However, only two AGMs have been held since 2000, both of which were poorly attended. Elections for committee members have not been held at any AGM since those of 2001. The current chairman was never elected but was given this position by the chief after his predecessor (who had been elected in the 2001 elections) left the village after allegedly misappropriating CAMPFIRE funds.

On the rare occasion when AGMs are still held, their function is now very different from the accountability basis outlined in the constitution. According to the MCC chairman:

> …*we use AGMs as a way to tell the community how the committee and traditional leaders have budgeted and spent CAMPFIRE money and other things. It's where we let them know what their leaders are doing for them* (Elias Chafesuka, interviewed Mahenye, May 2005).

The regular monthly planning meetings of the MCC are held and known as 'First Friday' meetings. The original committee of seven has been expanded to 12. In addition to MCC members, these meetings are now also open to all members of the traditional leadership, the councilor and the ward coordinator, totaling 44 people. Minutes of the meetings for the years 2004/5 illustrate that discussions are dominated by issues relating to the selection of the safari operator and what is perceived to be the undue influence of the RDC in the process. Moreover, it is at these meetings that 'elections' are now undertaken for new membership of the MCC, with candidates for membership nominated exclusively by existing MCC members, normally the chairman. Income and budget transparency to the household level has evaporated – as revealed in the quote from the chairman, the mentality of the leadership is not based on collective decision making by/with the people or accounting for actions and decisions (active and interactive) but informing the people (whose role is passive).

8.3.4 Shrinking Incomes and Economic Incentives

This research indicates that significant funds are being lost due to local level problems, and higher 'leakages' occurring in a chain of transactions. Consequently, there is a cumulative erosion of revenue even before household dividends are paid. The major leakages come from national economic distortions. Primarily, these losses result from:

- the loss in value that occurs when converting foreign exchange to the massively over-valued Zimbabwe $
- the loss in value resulting from astronomical annual inflation rates when revenue remains stored in bank accounts for up to a year before household dividend payments are made.

This has significant implications for CAMPFIRE, implying that the cash-based approach upon which it has traditionally relied to provide the economic incentive for resource management is of limited viability in the current economic context of Zimbabwe.

Throughout the 1990s, annual allocations to household dividends were consistently around 50% of total budget, ranging from 48% in 1992 to 55% in 1997 (Murphree, 2001). Since 2001 there has only been one allocation to household dividends. This took place in May 2004 and was on the basis (according to the official figures submitted by Chipinge RDC letter on 23/11/04) of a total revenue earned (2003) of Z$40,118,791.00. The household dividend amounted to a cash payment (in principle) of Z$6,100 per household. Nevertheless, Z$6,000 was deducted from each household prior to payouts, for a 'district development levy' by the traditional authority, the validity of which has never been verified, resulting in an actual cash in hand dividend of just Z$100 (US$0.03). As stated by one interviewee:

> Z$100 even then wasn't enough to buy one match, and most didn't know about it. I don't know anyone who even went to the [MCC project] office to collect their money.

As a proportion of the overall stated revenues, this sum of 'actual cash in hand' dividend represented less than 1% (0.2%) in comparison to the 50% averages in the 1990s. Meanwhile, those who attend the monthly MCC meetings get a sitting allowance of Z$15,000 per session, refreshments and transport. As the MCC meetings are potentially open to the 44 people as detailed above, total annual costs, in theory, can exceed Z$13,200,000, plus transport. This is in stark contrast to the total dividend payout in 2004 of Z$5,453,400.

The situation relating to income and budgets in 2004/5 is highly complicated not only by the state of the internal MCC accounts reviewed during this research, but by the payments from the lodges and hunting sectors bypassing a central revenue record system at either MCC or RDC level and with unclear contractual or financial agreements.

Sport hunting has been the most lucrative source of income, and has been mired in complexity. In 1997, Tshabezi Safaris won the concession for a five-year period. In 2002 the hunting concession was tendered again and once again awarded by the RDC to Tshabezi Safaris. The fact that no contract has been in place since 2002 is one of the

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causes of the conflict surrounding the hunting concession.

During this tender process, disputes broke out and are still ongoing between and within various interest groups within the community of Mahenye, with the RDC, and among three competing private sector operators. As of late 2005 the formal contract had still to be awarded. The resulting uncertainties and competition between the various stakeholders has been one of the driving forces enabling powerful local level elites to co-opt the power and resources of the MCC for their own political and personal financial ends. As a mirror of national power and politics, the situation created by the local elites appears to be an 'instrumentalisation of disorder' (Chabal and Daloz, 1999), in which elites serve as community and lucrative resource gatekeepers, 'vanguard' leadership with powerful political capital and connections while maximizing their access to benefits through disorder. By maintaining disorder and gatekeeper status, the local elites successfully play off the private sector members against each other, monopolize the considerable benefits of patronage and ensure that the rules of the game (clear contracts and transparent payments) remain sufficiently obscure to prolong a stalemate.

Whatever the accounting and contractual complexity, the simple facts are that the households in Mahenye are getting no meaningful economic dividends from CAMPFIRE, in stark contrast to the 1990s. The widely held belief in Mahenye of corruption, misuse and abuse of funds and power by the MCC resulted in a written request from the Mahenye ward councillor to the RDC requesting an internal audit, which was carried out in April, 2004. This audit demonstrates that the picture (also observed in Balint and Mashinya 2006), concerning abuse of funds, infrastructure, equipment, and employment opportunities by those who now control CAMPFIRE is clearly grounded in facts. The report, which as of September 2005 had not been made available to the public, concludes:

> *The marginalised communities are not benefiting as much from the projects and it is apparent that the privileged few now stand to benefit. Recommended systems and procedures have been ignored, most likely deliberately* (Chipinge RDC, 2005:3).

The outcome of this situation is that all of those interviewed noted that there is no longer any independent local institution that represents the interests of the people or to which the grievances of the people can be aired. The entire discussions and decisions take place at the chief's *dare* (assembly meeting).

This is the background of radically changed institutions, local governance and politics and economic incentives against which the following section of narratives is set.

8.4 Stakeholder Narratives

Vanhu varwadziwa, havana kwavanochemera.
(People are not happy, but they do not know where to complain)

8.4.1 Background

Given the competing interests at stake it is perhaps not surprising that the narratives surrounding CAMPFIRE in Mahenye differ among the various stakeholders, and that different scenarios for change are identified by these groups. In very broad terms the stakeholder groups at a local level include the traditional leadership, the current MCC members, the general community members, and the private sector. Other external stakeholders include the RDCs and NGOs such as the CAMPFIRE Association. However, as the following discussion indicates, this simplistic breakdown of players hides an overlapping and constantly shifting array of perceptions, alliances and networks. This section relates the stories that each group shared with me, highlighting the concerns and issues dominant within each group. Wherever possible they are presented in their own words. However, the atmosphere of fear and mistrust in Mahenye meant that all interviews were conducted on condition of anonymity and therefore, no individuals are identified.

8.4.2 Traditional Leadership

The traditional leadership in Mahenye consists of Chief Mahenye, two headmen and 29 kraal heads. Given the co-option of the MCC by the chief and his immediate family (as of

September 2005 every member of the 12-person MCC was a relative of the chief) I identify these institutions here as falling within the same stakeholder group even though there are very clear 'fault lines' developing between individuals and sub-groups. Despite this close association of the chief with the programme, he claims to have no direct relationship with it, although he is outspoken in his support, noting that:

CAMPFIRE has been here a long time and brought many good things but it needs changes. The main problem is that money from hunting goes to the RDC first; it should come directly to Mahenye. Also the RDC want to interfere in who we select as our hunter.

The narrative constructed by both the chief and the MCC chairman is that of a successful programme that brings development to Mahenye while protecting the natural resource base and upholding local culture and traditions. While they identify some problems with the programme, they attribute them to external agents and technical deficiency in the implementation process. These problems are attributed to the greed and inefficiency of the current safari operator, and the unwillingness of the RDC to commit to fiscal devolution and local level decision making regarding the selection of safari operators. They acknowledge the problems of financial accountability in the recent past. However, they expressed confidence in the mechanisms now put in place to address these problems, which include the forming of a finance sub-committee of the MCC.

However, except for these two individuals, the eight other members of the traditional leadership and MCC interviewed (including the person responsible for financial accounting and record keeping) presented a less rosy story by identifying failures in leadership, financial management and governance – and detailing several instances of abuse and misuse of funds and MCC assets by the chairman – coupled with the technical and administrative problems identified by the chief and chairman as being the biggest impediment to the programme. A senior member of the Chauke family said:

The situation at the moment is a free-for-all. Soft drinks, sitting allowances, free transport, Christmas parties, nothing like before when things were run properly. It

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is corruption and bribery (undyire, in Shona language). *But those of us with the authority to do something can't because this dispute is in our own clan. Does a son question his father? Someone from outside must step in, either the RDC or CAMPFIRE Association. We made sure an auditor came but now the council (RDC) does nothing, they must remove the culprit, even make arrests. Council is letting us down.*

Reinforcing this accusation were the voices of two members of the newly established finance sub-committee who noted that 'they are still hiding the books' as they were prevented from overseeing or having any control of finance. Demanding access to information was not an option as this would simply result in their removal from the committee and possible expulsion from the area. The general sentiment of anger and resentment against the chairman was further articulated by the ward councilor, who had also requested the RDC audit. He independently echoed the sentiments expressed above commenting that:

> *The problems are the fault of the chairman, who overrides the financial committee. The people are unhappy and the problems are getting worse. If funds come direct here now they will just be stolen. If there is an election today the chairman and committee will be thrown out, people here know the problems and their rights.*

8.4.3 General Population
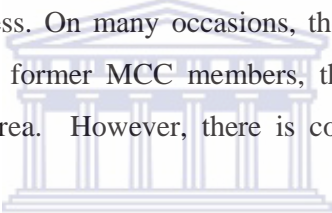
Of the 52 people interviewed in Mahenye, 32 can be broadly referred to as 'general population' in the sense that they did not belong to the other stakeholder groups. However, this hides a diverse mix of individuals. Those interviewed were roughly representative in terms of age, ethnicity and gender.

The story told by everyone in this group had at its centre disappointment and disillusionment with the current situation, but also a sense that events were still unfolding, and that they collectively had at their disposal means to address problems. This group

unanimously identified poor leadership, governance issues and the misappropriation of power by the MCC as the root cause of problems. They expressed concern and confusion about private sector tourism operations, the role of NGOs and the role of the RDC.

For over 10 years, CAMPFIRE was portrayed to me as a source of local pride and confidence as well as development. It was considered to have been a genuinely representative process. The majority of ward residents had considerable information concerning the nature and extent of their rights, technical details (for example, the value of individual species) and the nature of income-generating ventures in their area, in which they enthusiastically participated and benefited.

People articulated trust in and respect for their leaders at that time, crediting them with having brought about this success. On many occasions, they specifically mentioned the former chief, former councilor, former MCC members, the private sector partner and NGOs formerly active in the area. However, there is consensus on the cause of the problem:

> *Our troubles started when the old chief passed and [the former MCC chairman] and the others were pushed off the committee and [the current incumbent] was made chairman for life.*

But they are constrained to act because:

> *People fear to challenge the chairman. This is challenging the chief and would result in losing land or even being chased from the area.*

A widely anticipated outcome of this is that:

> *People will go back to poaching because there is no benefit from wildlife otherwise.*

There is also a common view that:

> *The RDC has more power, they should do something.*

There is little that people can do overtly, but they do have covert means of expressing their displeasure and translating this into political statements. Several different interviewees

recounted identical versions of the following story:

> *The chief had been told by the District Administrator that everyone must vote*
> *ZANU and then he would get a vehicle. We were told to do so, but everyone here*
> *voted MDC to get back at him. He could not do anything about that because it was*
> *a secret ballot. We hoped that the chief would not get his vehicle and realize that*
> *everyone was aware that he was allowing our CAMPFIRE money to be lost.*

Thus, there is a remarkable level of agreement among the majority of those in Mahenye on the basic situation and how it should be resolved. However, beyond this common understanding there is the complication of ongoing conflict between the MCC, the safari operators and the RDC over the re-tendering of the hunting quota. There is a strong perception among the community members that this conflict is being used by the MCC as a smoke screen to cover its own misconduct.

Some in the community do not trust the current sport hunting operator, Tshabezi Safaris, who is blamed for failing to conduct problem animal control (PAC) and for failing to maximize returns on the quota, thus reducing the revenue for Mahenye. However, others are aware that the MCC negotiated with Tshabezi directly to ensure that a proportion of payments were made in kind to avoid payment passing through the RDC. The MCC chairman maintains that this benefited the community as the 35% administration fee for Council was not subtracted. However, it is the common local belief (upheld by the RDC audit and this research) that those funds and assets that went directly to the MCC, such as vehicles, donations for the general store, materials for bridge construction and monies for school uniforms, have been misappropriated by the chairman. It was also commonly alleged that a rival operator, who is currently tendering for the Mahenye concession, was bribing the leadership with money, meat, beer and the construction of a house for the chief, in an attempt to favour the bid.

Private operators in the area are not trusted, although many believe that the MCC is manipulating them to its own advantage. This lack of trust is compounded by the fact that

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the MCC chairman is employed by the lodges as their community liaison officer:

> *If you want to get a job at Chilo [the lodges] or even Tshabezi as a housekeeper,*
> *you have to see the chairman and you will be made to pay a goat or some money.*

The positive relationships with the operator of the lodges, identified by Murphree (2001) and many people in Mahenye, have, at least for most interviewees, now broken down. This belief is fuelled by the perception that the decreasing financial returns from the lodges are a result of attempts on their management's behalf to defraud the community.

Notwithstanding large-scale disillusionment with this situation, the majority of interviewees could identify a core strategy to solve their problems. This strategy involves an appeal to the RDC, as the only institution with the legal and political authority, legitimacy and mandate, to intervene and assist in the restoration of local institutional structures that are accountable and representative of the local constituency. Thus, the collective demand is for the RDC to accept its responsibilities as the agency granted AA and act accordingly to ensure that the 'CAMPFIRE constitution' (established and secured by precedent bylaws of the MCC) and democratic functioning local institutions (the MCC under the rules of the bylaws) are in place. Essentially, the action demanded is that elections be held for the posts of the MCC – under the secret ballot and transparent rules of the existing bylaws – after four years of these basic rules having been flouted.

Only after this demand has been met do people want to see financial devolution with revenues coming directly to the local institutions. One former influential MCC member sums up the situation as follows:

> *There is a lot of talk from the committee about 'devolution' but if the RDC lets*
> *funds come direct to them* [the MCC] *they will disappear in days along with the*
> *rest of our money. We would like to see funds coming directly but not at the*
> *moment, our problems have to be sorted out first. The RDC is the only one that can*
> *help us do this. They are legally responsible as the holders of AA, and they must*
> *accept their responsibilities.*

Local people are collectively indicating that the RDC has an important role to play in fostering the conditions that will ensure their empowerment. They could do this by providing neutral arbitration in a situation that at present cannot be addressed locally owing to the current levels of distortion and complicated politics.

People are clear that CAMPFIRE, by providing them with information about their rights and those of the other institutions involved, has provided them with the confidence and basis to express demands to the RDC:

> *People are very much aware of their rights and obligations and they know this because the old committee used to bare all things and read the constitution in public at AGMs and other meetings, we also know from this what the RDC should be doing.*
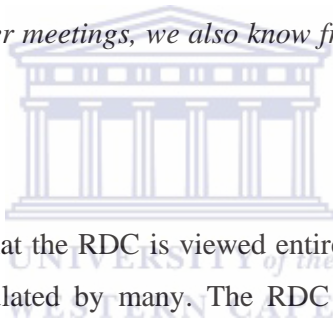
However, this does not imply that the RDC is viewed entirely favorably in Mahenye and mounting frustration was articulated by many. The RDC is perceived to be primarily concerned with ensuring maximum income from the hunting operations to meet its own financial needs at the expense of the people. The delays in re-tendering are seen to be the result of the RDC trying to negotiate more favorable terms. These delays are bringing it into disrepute and fuelling damaging rumors about its motives:

> *We know Chipinge RDC is aware of all the problems but they do not assist, they are getting something from this.*

> *Tshabezi hunted in the area without a contract because he managed to bribe officials at the RDC. Now the intention of the council is to take over the running of CAMPFIRE because it generates so much money.*

The most striking element of the narrative is the level of agreement on the nature of the problem (local elite capture and distortion of the MCC and its core rules and roles) and

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how it can be solved (RDC intervention as an obligation of AA status, but not RDC as a substitute for MCC the institution of the bylaws). Despite problems (and dangers), the people of Mahenye continue to demonstrate the remarkable level of 'intra-communal cohesiveness' and capacity for expressing 'constituency demands' identified in Murphree's past scholarship.

8.4.4 The Private Sector

Private sector interests consist of the operator of the two lodges, River Lodges of Africa (RLA); the existing safari operator, Tshabezi Safaris; and Zambezi Safaris, who is tendering for the quota. Representatives of the Lodges (RLA) and Tshabezi were interviewed and told a common story of how, since 2000, it had become increasingly difficult to have a professional relationship with the community.

While they are both aware that there are conflicts about the level of accountability of the MCC to general community members, both still use the narrative of 'the community' and their actions are guided by the understanding that the MCC represents 'the community'. Ultimately, the primary concern of both is the national economic and political system that is leading to a decline of tourists and threatening their businesses, although this is clearly more of a threat to the lodges than safari operations.

Tshabezi's story illustrates wasted time, money and effort, a breach of trust and unprofessional conduct by both the RDC and the MCC. They are concerned with contracts going unsigned, lack of clarity on where responsibility lies or what the proper procedures and mechanisms for tendering should be. They fear that the current situation is leading to further degradation of a resource base that is already under pressure.

> *We thought people were genuinely interested in the development of the area and so invested directly here, but it has been a waste. We've negotiated contracts at a local level because that's what the theory is all about, but we should have been talking with the RDC. Now there is a conflict between the community and the RDC over allocation of funds and we are caught in the middle and made to look like the bad guys.*

The story told by representatives of the lodges differs slightly, as may be expected given the long-term investment the company is making in the area. As demonstrated in their promotional materials, the CAMPFIRE programme and its development and conservation benefits are an integral component of their marketing strategy. The discourse of CAMPFIRE – 'participation, community benefits, local cultural traditions and incentives for conservation' – is embedded in the management strategies and rational of the lodges and their staff. Although they are aware that there may be problems, these tend to be down-played:

> *We do tend to have our heads in the sand and do not really know the details but we know the current chief is working in his own self-interest, leading the programme away from where it's supposed to be going. But there are no indications that anyone is going to pose a direct challenge to the royal family. It is the chief himself who will have to make the changes. To the extent that we get involved locally, we do so through the legitimate structures, those of the chief and his family.*

Thus, despite RLA being aware of misappropriation of funds and conflicts within the community, it continues to negotiate new contractual arrangements through the office of the chief, as evidenced in the submission of a 'Concept Document Proposing a New Partnership' to Chief Mahenye, copied to the MCC, in late 2002. Implicit in this document is the assumption that the chief and the MCC were the legitimate and accountable representatives of the people of Mahenye. According to interviewees, it was very clear even by this date that this was not the case. One explanation for this stance is that it harks back to a story line appropriate to the institutions of the 1990s, irrespective of the individual leadership changes from 2000 and the evolution of deep distortions that removed their local legitimacy. An alternative explanation, given by several members of staff who are from Mahenye, is that the reaction of senior management to local events has been pragmatic acceptance of the new political realities now prevalent at local and national scales:

The new chief does not seem to understand that getting benefits from us is a privilege and not a right. He comes here and demands beers and other favours. He demands far too much from us and threatens if we do not honour, because the general manager is white and he can be associated with MDC! We cannot retrench the chairman because he is such a powerful individual – removing him from the payroll will be disastrous to our relationship with the chieftainship.

8.4.5   The Rural District Council

The role of the RDC includes formal awarding of the hunting concession following an established process of advertising and competitive tendering. As well as having a legal obligation in this regard, they also have a financial incentive to ensure that the process is efficiently managed as they are recipients of 20-35% of the income as an 'administration' fee. In theory, tenders are evaluated both in terms of financial value and on qualitative considerations, with the expectation that RDCs take into account the views of the wildlife-producing ward. However, an independent commission of inquiry undertaken in 2005 at the request of the Chipinge RDC indicates that established procedure and competitive bidding processes have not been adhered to and that there is no clear relationship between the value of the resources and the payment by the safari operator.

Following a written request from the Mahenye Ward councilor, backed up by anonymous letters from Mahenye residents, the RDC undertook an independent audit of the MCC in 2004. As recounted above, this audit clearly revealed the validity of accusations of mismanagement and misappropriation of CAMPFIRE funds by the elite within Mahenye. The RDC's story of Mahenye emerges from the commission of inquiry, which related the conflict from the hunting concessions and issues of financial mismanagement raised in the audit reports.

According to the RDC's CEO, the situation is 'a big mess' that has come about because 'one individual is no longer accountable', and is bringing the RDC into disrepute:

Chipinge is proud of being the birthplace of the CAMPFIRE concept, but now we are failing to live up to our reputation. We view it as a priority that things are put right.

The RDC's chosen strategy involved analyzing two elements of the problem: the lack of accountability and the conflict between the community and the safari operator:

And now we will approach the issues in stages. Our first priority is to sort out the problems with the safari operators. Once this is done we'll address local problems of representation. Elections with a secret ballot need to take place, and new safeguards developed to make sure authority is not abused.

The RDC's story is that they are aware of problems and are in the process of making a measured and responsible decision about how to proceed, in order to respond to the demands and needs of their constituency. Given such a reasonable response, it is fair to speculate why there has been so little action. The audit – which clearly illustrates fraud and corruption – was carried out in August 2004, and the commission of inquiry took place in May 2005. And yet by October 2005, despite the CEO acknowledging that it was a priority for the RDC, no action had been taken. This may simply be a result of bureaucratic ineptitude, but once again it is possible to identify alternative reasons.

Chief Mahenye's position creates opportunities for networks and allows him to reach out to politically powerful national factions that may influence the strategies adopted by and the nature of the relationship with the RDC. For example, the Deputy Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, (who additionally holds a leading post within the state-approved traditional chief's institution) has attended meetings with the Mahenye CAMPFIRE committee at which discussions related to securing greater financial devolution from the RDC. The chief has also worked closely with the former District Administrator of Chipinge (himself now a Member of Parliament) to influence the Mahenye vote for the ZANU-PF MP candidate. These personal national networks and

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political affiliations provide a level of complexity in local power struggles that was beyond the scope of this research to explore in detail (and would have raised security issues had attempts been made to do so). However, they have a real impact on the balance of power between the RDC and traditional authorities and this may at least partially account for the reluctance of the RDC to take decisive action.

8.4.6 The NGOs

The marginalization of civil society from policymaking and implementation in any sphere that relates to governance in the politically contested rural areas (described in Chapter 7) has had profound impact on CAMPFIRE in Mahenye. The consequence of this marginalization is that the former CAMPFIRE Collaborative Group (CCG) members (particularly NGOs such as WWF and Zimbabwe Trust) who formerly played key roles in institutional development within Mahenye are no longer able to do so, partly as a result of loss of access to funds but also because their mandate for involvement has effectively been removed. Field staff interviewed had formerly operated in Mahenye and aware of the current situation in Mahenye. However, they did not have the means and resources to address the problem, and they also felt intimidated to try to address them. As expressed by one NGO officer formerly active in the area for a decade:

> *[Our friends] in the RDC tell us Mahenye is a mess, the chief and chairman have taken over. I hate to hear it after years of working with them, but with no vehicles, no fuel, and no reason to go there, what can we do? Anyway, I am known as MDC, the chief is ZANU-PF; it would not be good for my health.*

The one NGO that is still highly active in CAMPFIRE implementation is the CAMPFIRE Association (CA). They are familiar with the current situation in Mahenye, not least because the CEO was a member of the commission of inquiry. They are involved with the RDC in seeking a solution to the problems based on their understanding that:

> *There are a lot of undeclared interests at play in Mahenye. There is need to identify the root cause of the problem and sort out the institutional problems. We*

strongly felt as a commission that there was need for changes in tenure of office, to elect a new committee (Charles Jonga, CEO CAMPFIRE, interview Harare, May 2005).

As in the case of the RDC narrative, there is also a sense of deadlock in taking actions or decisions in the discourse of the CA; particularly given this is precisely the institution tasked with linking the producer communities of CAMPFIRE with district and national agencies and with the overall coordination of the programme.

8.5 Discussion

In discussing the issues of CBNRM, democratic governance, institutions and economic incentives in Mahenye, a good place to begin is to recognize the complexity of the current situation both in Zimbabwe and in Mahenye, but also the extent to which there is remarkable congruence and depth in the narratives of local, district and national scales about the reality of the challenges and the most urgent next steps to take.

8.5.1 Local Governance, CBNRM Institutions and Historical Precedence

One of the paradoxes and strengths of the case of Mahenye, clear in the narratives from various sources, is the extent to which the ward, the dynamics of its governance and its institutional evolutions place it not just as a precursor to CBNRM in the region. Mahenye also reached a phase in the mid to late 1990s of practically implementing the more recent scholarship that stressed multi-tiered governance linkages and jurisdictional and scale principles involving upward delegation/downward accountability depending on political agency, ecological and social scale requirements (Martin, 2003, Murphree, 2001). It had in that decade moved beyond the 'chicken and egg' structural dilemma of full devolution as a prerequisite for CBNRM, versus fragile local common property regime as a cause of failure of CBNRM.

This situation arose as a result of congruence, where the strength of the local society, which could mix the modern with customary institutions, had linked up to scales and

institutions of the state, private sector and NGOs with powerful economic incentives and political capital supporting these evolutions. The challenge was to come from 2000 with the series of connected local and national events that generated the dramatic distortions to economic incentives, political dynamics and local leadership. The informal and precedent basis of the 'Mahenye Constitution' was inadequate to counterbalance this profound shift. In simple terms, the devolution-jurisdictional egg was hatching out in a much rougher neighborhood.

However, it is important to stress (as do the majority of the local narratives from Mahenye, which speak of resilience and knowledge of the past strengths of their institutions) that this does not preclude the ability to react or adapt. From 1982–1991 there was a precedent of tackling significant challenges. This, plus the fact that the widely agreed-on strengths of the institution up to 2000 were achieved, gives hope that the scenarios and strategies for change envisaged by most Mahenye people can engage with the crisis of today.

8.5.2 National to Local links, Mirrors and Influences

Inasmuch as problems in Mahenye reflect local failures in governance and capacity, clearly, local governance is being significantly affected by national governance issues. In Zimbabwe, recent political events have resulted in the promotion of institutions and individuals associated with the ruling party while those affiliated with opposition parties and politics have been marginalised (Raftopoulos and Savage, 2005, Bauer and Taylor, 2005, Harold-Barry, 2004, Hill, 2005, Amnesty International, 2004, Hammar, 2003). In this regard, the Mahenye situation mirrors the national context, which has profoundly impacted the balance of power between various Mahenye institutions as well as determining which individuals would play active roles within institutions, based upon their political affiliations.

One of the most significant legislative changes promoting shifts in the institutional dynamics and balance of power within Mahenye has been the Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) of 2001, which has strengthened the power of traditional authorities nationally while also bringing them under the influence of the ruling party, ZANU-PF. This Act has

not only enhanced the authority of the chief locally but has also changed the nature of the relationship between chiefs, RDC and the private sector. Other changes which have influenced events in Mahenye include the creation of new and powerful institutions representing the party at the local level. These include the ward coordinator (an employee of the Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment Creation), while formerly, relatively insignificant institutions such as the ward chairman of ZANU PF have taken on new prominence. Compounding this is that the modern development structures and their representatives, notably the ward councilor, have become accountable to the the ruling party, rather than the electorate. In addition, they have sometimes, under violent pressure, represented party interests in rural areas (See Hammar 2003 for a detailed account).

Nevertheless, changes in the national context have not only been legislative or administrative. As discussed in the preceding Chapter, the year 2000 saw a dramatic and public shift in the political dynamics of Zimbabwe, culminating in an increase in politically motivated violence and in the collapse of the 'rule of law' (Raftopoulos and Savage, 2005). This situation was underlain by a racially biased and populist moral discourse about the return of African soil to Africans, adopted by the ruling party, which served to marginalize and vilify whites and, by inference, political opponents of the ruling party. At local levels this often translated into violent persecution and marginalization of MDC supporters and whites.

Many of those interviewed noted that the impact in Mahenye has been to support the process of marginalization of key figures who were known to be opposition supporters from decision-making roles and a further reinforcement of the powers of the chief. Alternatively expressed by one interviewee:

> *People cannot make their concerns public for fear of being labeled opposition supporters.*

Thus, the relationship between the traditional and ruling party institutions has

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fundamentally changed, with the result that power and influence of traditional authorities has been enhanced but at the expense of increased dependency on the ruling party. In Mahenye, all power is vested in the chief (as distinct from the institution of customary authority) whose position is secure because of the mutually beneficial relationship and endorsement from ZANU-PF and the other newly created or co-opted institutions such as the MCC under the current chairman. The new roles acquired by the chief and his family translate into real power over and beyond what was traditionally extended to them.

The national context has enabled the chief to translate his newly enhanced legal position *vis-à-vis* natural resources and new position as a powerful ZANU-PF representative to divert the claims of others and validate his own claims over these resources. Therefore, he has expanded his control over development in Mahenye. One of the actions undertaken by the chief on his ascendancy in 2001 was to ensure that CAMPFIRE and its benefits were brought under his control.
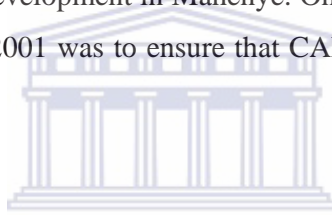
8.5.3 Economic Factors - CAMPFIRE Incentives

The narratives and realities of Mahenye illustrate that the local and national institutional distortions are also present in the economic context. The dramatic fall in institutional norms is illustrated by the decline in household dividends, between the late 1990s and 2004, from around US$20 to three cents. The real decline of the proportion of revenue allocated to household dividends fell from around 50% to less than 1%. Effectively, the ward residents are getting no economic returns from their wildlife management or recompense from the costs of living with wildlife.

CAMPFIRE revenue mechanisms are now effectively a long pipeline of massive leakages, exposed to foreign exchange losses, inflation at the world's highest rates, *ad hoc* taxes, fraud and minimal transparency. The combined revenue disbursed as household dividends for the 894 households in Mahenye in 2004 was therefore a total of US$27. The real value of elephants sold that year was US$39,000 (Rihoy et al., 2007). In effect, Mahenye inhabitants therefore suffered more than a 99% loss in revenue. This

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clearly makes no economic sense. The huge losses indicate that the ward and the RDC are being seriously prejudiced by maintaining a mechanism suited to a previous economic environment.

8.5.4 Networks, Patronage and Power

By 'capturing' CAMPFIRE in Mahenye, the traditional authorities have created a powerful patronage tool for themselves through which they can construct and reproduce power relationships and perpetuate their authority. CAMPFIRE provides the means to develop a strong network of loyal supporters. This begins with the enrolment of other members of their extended family as MCC members, ensuring that they receive significant financial benefits in the form of sitting allowances, access to valuable transport and prestige. The chairman and chief have ensured that these people are beholden to them. By extending the First Friday meetings to include all members of the traditional authorities and other party-endorsed positions, such as the ZANU-PF chairman, ward development officer and councilor, this network has been extended to all those in positions of authority in the village. The network is extended outside family by the manipulation of scarce and valuable employment opportunities within the CAMPFIRE project itself. For example, posts for game monitors, grinding mill operators and shop assistants are now decided upon exclusively by the Chairman of the MCC.

The same is true for jobs with the private sector operators who maintain the façade that the chairman of the MCC represents 'the community' and give him leverage over who is appointed to these positions. Other benefits that the chairman extends to his network members include the provision of credit at the grinding mills and CAMPFIRE stores and the provision of personal loans. By consolidating their positions of power in other institutions outside the MCC, the chairman and chief can threaten retribution to anyone who questions their decisions, not just in the form of losing the benefits that have been forthcoming from being part of their network, but also through the potential loss of access to food aid, land or being labeled an opposition supporter. This last threat can also be extended to private sector operators and the RDC through the manipulation of their national political networks.

Thus, the chief and chairman would appear to have built themselves an unassailable position of power and authority. However, this is clearly not the case. There is a unanimous condemnation of the chairman and unanimous agreement on the need to find a solution to the current problems, even amongst those who would lose their privileged positions as network beneficiaries.

Nevertheless, there is widespread discontent and the situation within Mahenye remains a socially and politically constructed stalemate with no local means of sufficient agency or power to break the deadlock. Therefore, people have identified alternative mechanisms to assist them to solve their problems. The long and successful history of CAMPFIRE in the area has ensured that there is considerable local knowledge about the process, including a thorough understanding of the roles, agency and responsibilities of various institutions. Thus while the RDC is widely distrusted on the grounds that it has its own agenda in relation to the safari operations and securing its own revenue, there is, nevertheless, clear recognition within Mahenye that it has a legal responsibility to step in to break the local stalemate and that it has the political agency and state-party linkages to do so.

It is generally recognized that this consists of two different but interconnected activities. Firstly, addressing issues of local governance and secondly addressing fiscal accountability and revenue efficiency (such as the controversy over the sport hunting contract and the major leakages of revenue earned). Once these issues have been resolved, the majority of people in Mahenye want to see greater fiscal devolution occurring. That is to say, their scenario for change is a sequence of events in rebuilding a process of devolution based on responsibilities and authority but also with linkages of strategic delegation and practical politics to get there.

8.5.5 Building Accountability - Linking the Local and District

The narratives suggest that one of the most significant impacts of CAMPFIRE over the last 15 years has been to empower local people by making them aware of the value of the natural resources in their areas and the extent of their rights to these, while raising

awareness of mechanisms through which they can exercise these rights. Community members have the knowledge, confidence and organizational awareness to counter local elites who are usurping power and undermining democratic local decision-making and to articulate demands to their political representatives at the district level to assist in resolving the problem. Despite local political mobilization having been largely covert to date due to fear of reprisal, it has created space for political negotiation between the local and district level and has served as a catalyst to two external and damning investigations. This ultimately leads to greater accountability of the RDCs to their local constituents.

Contrary to interpretations of Mahenye as another example of CBNRM in crisis, my interpretation of Mahenye narratives is an optimistic one of evolution and resilience. At the local level, there is ample evidence that many of those factors which Murphree (2001) identified as decisive in their overall success are still present, most notably intra-communal cohesion, resource richness, social energy, flexibility, evolution, and acceptance of risk. However, it also provides evidence that CBNRM is evolving and has empowered local communities with the means and incentive to engage and negotiate with their local government representatives: if this process is to gain strength within the current context of Zimbabwe, new creative thinking will be required

8.6 Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the institutional and governance configuration represented by CAMPFIRE provides opportunities and incentives for interaction and negotiations between local communities and local government. Consequently, one of the most significant outcomes of CAMPFIRE over the last 20 years has been making local people aware of the economic value of natural resources, their rights to these, and mechanisms for exercising these rights. This demonstrates that communities can negotiate effectively with district governments, exercising their agency through demands for greater responsiveness and accountability. Inasmuch as democratic governance and effective environmental management in Zimbabwe has diminished at the national level, these have persisted in some cases at the local level through local

negotiations over natural resources. This has effectively empowered selected local communities through the creation of democratic space and accountable local governance.

Moreover, based on field evidence from Mahenye, this research indicates that under certain conditions RDCs can play a vital role in ensuring that local elites do not monopolize and capture the process at a local level. RDCs can provide a system of checks and balances to ensure that powerful local elites working in collaboration with unscrupulous private sector interests and national politicians do not abuse the process. The Mahenye story suggests that the community's particular history and institutional configuration of CAMPFIRE in their District has genuinely empowered people to exercise their rights. They have the means and incentive to engage and negotiate with local government, collectively expressing 'demands' to the RDC and the RDC has responded to the demands. Many democracy scholars note that development of an "informed and alert electorate" is an essential prerequisite for the establishment of democratic governance in Africa and for the continent's future economic growth. The implications of this process for democratisation are explored in detail in the concluding Chapter. The findings of this research are not in isolation, they concur with Taylor and Murphree (2007) in that CAMPFIRE appears to be emerging from a difficult period as a resilient, self-reliant initiative with some communities empowered to challenge the status quo, and RDC's prepared to respond positively to this challenge.

These findings indicate that it is necessary to revisit the conventional wisdom that decentralization undermines CAMPFIRE's ability to deliver upon its objectives. This evidence suggests that decentralization is proving to be a politically expedient 'stepping stone' to devolution. It is providing a mechanism to tackle the practical governance arrangements between the first and second tier institutions that can progressively break down existing social and political barriers and in so doing create political and democratic space for communities to participate directly in policy making processes. The example of Mahenye appears to give credence to the notion that RDCs can and will respond to the

needs of their local constituents should these be clearly articulated. Mahenye provides tentative evidence then, that in some instances CAMPFIRE has empowered communities to negotiate effectively with district governments in calling for greater representation and accountability. As democratic governance in Zimbabwe has collapsed at the national level, it has persisted at the local level through local negotiations over natural resources. This represents some hope for the democratic future of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 9

CBNRM POLICY PROCESSES AND POLITICS OF RESOURCE GOVERNANCE IN BOTSWANA AND ZIMBABWE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of the politics and governance of CBNRM in Botswana and Zimbabwe. It explores the intersection between CBNRM and macro dynamic processes, focusing particularly on devolution, decentralization, and the nature of policy processes affecting the CBNRM sector. Using the policy process analytical framework (Keeley and Scoones, 2003) this chapter describes the dynamics within the CBNRM policy context in the two countries and locates them in relation to policy processes and contextual factors at the international and regional levels. In this chapter, I analyze the findings presented in earlier chapters, highlight patterns and disentangle the complex interactions between different levels in order to show how these shape policy processes and CBNRM governance outcomes.

Using a comparative assessment of CBNRM processes in Zimbabwe and Botswana, I offer insights into the contextual dynamics that shape CBNRM. This comparative analysis illuminates why natural resource governance reform efforts to date have been unsuccessful in their attempts to bring about devolved governance structures in the two countries. The focus on policy processes and governance issues emerged from recognition of the fundamental constraints imposed by the lack of effective governance and democratic regimes at the local and national level.

One component of the analytical framework has focused on structured political interests, actor networks and discourse analysis. This has enabled me to systematically construct and develop an understanding of those factors that are key in determining policy processes and outcomes in the two countries. The case studies from Botswana and

Zimbabwe demonstrate that CBNRM policy processes and outcomes reflect social and political complexities in decision-making, dominated by and interlinked with political and economic interests. These dynamics are intimately and intricately interwoven, overlapping and mutually reinforcing, making it difficult to draw clear distinctions between them. Nevertheless, distinctions can be made for analytical purposes, which allow for an unravelling, revealing and understanding of the myriad iterative social, economic and political processes across all scales that affect CBNRM outcomes.

Despite the sharp contrast between Zimbabwe's turbulent political, economic and social 'crisis' and Botswana's relative stability, CBNRM appears to have more support and greater resilience in Zimbabwe than in Botswana. As Chapters 7 and 8 revealed, the decentralisation of natural resource management in Zimbabwe through CAMPFIRE remains an entrenched component of the country's conservation strategy. In contrast, the initial progress towards devolution of control over natural resources to communities has now been overturned in Botswana due to recentralization of control to the central state. The recentralization process in Botswana raises serious questions about central government's commitment to CBNRM principles and philosophy as well as efforts to strengthen local democracy and empowerment.

Nevertheless, it does not imply that CAMPFIRE thrives throughout the country, but rather there are several instances – Mahenye as detailed in Chapter 8 and Masoka as detailed by Taylor and Murphree (2007) - where not only does it continue to be a viable conservation and livelihood strategy, but further it has demonstrated that communities are able to negotiate effectively with local district government, contributing to greater responsiveness and accountability at this scale of government. The result is that even as democratic governance in Zimbabwe has come under assault in the national arena, it has persisted and even been revitalized at the local level through negotiations over natural resources.

Quite a different scenario has unfolded in Botswana. The findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6 highlight the shrinking of democratic space and autocratic tendencies in CBNRM policy processes within a country so often upheld as the beacon of democracy in Africa. The shrinking of democratic and policy spaces for communities and civil society have restricted their ability to effectively influence CBNRM policy. This has stifled opportunities for decentralisation of natural resource management and weakened accountability at local-levels. This Chapter identifies and explains those factors that emerged and shaped CBNRM policy and practice in the two countries resulting in these unexpected outcomes.

9.2 Comparative Analysis: Botswana and Zimbabwe

Evidence from Botswana and Zimbabwe provides crucial insights into natural resource governance and politics. The previous chapters revealed that CBNRM is being incorporated into existing social, economic and political relations at all levels and in particular, those related to the highly politicised contestations over natural resource and land rights. Clearly, alliances and boundaries form, and as situations change, shift and reconfigure the landscape of natural resource management governance and politics. Therefore, it is necessary to understand these shifts, reconfigurations, and constellations of different interest groups and alliances - ranging from the international to local - with particular emphasis on national political elites. The focus of attention here is on analyzing the impact of the different policy contexts on CBNRM outcomes. The aim is to understand whether the policy process allows or discourages greater local participation and democratisation of natural resource management. This sheds light on how and why reform efforts succeed or fail, which should in turn enable the development of more effective strategies for influencing change.

9.2.1 Structured Political Interests

The macro-political context determines the challenges facing CBNRM in both countries. Chapters 5 and 7 focused on the institutions through which CBNRM policy and laws have been and are being created in Botswana and Zimbabwe. They present an analysis of

the political consequences of such changes as well as the impact of the wider political institutional environment on policymakers' decisions. It appears that the most influential factor in determining outcomes is the perspective and attitudes of political elites, which are shaped by the ramifications CBNRM holds for these elites.

In Zimbabwe, the state - even in its current dysfunctional condition - continues to support CAMPFIRE (see Chapter 5). This arises largely because the decentralized nature of CAMPFIRE ensures that it is an important strand of the ruling party's efforts to exert control in rural areas and because the relatively politically influential RDC's are fully supportive. Conversely, in Botswana – as discussed in Chapter 7 - CBNRM and its initial devolutionary approach have failed to engage and maintain the support of the political economic elite. This has been due to the significant political ramifications for the ruling party's nation building strategy and its direct contradiction to the Constitution as well as its direct economic implications for Botswana's small governing elite.
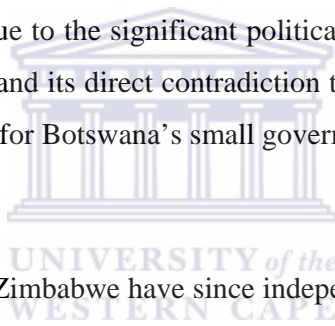
Chapter 5 details how RDCs in Zimbabwe have since independence played a critical role in the ruling party's strategies to control and develop spaces, resources and populations in rural areas. Decentralisation was conceived by ZANU-PF as a means to create and maintain the one-party state and as such had the full political backing of the state. CAMPFIRE offered opportunities for advancing the political objectives of decentralization and continued to serve political interests after 1999 and the onset of crisis. Since this time, central government has been increasingly unable to provide financial support to RDCs despite delegating increasing responsibilities for basic social services to them. Given the deteriorating financial situation of RDCs and increasing demands upon them, dependence on CAMPFIRE revenues becomes ever more pronounced. The central role that RDCs play in the ruling party's overall strategy for penetration and control in rural areas (Hammar and Raftopoulous, 2003) explains why central government continues to support the RDCs in the decentralisation of natural resource management through CAMPFIRE. For ZANU-PF, CAMPFIRE provides the financial means by which RDCs are able to continue delivering services and retain their

influence in rural areas with limited financial cost to central government. CAMPFIRE revenues provide a financial 'life-line' to support ZANU-PF in its efforts to 'recapture the frontiers of rule' (Hammar 2003:144) that the space of local government represents. Decentralisation ensures that the politically powerful RDCs are reliant on CAMPFIRE revenues, therefore, reinforcing RDCs' support for CAMPFIRE. CAMPFIRE's role in central government's overall strategy for control of rural areas has ironically stifled government's recentralising tendencies.

The macro-political and economic dynamics in Botswana are quite different from Zimbabwe. As discussed in Chapter 7, Botswana is governed by a small political economic elite - whose economic interests have traditionally been dominated by diamonds and cattle - with mutually reinforcing political and business interests. CBNRM has direct implications for the elite, in part because it determines land use and control over wildlife, which underpins Botswana's third largest income earner, tourism. The political economic elite influence the conditions of democracy in Botswana. Whilst there often appears to be an uncritical acceptance of the 'progressive' state of democracy, a serious re-examination of the current political system and climate reveals an increasingly autocratic political atmosphere dominated by a few senior political figures (Molutsi, 2005, Swatuk, 2005, Rotberg, 2007, Workman, 2009). Several of these have become personally involved in CBNRM policy development and often play a critical role in shaping its outcomes. The influence of powerful political individuals, most notably President Ian Khama, in CBNRM highlights the dominance of the traditional/modernised political economic elites in wildlife conservation. This reinforces Gibson's (1999) assertion that wildlife in Africa is a political tool.

These elites promote policies that favour their commercial interests in relation to cattle and diamonds (Peters, 1994, Swatuk, 2005, Good and Taylor, 2005). As a result, the broader national policy and political environment tend to contradict and undermine the subsidiarity and devolutionary principles of CBNRM despite the rhetorical commitment

to community empowerment and participatory-oriented policies in the rural development sector. For example, policies that promote cattle ranching and the indirect 'privatisation' of grazing land through water management dominate the rural development sector. The elites tend to pay attention to the value of wildlife as a national rather than a local economic resource. Devolved control does not privilege, or even favour, elite private commercial exploitation of wildlife. In Botswana, this is better facilitated by state control.

Nevertheless, CBNRM has significant political ramifications beyond the immediate economic interests of the elite. The Constitution of Botswana states that all natural resources are national assets, and the proceeds from their exploitation should be managed centrally through national coffers to ensure transparent and equitable distribution (Poteete, 2007). CBNRM 'localises' benefits from wildlife resources to local communities since they bear the cost of wildlife management within their local jurisdiction. By delineating membership and rights in CBNRM to the local community, it effectively de-emphasizes the constitutionally implied 'national citizenship' that entitles all citizens to benefit from mineral, land and other natural resources. Inevitably, it has brought to the fore political dynamics and contested claims to natural resources in the country. The GOB has been forced to re-examine the implications of devolution of wildlife resources and benefits vis-à-vis decentralization and/or recentralization of CBNRM benefits in line with the principle of all natural resources being 'national resources.' Decentralization of natural resources and partial devolution of management responsibilities contradicted government's professed commitment to the principle of natural resources as national resources. This principle had formed an integral component of Botswana's nation-building approach, which stressed the political imperative of projecting the primacy of national over local, especially traditional identities. The distributional struggles and claims that emerge in the 'diamond debate' have to be understood in terms of their political implications for the ruling party. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party's call for centrally managing CBNRM funds is an attempt to address questions raised about its coalition building strategy and the discrepancy in the

treatment of mineral and CBNRM-related wildlife resources. It has used the 'diamond debate' to recentralize CBNRM benefits and dictate the future based on its political agenda in the same manner that ZANU-PF determines the future of CAMPFIRE based on its political agenda.

A further factor that has influenced political perspectives and support for CBNRM emanates from the differing colonial experiences of the two countries and the resultant impact on access to land and other natural resources along racial lines. As discussed in Chapters 2, 4 and 6, the initial impetus for the CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe was to do away with racial discrimination introduced during the colonial and post-colonial periods and transfer economic opportunities that had been granted to private property holders to communal land dwellers. CAMPFIRE was then associated with the political imperative of deracialising access to natural resources in Zimbabwe - a politically compelling narrative. In Botswana, this politically attractive discourse in support of CBNRM has little resonance. Botswana's history as a protectorate of the British Crown, rather than a colony, ensured that it was less affected by colonial rule than any other country in southern Africa. This led to various distinctions between Botswana and its neighbouring states, nowhere more so than in terms of land tenure systems. Settlement by white farmers was never a dominant feature and consequently no more than 5.5% of the land was ever alienated for white-owned farms, compared to nearly 60% in Zimbabwe (Tshuma, 1997). The result is that the politically compelling deracialisation discourse and context for CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe is absent in Botswana, and additionally racial or ethnic discourse is actively discouraged by the Constitution and GOB (Taylor, 2000). Thus one of the principle pillars on which CAMPFIRE was/is able to draw support from the political elite is absent in Botswana. Recent years have seen racial arguments used to great effect by the state in Zimbabwe in an effort to secure popular support for land redistribution along racial lines. The increased emphasis on racial discourse by the Zimbabwean state serves to make it increasingly difficult for it to discard CAMPFIRE, even if it was in its interests to do so,

given that its original hyped rationale was to ensure racial equality in access to wildlife resources.

9.2.2 Discourse and Actor-Networks

The perspectives and priorities of national political elites alone do not determine CBNRM outcomes and strategies. As discussed in Chapter 3, the social and political commitments that CBNRM entail rely on support of particular audiences and practices. Chapter 4 traces how international and regional discourse coalitions and actor-networks - with Zimbabweans at the forefront - have been instrumental in CBNRM policy processes. Actors within the community conservation and sustainable use coalitions participate to various degrees in the production and reproduction of CBNRM concepts and policy. They have also been involved in the 'depoliticisation' of CBNRM as discussed in Chapter 4. The effectiveness of such networks in influencing the development of national policy depends on their ability to unite diverse interest groups, including political elites. They have to include policy entrepreneurs who are able to exercise agency and strategically influence a network of social relations (Long, 2001, Latour, 1987). These networks have to draw upon knowledge and science to drive policy, and it matters where this science comes from, who can use it and in what manner (Sutton, 1999). Involvement and exclusion in this policy process have implications, and these have to be considered at international, national and local levels.

Chapter 4 discussed how and why CBNRM became embedded internationally and regionally within environmental and conservation policy-networks and epistemic communities and particularly those of sustainable use. It illustrated how it became caught up in and responded to a 'crisis' narrative (Keeley and Scoones, 2003) - sustainable use, and by extension CBNRM, was under threat from preservationists and animal rights groups. The result was that the networks with which CBNRM was engaged internationally were dominated by conservation issues to the exclusion of a range of other critical issues and networks. The influence of key policy entrepreneurs and networks permeated regional and national levels as those key individuals moved across

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locales and shaped CBNRM practices through specific initiatives, funding networks, and professional alliances.

This manifested itself in many ways, for example, within both Zimbabwe and Botswana, while CBNRM was perceived to be at the forefront of decentralization efforts, these progressed largely in isolated parallel of the broader national efforts to decentralize (Conyers, 2001, Taylor, 2000) as well as the international discourse on decentralization and democracy. The outcome is that the CBNRM processes have been largely uninfluenced or informed by and uncoordinated with the mainstream decentralisation/democratisation discourses, experiences and lessons both nationally and internationally. A significant implication of this was the common perception among implementers and advocates, that devolution, in contrast to decentralisation, was the only appropriate form of governance arrangement. This belief persisted for several decades in spite of evidence within the broader development/democratisation literature, as discussed in Chapter 2, that it may not always empower marginalised communities and in some cases may undermine them.
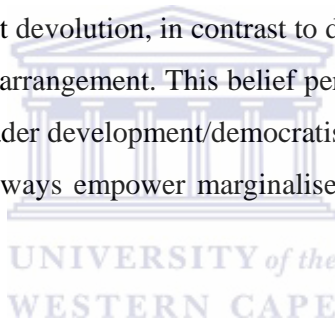
Within the international conservation community, it was a generally accepted principle that 'conservation and politics don't mix', leading to claims that the environment was politically neutral (apolitical) and therefore needed to be insulated from politics. Thus the rhetoric of conservation became depoliticized and treated as uncontested 'science'. As a result, sustainable use assumed the apolitical and ahistorical narrative of agricultural economics, emphasizing 'financial and economic profitability' and 'Africa's comparative advantage'. Chapter 4 illustrates that to the degree that CBNRM networks engaged internationally with social science networks through its Common Property Regime (CPR) conceptual underpinnings, such networks failed to encourage the creation of linkages to discourses and networks that focused on political issues such as democratisation and decentralisation. Indeed, CPR tended to actively discourage this by its apolitical analysis of tenurial regimes. The result is that CBNRM has never been

conceptualised as a political process empowering communities to challenge power structures, resource allocation and resource rights.

Actor networks play a central role in CBNRM policy process at the national level. The findings presented in Chapter 5 indicate that the existence of a weak CBNRM actor network in Botswana has resulted in little support for CBNRM leading to recentralization as a result of political opposition. Conversely, the strong CBNRM actor network in Zimbabwe has been an important component in ensuring that decentralized CBNRM benefits continue to flow to local levels despite the national political and economic meltdown, policy turmoil and recentralising tendencies of the GOZ.

As demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 7, the origins of CBNRM at national level influence the nature and development of an actor network, including the extent to which policy entrepreneurs are able to exercise the required agency to influence policy. The review of the history and philosophy of CAMPFIRE discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 illustrates that the Zimbabwean initiative encompassed thousands of people and various institutions at all scales. CAMPFIRE was conceptualized and rooted in Zimbabwean experience and realities. Its development involved a lengthy and inclusive process based on learning through trial and error in Zimbabwe. This resulted in the generation of locally substantiated scientific facts and data relating to economically viable forms of land use, sustainable use of species, and politically expedient means of ensuring the participation and beneficiation of communal land dwellers in conservation activities. CAMPFIRE benefited from the expertise of a small but influential network of colonial and post-colonial conservation policy makers that appreciated science and sustainable use approaches.

This science became extremely influential through the construction of actor networks, which incorporated bureaucrats, politicians, donors, local and international NGOs, the private sector, local communities and academics, all of which supported these knowledge

claims. These actor networks were involved in an ongoing process of producing facts that led support to the CBNRM narrative. They engaged in a process of co-construction, recursively shaping the way in which data and science were 'produced' and policy made. These networks were led by several key and strategically placed 'policy entrepreneurs' senior policy makers from the Department of Wildlife Management and National Parks. Duffy (2000:1) explains how appeals to the concept of sustainable use in the 1980s and 1990s in Zimbabwe served to 'depoliticize internal environmental politics', allowing the local conservation movement and its allies to present a united front.

This policy network has effectively evolved over the past thirty years from an apolitical network dominated by whites, NGOs, technical experts and a science based discourse, to a political body, dominated by RDCs, utilising a politically appealing discourse in addition to encompassing the scientific rational of earlier years. The racially biased and party-oriented political and policy environment of the last 10 years no longer favours, or even tolerates, interventions from whites or NGOs, and discourages rational, technical, science-based policy solutions such as those advanced by the CCG. The replacement of the CCG by the CA alone as the primary advocacy group for CAMPFIRE, represents the replacement of what has become a politically impotent group by one that has a significant political voice with significant incentives to use it. As such it represents a political body with a legitimate constituency in a manner that the CCG, consisting primarily of NGOs and technical agencies, could never aspire to.

Thus evolution of the CAMPFIRE actor-network has kept pace with political and social evolutions within Zimbabwe as a whole, occurring in such a way that it has been possible for the policy network to maintain effectiveness and influence despite the extreme changes in the social and political conditions and corresponding changes in the policy environment within the country. CAMPFIRE is essentially evolving from a science-based process, which as discussed in Chapter 4, was relatively exclusionary because of the nature of the discourse on which it relied, into a political process that has the potential to increase political and policy space in natural resource management.

The origin of CBNRM in Botswana offers a sharp contrast to that in Zimbabwe. As explored in Chapter 5, CBNRM in Botswana was essentially a foreign import driven by donors. This significantly influenced how it was received and integrated nationally. Because CBNRM is perceived by Tswanas as an imported environmental paradigm, its local relevance and legitimacy have been compromised (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Its 'alien' nature and lack of 'indigenous' conceptualization and development stand in stark contrast with the CAMPFIRE programme. Long and van der Ploeg (1994) argue that the absence of indigenous conceptualization and development creates a lack of cultural understanding, relationships, identities and connections to both local and national social and political networks. Foreigners who dominated CBNRM in Botswana generally lacked 'agency' and full appreciation of complexities within the local institutional landscape, and this presented CBNRM with immense implementation and operational challenges. This limited local legitimacy compromised the development of a strong CBNRM actor-network. This has manifested itself in the remarkable absence of an indigenous 'politically salient constituency' (Murphree, 1995a) at all levels. Notably there is a lack of community representatives, politicians, local NGO 'personalities', leading academics, and senior managers and conservation practitioners in DWNP as supporters of CBNRM. Consequently, CBNRM in Botswana is largely bereft of policy entrepreneurs. The lack of a strong constituency at all levels compromised the social and political sustainability of CBNRM, making it relatively easy to discard once donors withdraw their support.

Donor driven attempts to create an influential actor-network – the CBNRM Network - whilst successful in the short-term in providing a counterweight to the political economic elite, proved unsustainable in the face of heightened political opposition. This 'donor' actor-network was further compromised by the existence of an alternative politically popular conservation paradigm of 'protectionism'. This paradigm was promoted and endorsed by President Khama (previously senior military official and vice president of the country), a 'policy entrepreneur' of unsurpassable national influence. Consequently,

the alternative narrative of protectionism currently dominates conservation in Botswana. Protectionism is based on Malthusian assumptions about population growth leading inevitably to natural resource degradation, and a perception of rural dwellers as 'perpetual adolescents' incapable of rational resource management decisions. Furthermore, Khama's antagonism towards CBNRM is informed by his party's political philosophy regarding 'natural resources as national resources' (Poteete, 2007). This is not a narrative or political philosophy which embraces greater democratisation of political space.

In the case of Zimbabwe, the existence of a strong actor-network has enabled the mobilization of political support and greatly influenced the development of a CBNRM supportive policy framework, which involved pragmatic compromises. In Botswana, the weak actor-network undermined its political voice and exposed CBNRM to the whims of political economic elites, failing to counterbalance pressure for recentralisation.
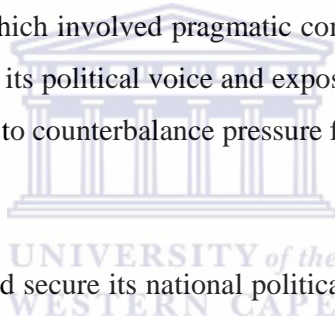
CAMPFIRE's local origin helped secure its national political endorsement and appeal to a wide range of national political agendas. During the 1990s, it achieved critical international acclaim, and received many international conservation awards and accolades. Considerable international media attention was devoted to it; it attracted generous donor support, and researchers from all over the world took interest in the programme while thousands of conferences and publications were generated from the CAMPFIRE experience. This acclaim and recognition of CAMPFIRE helped cement its social and political popularity at home. CAMPFIRE's international profile made it possible for the Zimbabwean government to play to other populist political agendas, enabling it to adopt populist stances at international events as well as 'sell' its political rhetoric to the national electorate.

The rhetoric included arguments about 'sovereignty over national resources,' 'racial equity,' 'African solutions to African problems', and 'anti- eco-imperialism' (portrayed

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as the new form of colonialism). Such political rhetoric was put forward as arguments in support of sustainable use and CAMPFIRE at international meetings. Government then manipulated these to good effect in bolstering its national image and political popularity. Essentially CAMPFIRE enabled the government to rhetorically champion participation and empowerment nationally and internationally while projecting itself as the protector of the underdog. Several commentators (Hughes, 2006, Fakir, 2001, Murombedzi, in press) note that the state-capital alliance represented by CAMPFIRE functioned to protect existing property rights and deflect attention away from the real struggles of communities for land and property (resource) rights by providing temporary and inadequate access to 'benefits' from resource use.

As CBNRM in Botswana was perceived as an externally imposed practice, its implementers and advocates were unable to draw upon the 'Zimbabwean rhetoric' to gain national political support. The rhetoric of 'African solution for African problems' did not resonate in Botswana. Furthermore, the dominant local narrative revolving around CBNRM in the last decade has been one of 'failure' with stories of misuse and abuse of funds abounding at all levels (Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Far from being viewed as a source of national pride, as CAMPFIRE was throughout the 1990's, it is widely perceived as promoting fraud and corruption in a country that prides itself on having been ranked by Transparency International Corruption Index as having the lowest corruption rate in Africa since its inception in 1998 (Transparency International, 2008).

9.2.3 Contrasting Implementation Strategies and their Impacts

CAMPFIRE has been characterized by a series of pragmatic, strategic compromises aimed at accommodating varied, and sometimes contradictory, positions of a variety of interest groups (Murphree, 1997b). For example, CAMPFIRE adopted a decentralized approach to natural resource management as a compromise rather than the initially envisaged devolution approach despite the continued criticism that this was its weakness (see introductory chapter and Chapter 5). I question this assumption in light of the empirical research findings and analysis presented here. This willingness to compromise

ensured that CAMPFIRE was able to materialize in the first place, as well as secure and maintain its broad based political support – the ingredients for its political survival even through the current crisis in Zimbabwe.

In contrast, Botswana adopted CBNRM as an imported blueprint 'package'. A central component of this package, adamantly insisted upon by the donor and expatriate implementing staff, was that devolution to independent grass-roots CBOs was an imperative and that the role of District Councils must be confined to 'facilitator of a process' (Winer, 2006, personal communication). One of the given rationales for this approach drew upon the perceived 'failures' of CAMPFIRE relating to it having decentralized rather than devolved powers. Consequently, donors' and expatriate staff's approach to CBNRM did not accommodate any negotiations or compromises, which may have served to build political capital and develop the social and professional relationships necessary to ensure that CBNRM was introduced in such a way that could accommodate the unique complexities within the country's local and national political and social context. Initial advocates of CBNRM did not pay close attention to the political dimensions of natural resource policy-making processes. Inattention to socio-political processes of empowerment and the potential of CBNRM to alter levers of power proved costly. CBNRM strengthens social empowerment, capital, and community development, which could be leveraged into political capital. The OCT case study reveals how politics intersect with CBNRM at the local and national levels. The 'diamond debate' invoked political questions and contradictory impulses of CBNRM and nation-building or national development.

Failure to integrate other relevant line ministries and reach out to civil society for the first 10 years of project implementation in Botswana further alienated and isolated CBNRM from the mainstream national policy processes and local government structures. In contrast, from its inception, CAMPFIRE has been implemented nationally by a wide variety of organizations, including government institutions and civil society organizations with different areas of expertise, skills and capacities. This has ensured a

blend of skills and approaches, and mobilization of human and financial resources. This does not imply that implementation has been without significant problems. However, it has insured that basic oversights in implementation - arising from lack of appropriate expertise - did not undermine efforts to establish representative local governance structures. This is best appreciated when contrasted with the situation in Botswana where efforts to establish local governance institutions were tied to the institutions underpinning the authority of the traditional leaders, the *Kgotla*, by the implementing agency on the simplistic assumption that these were democratic structures. The *Kgotla* has its own challenges, and has enabled the domination of CBOs by local elites as well as reinforcing the marginalization of some community members from decision-making processes based on cultural values. Case study findings from OCT presented in Chapter 6 clearly indicate that the way mobilization activities were carried out did not facilitate a community driven process but rather created opportunities for elite capture.

The aim of this discussion is not to review in any depth the details of the implementation approach in Botswana or Zimbabwe but rather to identify those factors that have implications for the policy process. The intention of using this example is to illustrate the problems and distortions of the implementation process that arise when the main implementing agency is under resourced, lacks political influence, is inappropriately skilled and is uncommitted. The collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach that characterized implementation processes in Zimbabwe and was one of its primary strengths was absent in Botswana, which proved to be a critical weakness.

A further contrast between Botswana and Zimbabwe - and one that is of greatest relevance to this research given its impact upon CBNRM governance reform outcomes - is the role of local government in the two countries. In Zimbabwe, despite initial efforts to ensure devolved governance structures, pragmatic compromises led to CAMPFIRE becoming decentralized to RDCs. RDCs are the legally appointed 'Appropriate Authority' over wildlife and play a central role in implementing CAMPFIRE at all levels. In Botswana, the implementation approach marginalised DCs, which have no

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legal authority over wildlife and therefore have limited involvement in CBNRM. Instead, authority was invested in CBOs until the recent reversals that saw authority recentralized to DWNP. The role of the DC in Botswana is confined to one of several technical advisory agencies whose advice can, and frequently is, legally ignored. This approach adhered to simplistic blueprint notions of devolution versus decentralisation, and was informed largely by the donor's perception of shortcomings in the decentralisation approach adopted by CAMPFIRE.

While Zimbabwe's RDCs are notoriously associated with 'capturing' CAMPFIRE benefits, the findings in Chapters 7 and 8 indicate that RDCs have played a critical role in maintaining political support for CAMPFIRE at the national level and providing a system of checks and balances, which have largely prevented the capture of CAMPFIRE processes by local elites. In contrast, the research findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6 indicate that the marginalization of DCs in Botswana led to a void in implementation capacity, an absence of local checks and balances to prevent elite capture, and an absence of political allies to add weight to those voices urging against recentralisation. Perhaps most interestingly the local level case studies, presented in Chapters 6 and 8, indicate that in both countries, communities themselves see the importance and value of the role of local government. In the case of OCT in Botswana, the community strategy to address current problems of elite capture of benefits has been to actively seek and formalize the inclusion of local government in CBNRM strategies. Whilst in Mahenye in Zimbabwe, the community held the RDC accountable and demanded that it represent the interests of the majority in the face of co-option of benefits by the traditional leadership.

9.2.4 The Role of Local Government

As the discussion in Chapter 5 illustrates, Botswana has a long history of decentralization. Whilst local government remains responsible and accountable to central government, its local political processes are relatively well developed and democratic. There is consensus among observers that local government has an excellent record in delivering key services, and it is well funded by central government. DCs have ultimate

responsibility for 'delivering' rural development - with proven skills and capacity to do so and a track record which demonstrates their competence in this regard. Regardless of this admirable track record, they remain largely peripheral to the implementation process, despite the significant capacity constraints of the primary implementing agency, the DWNP. The marginalization of DCs in the implementation process has made them a vocal critic of CBNRM, which they have branded as a 'failure'. The OCT case study suggests that such an approach fails to cultivate incentives and a vibrant local political context that could ensure positive CBNRM outcomes.

In contrast, Zimbabwe's RDCs play a central role in CAMPFIRE at both local and national levels. Each RDC has its own CAMPFIRE management unit which – originally in collaboration with supporting NGOs and DWNPLM but since the early 2000's independently – is primarily responsible for CAMPFIRE management activities locally, including the provision of institutional strengthening and capacity-building services. RDCs gain significant income from CAMPFIRE activities; from 1989 to 2002 CAMPFIRE generated over $20 million in direct income from wildlife, with about 50% of this being retained by RDCs (Frost and Bond, 2008) and as a result they remain influential supporters of CAMPFIRE. The RDCs collectively represent a strong and active political constituency for CAMPFIRE, and the CAMPFIRE Association represents them at the national level. Moreover, based on field evidence from Mahenye (see Chapter 8) as well as documented research from Masoka (Taylor and Murphree, 2007), clearly, RDCs play a crucial role in ensuring that local elites do not monopolise and capture the process. The Chipinge RDC provides a system of checks and balance against the abuse of finances by powerful local elites, working in collaboration with unscrupulous private sector interests and national politicians.

9.3 Key Findings
9.3.1 Political Engagement
The preceding discussion, based on the research findings presented in Chapters 5-8, demonstrate that CBNRM is essentially a contested political process. However, they also

illustrate that the failure of CBNRM implementers and advocates to engage with the wider political processes affecting natural resource management and governance stem from the nature of CBNRM origin's and the framing assumptions upon which it is based. This failure to engage with or understand the broader political environment has been in large part responsible for the failure of governance reforms leading to expanded policy space and greater participation. Achieving appropriate natural resource governance reforms requires not only a good policy design but also the power to put the policy into practice (Hyden, 2008, Chabal, 2009). However, the avoidance of political engagement has compromised the abilities of CBNRM practitioners and implementers to develop appropriate governance reforms.

The actor-networks and epistemic communities, which advanced CBNRM in the 1980s and 1990s, influenced CBNRM practice and implementation, and they largely came from within the 'conservation and environment' community. Within such circles, it was a generally accepted 'adage' that 'conservation and politics don't mix,' and this led to claims that the environment was somehow above politics and needed to be insulated from it (Duffy, 2000, Manor, 2005, Buscher and Whande, 2007, Anderson and Grove, 1987). Hence, environmental policies were presented as non-political 'scientific' prescriptions, and social science incorporated to the extent that it promoted conservation objectives.

Despite these shortcomings in the conceptual framework, a certain degree of political pragmatism was evident in Zimbabwe and CAMPFIRE implementation was characterized by some political astuteness. The result was that despite its initial conceptual adherence to devolution, a pragmatic compromise was reached in recognition of the political opposition to devolution. The outcome was decentralisation to RDCs. Paradoxically, this has led to the unintended outcome of a policy process which has reconnected CBNRM to mainstream political institutions and processes. CAMPFIRE appears to be evolving from a largely technical process to a political one. This evolution and its accompanying shifts in policy entrepreneurs and actor networks are enabling new

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perspectives to enter the policy debate and challenge some of the framing assumptions and premises of the conventional policy framework. New policy spaces are being created through the increased interaction and negotiations between RDCs and their constituencies. The decentralised nature of CAMPFIRE has enabled it to achieve political traction. This is an *unintended* outcome of the policy process, but it has ensured that CAMPFIRE has reconnected to mainstream political institutions and processes despite its attempted disavowal of politics.

In Botswana, the outcome of the policy process has been markedly different. As Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate, because of the implementation strategies, actor-networks and discourse adopted, CBNRM has remained external to macro political processes thus largely irrelevant to broader national debates and political constituencies. This irrelevancy has ensured that an alternative conservation paradigm, based on protectionism and exclusion, has been able to gain ascendancy within the policy process. Adoption of a protectionist approach ensures an extension and reinforcement of existing authority and control and a contraction of networks of those involved in policy making. The outcome has been a reversal of the devolutionary approach and a recentralization of control, leading to a reduction in policy space enabling greater participation in natural resource management.

Differences in the political economy context, programme origins and the wider political dynamics in the two countries explain the different outcomes. Hence, the links between the policy process and outcomes are extremely complex.

9.3.2 Devolution

A core argument of this thesis is that the uncritical and simplistic focus on devolution as the appropriate governance arrangement for CBNRM by proponents, analysts and implementers over the years has been a further factor which has obscured the political dimensions of CBNRM. Adherence to devolution has persisted in spite of evidence

within the broader development/democratisation literature (Johnson, 2001, Crook and Manor, 1998, Agrawal, 2001, Manor, 2005) that it may not always empower poor communities, and in some cases it may actually undermine them.

The analysis of the CBNRM policy process in Botswana and Zimbabwe indicates that it is the nature of the policy process itself that is a significant causal factor of this problem. The assessment of actor-networks and discourses prevalent within CBNRM policy processes reveals that they have been driven in part by pragmatic national political agendas and economic realities – racially equitable redistribution and participation in the benefits of natural resource management – but only in so far as these coincided with the interests of political economic elites. It is also clear that they have been influenced by changing international perspectives, discourses and paradigms of conservation and development. Chapter 4 explored how the notion of devolution became an entrenched component - an 'iconic fact' (Keeley and Scoones, 2003) - of the discourse adopted by the CBNRM actor-network, framing the way in which problems were thought about and different issues linked in an often programmatic, cause and effect manner. The international influence has manifested itself perhaps most obviously through the interventions of international donors and NGOs, which have been influential in the development of CBNRM policy and programme implementation. The result was that the principles and concepts upon which CBNRM was premised and, which originated and were developed largely within the wildlife sector, were disbursed throughout a range of countries at many different levels (Steiner and Rihoy, 1995). One such framing principle was that of devolution, an approach promoted by donors as compatible with their neo-liberal agenda.

This policy narrative of devolution has been firmly adhered to for the last fifteen years. This has allowed complex issues and processes to be reduced and interpreted in simplistic ways, with failures related to CBNRM simply dismissed as having as their root cause 'aborted devolution'. This response has stifled further rigorous analysis. As the evidence from Botswana presented in Chapters 6 and 7 illustrates, this has led to a

prescribed approach to implementation that relies upon the imposition of a set of solutions, revolving around devolution, which may not be appropriate to the national and local context. The effect has been to reduce the ability of the supposed beneficiaries, rural communities, to engage in the policy process.
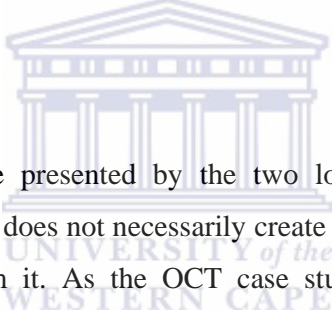
The emphasis on devolution has served to polarize the issue of governance. The potential positive interactions between first and second tier levels of governance - the 'local arena' in which the 'ongoing process of struggle and contest' identified by Gaventa (2006) as necessary for democratic practices to emerge - have gone largely unexplored. The evidence from Zimbabwe suggests that in this particular context where a period of crisis and change is underway, political space may be more effectively created through decentralisation. The process of negotiation and dialogue that has been initiated in several districts between first (local governance) and second (local government) tier institutions represents an important component in the development of local democratic politics by ensuring greater accountability on behalf of local government to their constituents. This should be viewed as an important step in achieving incremental political coherence and a participative negotiated consensus, or 'democracy of the base' (Ake 2000:32). Decentralisation has allowed for greater participation of rural dwellers rather than relying primarily on CBNRM implementers, and improved their knowledge and practices in conservation. The greater participation of rural dwellers has widened the 'policy space' within which they can influence the outcomes and trajectory of CAMPFIRE at the local and national levels, thereby altering power relationships.

9.3.3 CBNRM and Customary Institutions

Chapter 2 discusses the contemporary governance implications of the historical roots of natural resource management. In the African context, natural resources with high economic value feature predominantly in the public domain, often serving as tools for patronage interests and thereby allowing governing elites to maintain their power. Contemporary political and power arrangements in African countries are then a complex blend of formal and informal institutions exercising power (Hyden, 2008; Nelson, in

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press). Governance processes must be analysed in relation to both formal and informal institutions and processes.

Policy approaches to traditional leadership over the last three decades have been somewhat ambiguous (UNECA, 2007). Immediately post independence attempts were made to contain traditional authorities, but this has been followed since the early 1990s with a wave of 'retraditionalisation' which has enlarged the formal role of chiefs in local governance and development (Kyed and Buur, 2006). This wave of retraditionalisation accompanied the wave of democratisation and liberalization policies of the 1990s and indeed was interpreted by many as a means to reinforce democratic processes through the provision of new democratic space that enabled the marginalised to access the state (UNECA, 2007).

Clearly, the empirical evidence presented by the two local level case studies that recognition of traditional leaders does not necessarily create public or political space, nor does it necessarily detract from it. As the OCT case study presented in Chapter 6 demonstrates, in the case of Botswana where the role of traditional authorities has historically been recognized by the state, the local chief has been actively working with democratically elected representatives at the DC to try to ensure greater public participation, transparency and accountability. Meanwhile the Mahenye case study presented in Chapter 8 illustrates that in Zimbabwe, where the policy framework introduced with the Traditional Leaders Act in 2001 ensured that the chief becomes an agent of the increasingly authoritarian state (Raftopoulos, 2004), the traditional authorities were actively working against the democratic interests of the majority.

Irrespective of the outcomes, traditional authorities play an important role in natural resource governance and policy makers need to take account of their presence in framing policies. The implication for natural resource governance reform is that traditional authorities should be recognized as important, and should not be seen as necessarily

positive or negative but rather their consequences should be scrutinized and investigated empirically.

9.3.4 Policy Space

Chapter 5 describes how adherence to a devolutionary approach to CBNRM imposed in Botswana by donors and implementers reduced opportunities for policy makers as it curtailed their ability to think and gather information on alternative approaches. One casualty of this approach is that the potentially critical links with the politics of democratisation have gone largely unrealized and important opportunities for improved natural resource management and democratisation left unexploited. However, perhaps even more significantly, the focus on devolution has also failed to secure greater space for rural communities in the policy making process, despite rhetoric to the contrary.

The CAMPFIRE initiatives in Zimbabwe led to the development of a diverse network of stakeholders in support of CBNRM. To what degree were rural communities participating in CAMPFIRE involved in the policy making process? Chapter 4 explores how the discourse and actor-network with which CBNRM became so intimately intertwined internationally served to marginalize more than just expertise and insights from other disciplines. In Chapters 5-9, I traced groups that have been influential and others marginalised from the policy making process in Botswana and Zimbabwe. Clearly, in both countries, policy making was initially the preserve of a few conservation experts and bureaucrats who facilitated policy development ostensibly to enable greater participation in natural resource management with the objective of strengthening conservation policy. Today, the situation in Zimbabwe seems to be evolving towards a more inclusive policy making and participative process whilst that in Botswana appears to be contracting the policy space.

While the CBNRM policy process has not relied exclusively upon a purely scientific rationale, it is clear that scientific rationale has played a role in enabling the state to

retain authority over natural resources when convenient. The 'sustainable use' discourse predominant in southern Africa can be characterized as a 'language game run by the professional classes' (Lyotard, 1979:25) which has in some instances excluded the knowledge and participation of others from involvement in the policy process and network. CBNRM policy making in both Botswana and Zimbabwe has been dominated by professional ecologists, environmentalists and economists which ensures that policy making remains far removed from local realities. While community participation in some aspects is encouraged - and notably at international fora where community representatives are called upon to support state and NGO positions regarding sustainable use and trade - scientists and technical experts continue to determine the parameters of this participation at a national level and in wildlife management.

For example, the suitability for inclusion of a village in a CBNRM programme is determined at the top of the administrative hierarchy in the respective government department, thus denying communities the right to choose whether to engage or not. Once involved, community members may engage in some proscribed elements of decision-making such as quota setting while the technical aspects of wildlife management come as predetermined technology packages, developed and approved by scientists and technocrats. The key decisions concerning wildlife management and technical operations are effectively made by central government departments and safari companies. Thus CBNRM continues to construct communities as 'subjects' of development planning, not 'citizens' fully involved and engaged (Mamdani, 1996). This allows for only selective inclusion in the policy making process as only proscribed forms of participation are allowed.

9.4 Conclusion

Situating CBNRM within its international, national and local context makes it clear that the policy process with which it is associated is extremely broad with a wide range of intervening variables influencing outcomes. Appreciating the nature and potential impact of this context requires an understanding of the nature of the individual state and society.

The comparative analysis of the situations in Botswana and Zimbabwe offered here demonstrates that whilst the details and circumstances may vary between the countries, the determining factor common in deciding where power and authority over natural resources will lie is political and relates to the incentives and interest's political elites possess for maintaining or expanding control over natural resources. It is then political processes which ultimately determine the shape of natural resource management governance arrangements and institutions.

Affecting the attitude and perspective of policy makers will be the scientific underpinnings, the nature of the actor network and the discourse and narrative surrounding CBNRM. Enabling communities to engage with and negotiate these political processes themselves is a crucial ingredient in determining outcomes and needs to be better understood. The evidence presented in this thesis suggests that the current simplistic belief that 'devolution' represents good governance arrangements for CBNRM, and 'decentralisation' bad, needs to be revisited with the focus on which approach will better facilitate community engagement with political processes.

New social and political relations have been created around particular policy positions, new relations of knowledge, power, meaning and practice have emerged. My research has followed how this process worked itself out in Botswana and Zimbabwe and whether the result has enabled or excluded the involvement of rural communities. In Botswana, the initial policy of devolution was contested from a number of points between the micro and macro levels, resulting in its being substantially revised. The same process, although manifesting itself very differently, is unfolding in Zimbabwe. This illustrates the complexity and dynamism of the policy process, and it is this, which can gradually result in substantial challenges or shifts in knowledge and practice that enable alternative practices to occur. The emergence of these alternative practices creates critical 'policy space' that facilitate alternative perspectives to challenge existing power relationships. The outcomes of these shifts in each country are being determined by the broader macro political economic characteristics.

The local level case studies in both countries confirm that communities possess considerable 'agency' and are prepared to exercise this in attempts - through their resistance to appropriation of their resources by local or external elites - to advance their own interests in spite of various structural difficulties. The influence of community agency tends to be overlooked (Turner, 2004, Chhatre, 2007). In Botswana CBNRM was implemented as though the participating communities existed in 'splendid isolation', not impacted by or impacting upon factors external to them. Such an 'isolationist' approach failed to cultivate incentives and a vibrant local and national political context, which could ensure positive CBNRM outcomes. In Zimbabwe, the evidence suggests that CAMPFIRE has created mechanisms and provided incentives because of its decentralized nature that enable local government constituents to demand greater representation. CAMPFIRE can then be viewed as having provided a mechanism to tackle the practical governance arrangements between the first and second tier institutions that can progressively break down existing social and political barriers.
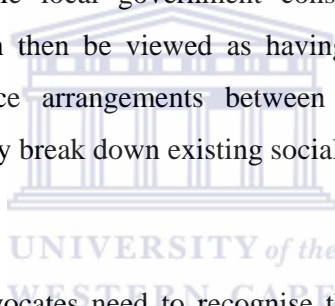
CBNRM implementers and advocates need to recognise the complexities involved in policy making and facilitate communities to engage with these processes themselves. A clear starting point for such interactions under certain circumstances can be local level regimes negotiating with local governments. The evidence presented here and elsewhere (Peluso, 1992, Larson and Ribot, 2005, Neumann, 1998) indicates that such interactions and negotiations can empower communities. However, whether this will always hold true given the variance in national contexts, is an issue I return to in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 10
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Introduction

This thesis has examined what factors affect the choices of policy makers when determining CBNRM policy and how this affects outcomes, particularly in relation to governance and institutional reforms. My approach has been to examine CBNRM within the broad context of the political economy, its discursive framework and actor networks, and identify those factors that either promoted or constrained progress in achieving reforms. This has enabled an analysis of the complex linkages between CBNRM, power, politics and democratisation. A core element of the research has been to identify the framing assumptions on which CBNRM has been based and analyse the effect of these on outcomes; a second has been to assess whether CBNRM can strengthen democratisation processes within the region and if so how this is best facilitated.
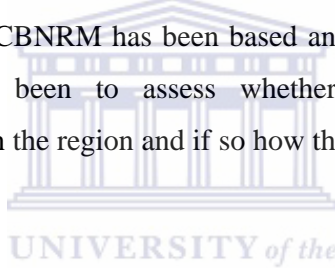
The problem statement presented in Chapter 1 notes that there has been a general failure within CBNRM to achieve the desired outcome of transferring powers from central to local institutions (devolution or decentralization) both within southern Africa and globally. This presents a fundamental impediment as theoretically it is based upon an 'if-then' proposition, with the 'if' being the downward transferral of powers through devolution or decentralisation (Larson and Ribot, 2005). As the first part of the proposition, the 'if', is going unachieved then it follows that there will also be a failure to meet the 'then', as is indeed happening. Understanding the failure to reach 'if' was then the core problem that I hoped to explain in this research. The overall aim is to contribute to the ongoing debate on the most appropriate institutional forms and governance arrangements to achieve sustainable natural resource management and improved livelihoods in southern Africa.

In this chapter I discuss the implications of the findings of this study for the future of CBNRM initiatives and democratisation in southern Africa and present policy and research recommendations.

10.2 Relevance and Implications of the Study
10.2.1 Recognising CBNRM as a Political Process

The empirical evidence and analysis presented demonstrate that failure to reach 'if' arises from a complex and interrelated number of reasons. The 'if' assumes that governance reforms enabling greater participation will be achieved. This is not the case. Many of the reasons for this failure have little to do with CBNRM *per se*. Most problems relate to failure on behalf of those involved in policymaking, implementation and advocacy to take cognizance of the broader political economy in which it is situated. This situation arises in part because of conceptual flaws in the framing assumptions of CBNRM.

In this study, I have identified a number of factors behind the failure of CBNRM governance reforms. Foremost among these are the following factors:

- contradictions with the priorities and incentives of local and national political elite;
- contradictions and competition within and between related policy sectors;
- national historical and social context, social norms and the degree of social stratification;
- the national economic context and priorities of the post-independence state;
- the national political context and prevailing ideology, in particular commitment to participation and empowerment;
- processes relating to local government reform;
- unresolved land issues, including tenurial arrangements;

- weak local implementation capacities and contradictions with the primary goals of the implementing agencies;

- the constraints imposed upon CBNRM conceptual development by the nature of the actor and policy networks by which it is dominated;

- NGO and donor commitment to 'blue-print' approaches; and

- isolation from contemporary discourses relating to governance and democratisation.

These factors lie largely outside the current conceptual model offered by a devolutionary approach to CBNRM. As Ribot and Larson (2005) and Murombedzi (2006) have observed, when such a situation occurs it implies that it is necessary to rethink this model by contextualizing it within the broader political economy.

In both Botswana and Zimbabwe, CBNRM outcomes have been determined primarily by its implications for political processes and political elites. CBNRM should then be viewed as a political process central to a range of political, social and economic issues at the national and local levels. However, the analysis of the policy process offered here illustrates how CBNRM has been artificially compartmentalized or 'black boxed' by both the actor networks with which it is engaged and the disciplinary structures of its policy discourse. Its genesis within the wildlife sector has served to prevent constructive engagement with many issues and processes that should be viewed as critical to its success. These factors constrained its ability to become an instrumental part of political change and confront or engage problems associated with democratic deficits or challenge the structure of rural economies. Engagement has been further constrained because there is little overlap, common language or common concepts between conservationists, development experts and political analysts.

CBNRM's failure to address the political economy within which it was situated resulted in CBNRM being an isolated intervention in rural areas, distant from any political

discourse or movement that could have propelled it and created avenues for participation in the policy making process for community representatives. The evidence presented here concurs with Fakir (2001) and Murombedzi (2006, inpress) in that, in some cases, CBNRM has actually undermined opportunities for increasing participation in political processes as it provided a useful guise for governments with weak democratic credentials to appear as if they were addressing issues of governance, land reform, and local economic development. In reality, reforms were merely rhetorically robust but largely irrelevant in practise. However, there is compelling evidence in Zimbabwe that suggests that this situation may now be evolving.

If CBNRM is to succeed in its goals of governance reform, there is a need to reach outside of the technocratic and donor driven, 'environment/conservation' processes and narratives, whilst not abandoning or disengaging with these entirely. Likewise, there is a need to move beyond the neo-liberal assumptions upon which CBNRM has been based. This requires situating CBNRM within a political economic discourse and developing politically strategic approaches, which recognize that power is a critical variable in policymaking. Constraints in undertaking a shift from a technical approach to developing politically strategic approaches should be recognized and accommodated. These include the lack of overlap in terms of actor-networks or policy entrepreneurs, limited common discourse or narrative and differing knowledge and science bases. An interdisciplinary approach will be required, which accommodates multiple objectives and has flexibility to enable it to accommodate tradeoffs.

CBNRM policy interventions, like any other development policy, occur within a complex vortex of political forces created by an array of often apparently external and unrelated processes. Recognising this allows for acknowledgement of the need for more constructive and pragmatic engagement with politics and political processes by implementers, analysts and advocates. This must include the creation and acceptance of practical spaces for critical political engagement by communities with the policy process at all levels. As the comparative analysis offered in Chapter 9 indicates, whilst the

current process rhetorically emphasises participation, the reality is that it has been dominated by a technocratic elite. Recognizing the pivotal agency brought to bear on the policy process by a broad array of actors at many different levels should not be allowed to obscure or negate the agency that communities themselves exercise in the process.

10.2.2 Weak Framing Assumptions

This thesis identifies three key framing assumptions that have led to CBNRM's inability to ensure greater participation in the policy making process and to engage with critical political processes. The first of these is a direct result of CBNRM's genesis within the wildlife sector in which the dominant perception was that conservation was somehow 'above politics' and needed to be kept separate from it. This 'depoliticisation' of conservation ensured that many of those firmly entrenched in the CBNRM networks maintained that political engagement and manoeuvring are outside the mandate of CBNRM or its implementing agencies. This perspective has prevented strategic political engagement to date.
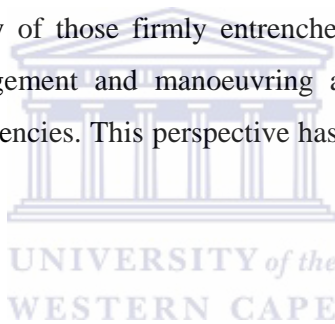
The second framing assumption relates to the belief that semi-autonomous institutions with private collective rights (devolved), contrary to the transfer of powers from central government to lower levels within government's political administrative hierarchy in public entities (decentralized), will most effectively deliver community participation in natural resource management. This longstanding devolutionary discourse fails to accommodate the realities of highly politicized and complex context within which CBNRM occurs. This has direct relations to a more generalized conceptual flaw characterizing efforts to promote democratic reforms in African states throughout the 1990's. The assumption is decentralisation reforms will occur because more sustainable and efficient governance regimes will result and further public interests (Hyden, 2008). This view also interprets reform as a largely technocratic process, operating in isolation from political interests and on the assumption that bureaucrats and politicians will carry out reforms that meet the public interest. This interpretation of the policy process as being simply one of a technological 'quick fix', misinterprets fundamental aspects of

governance processes and is clearly contradicted by evidence presented here and elsewhere (Manor, 2005, Larson and Ribot, 2005, Chhatre, 2007, Rihoy and Maguranyanga, 2007). Natural resource governance reform processes in both Botswana and Zimbabwe are being driven primarily by the political interests of the elite. This conforms to governance processes characterizing Africa in general, discussed in Chapter 2, which tend to be driven by the political and economic interests of the elite (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, Hyden, 2008).

The third framing assumption is that communities themselves lack agency. Turner (1999), Chhatre (2007) and evidence presented here in Chapter 4, indicates that the narrative which accompanies CBNRM is based upon the assumption that communities are powerless in the face of predatory states or external agents. This research has looked beyond the stated objectives of CBNRM policies, discourse and implementation approaches, to an investigation of what rural people are doing inside the institutions established by these policies. The actions of the people of Mahenye and OCT demonstrate that it is not the case that communities are powerless recipients of 'bad' policies but rather that they are exercising their agency and playing a clear role in determining CBNRM outcomes through their resistance to appropriation of their resources by local elites. They have been creative and innovative in demanding more appropriate forms of governance and in demanding greater accountability from local government. In both cases, one of the forms and strategies that this resistance has taken is to invoke the role of the state (local government) and demand it intercedes to produce equitable results, with varying degrees of success. Equally, there are examples from all over the world, which detail the manner of resistance of local communities to state efforts at resource appropriation (Peluso, 1992, Whande, 2009, Chhatre, 2007). The important lesson here is that the role of community agency is a key determining factor in shaping natural resources management outcomes, and it could be further strengthened.

The case study evidence from OCT in Botswana suggests that the emphasis on devolution failed to take account of political forces at local and national levels and

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ultimately served to undermine democratic outcomes by stifling opportunities for interaction and negotiation between local and state institutions. Conversely, the inadvertent adoption of a decentralized approach under the CAMPFIRE programme in Mahenye created opportunities and incentives for negotiations and relationships to develop between government and local institutions. In these cases, the decentralised approach offered by CAMPFIRE has proved more effective in strengthening community agency through the provision of policy space. But, as explained in detail below, this should not be interpreted to imply that decentralisation will always be the appropriate institutional form to adopt in every context. The lesson that it does provide is that far more attention has to be paid to get binding government/local government commitment if community agency and political space are to be sustained.

The neglect of local agency in decentralisation policies may be hindering creative solutions to local problems. In light of this, it becomes necessary to place greater emphasis on understanding the way the larger political context enables or disables the 'demands' or agency of communities to be affected. More effective efforts to promote natural resource governance reforms that ensure broad based participation in the policy process will be dependent upon the development of conceptual frameworks encompassing a more accurate description of how and why natural resource management reforms occur. This research is one contribution to this.

10.2.3 Expanding Policy Space and Strengthening Democracy

As discussed in Chapter 2, despite the rapid spread of 'democracy' within southern Africa during the 1990s, 'democratisation' to date has been characterized by incomplete and tenuous shifts towards more representative government. At best this has involved a partial movement from highly centralized political systems to systems with limited political checks and limited creation of democratic or policy spaces enabling greater participation in political and policy processes (Bauer and Taylor, 2005, provide a useful summary). Confirming this, Chapters 5 and 7 present evidence that whilst the institutional forms and procedures of democracy may be in place in Botswana and

Zimbabwe - although in the latter these have been enormously eroded over the last decade - empowerment, participation and policy space may actually be diminishing in both countries.

Given these imperfect operating conditions, if CBNRM is to achieve its stated goals in terms of governance reforms, strengthening democracy through the creation of space for greater participation in the policy process is a prerequisite to its success. CBNRM is a political process of negotiating changes in authority over resources from the centre to the local. Therefore, it is conceptually and operationally synonymous with the broader arena of struggles over rights, governance, and political authority. Natural resource management reforms must then be designed to strengthen emerging local democracy. This requires linking the local with the national, a basic requirement of a properly democratic system.
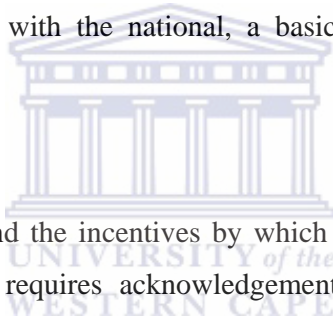
CBNRM provides the means and the incentives by which this can be done. However, ensuring that this is effective requires acknowledgement and understanding of the complexities facing CBNRM and of the political nature of interventions. It is in the immediate interests of the CBNRM networks in southern Africa to recognise the imperative to engage with processes of democratisation. Articulating and demonstrating that strengthening democratic processes is central to CBNRM must be recognized as a central aim and component. Even so, to achieve this requires the development of a more informed, nuanced and systematic conceptual framework, network and narrative for understanding natural resource governance and the issues that underpin changes in natural resource management institutions.

As the discussion in Chapter 2, highlighted strengthening democracy in the African context must encompass more than liberal democracy, embracing participatory democracy, democratic ideals, aspirations, and democratic politics. Gaventa (2006) sums up the situation:

*the issue is not replicating one version of democracy, as a standard set of institutions and practices, but to construct and deepen **democracies,** which may work differently in different places, and to find the most effective entry points for doing so, based on the local contexts* (Gaventa 2006:21, original emphasis).

A key question pursued in this thesis has been whether CBNRM is or has the potential to contribute to the deepening of democracy within southern Africa by addressing some of the 'democratic deficits' that characterize political processes in the region and if so under what conditions is this best achieved. An increased emphasis on participation by communities in natural resource management and decision-making theoretically provides important opportunities to strengthen democratic processes from the ground up. Evidence from Zimbabwe and Botswana suggest that it can be instrumental in constructing and supporting a political culture of rights and citizenship. Evidence from Zimbabwe suggests that it can enable people to seek out existing public spaces and strengthen these. Evidence from around the region suggests that it can create or strengthen ways in which civil society engages with the state. However, most significantly, there is ample evidence that it can create new policy spaces to allow for greater democratic engagement. However, this study provides empirical evidence that the entrenched notion that devolution is the way to enhance democratic practices requires greater scrutiny. The case evidence from Botswana indicates that in this particular context, the formation of devolved committees undermined the democratic processes and functions of local government. These findings therefore conform in part to those of others (Larson and Ribot, 2005, Ribot, 2005, Ribot and Larson, 2005, Ribot, 2007, Manor, 2005).

10.2.4 Devolution and/or Decentralisation: Alternative Institutional Forms and their Implications for Building Democracy from the Ground-Up

The preceding discussion has highlighted the central role of community agency and local government in the strengthening of democratic politics. Nevertheless, it remains clear

that accountability of local governments cannot be analysed independently from the accountability of higher scale government institutions. Woodhouse notes that generally, if political goals such as improving the position of the disadvantaged are not identified and pursued by the central state (Woodhouse, 2003), it is unlikely they will arise spontaneously at the 'local' level. Jones and Gaventa (2002) note that the capacity and willingness of the state to provide access, justice and legal redress based on a respect for human rights will determine the accountability of local government to its constituents. Likewise, Harbeson (2001) advises not to expect semi-autonomous, democratic local government to take shape while the overarching political and socioeconomic structure of an autocratic regime is in place. Ake (2000) sums up the key problem in such polities:

> *Unfortunately, those who have the power to effect the changes which democratisation requires have a strong interest in resisting these changes, and those who have an objective interest in the changes do not have the power resources to affect them. Power and desirable change are pulling in diametrically opposite direction* (Ake 2000:190).
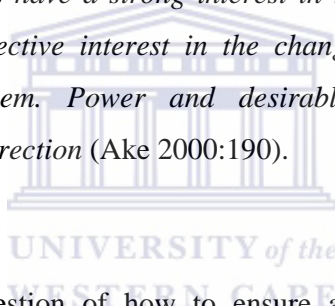
From this perspective, the question of how to ensure appropriate natural resource institutions are in place revolves around how to construct mechanisms and patterns of political accountability between grassroots and national levels of government that afford new discretion to the former. Thus in weak democratic polities like Zimbabwe, and increasingly Botswana, the agency of communities in demanding further rights from government will be insufficient to achieve greater accountability from government. It must be accompanied by creation of policy and democratic space to enable communities to participate in decision-making and politics.

The empirical evidence presented here concurs in part with the findings of Ribot (2008) and others when they note that people actively engage with democratic processes when decisions that are being made affect their day to day lives. Therefore, decentralizing natural resource decisions involves local governments in decision-making that has direct

relevance to their constituent's everyday livelihoods. This, in turn, gives people a good reason to engage their representative authorities. The political participation inherent in CBNRM may trigger other opportunities for political engagement. For example, debates about rights to resources in both Botswana and Zimbabwe led to direct appeals to and negotiations between constituents and local government, demonstrating an awakening of political consciousness in both cases. This in turn builds aspirations and expectations, leading to the questioning of authority and processes of negotiation, which empower communities and ultimately lead to demands for greater accountability. The result is an empowered local government with natural resource management responsibilities that can be responsive to local needs and aspirations.

When local government is accountable downwards, as well as upwards, it can provide a mechanism in the creation of democratic space for policymaking and political participation by their constituents in national policymaking processes. Ribot (2008) notes that the location of local government at the base of the hierarchy of government institutions allows people at this level to capitalize upon the power of local government in influencing higher levels of government. Local government is the lowest scale of democratic institutions for governance and in relatively close proximity to those communities affected by CBNRM policies. Thus Ribot (2008) concludes that natural resource governance institutions can strengthen processes of democratisation and achieve sustainability most effectively if a process of decentralisation is adhered to in all contexts.

Chattre notes that where local governments are endowed with sufficient autonomy and resources, communities and sub-groups within are more likely to channel their agency through them to influence the implementation of policy and the functioning of parallel institutions (Chhatre, 2007). Such a situation is clear in Botswana where local communities appealed to the relatively well-funded and representative DC to exercise its authority to represent their democratic interests. Despite the current political chaos and economic collapse in Zimbabwe, the same process is unfolding there. Traditionally,

RDCs have played a significant role in rural areas within CAMPFIRE, and it is based on the historical role that the community of Mahenye was turning to the RDC as the most effective means they had at their disposal to resolve local stalemates. This is an indicator that in those countries in the region which do have strong, effective local government, excluding them from CBNRM through a process of devolution may not serve the interests of local communities, local governments or democratic processes as a whole.

However, the analysis of the policy process in Botswana and Zimbabwe reveal the significance of an additional dimension that is not fully accommodated within the scholarship outlined above. Perhaps the most striking element of the analysis offered here is that context – political, historical, social and economic – is the ultimate determinant of outcomes. Both Botswana and Zimbabwe have relatively strong, democratic and well resourced local government structures and it does not necessarily follow that the same processes will play out in those countries where local government structures are unelected or weak, such as Zambia (Brian Child, personal communication). Harbeson (2001) argues that the important factor is not the degree of state intervention - i.e. more or less devolution or decentralisation - but the level of state accountability and that 'finding the right balance is key but will be variable **depending on the particular context of each country**' (Harbeson 2001:91; emphasis added).

The case evidence from both Botswana and Zimbabwe make it apparent that alliances and boundaries are formed in CBNRM, and when situations change these alliances and boundaries shift and reconfigure the landscape of governance and politics. There is a high level of complexity and a multiplicity of actors with competing objectives involved at different scales in natural resource management reforms. Given this shifting context, creating governance reforms that ensure greater participation and accountability must be viewed as a dynamic, evolving process, rather than a binary or limited number of institutional choice options based on central transfers of powers. CBNRM should then be viewed as a process of applied and incremental experiments in democracy; of value because it involves not a single 'holy grail' of full devolution or 'ideal democracy' but

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the interaction of tiers of governance over time in adaptive processes (Rihoy et al., 2007).

How do we build and sustain democratic CBNRM processes in undemocratic political systems? What needs to be done to build capacity for democracy and governance at the local level? There is a need to articulate the political intentions of CBNRM and its democratising objectives. This will require meaningful participation of rural people in policy formulation and implementation. To achieve this, it is necessary to focus on understanding and developing viable local governance regimes. This focus in CBNRM would benefit from looking beyond the standard institutional prescriptions of devolution or decentralisation to recognize that issues, context and circumstances determine the structure. Anstey (2008) notes that the binary choices that the decentralisation scholarship offers, with majority weighting given to the issue of institutional choice between public and private entities, places too much emphasis on structure and external design, neglecting both context and community agency. Of greater value would be a focus on expanding community agency and political spaces and developing the local governance regimes to accommodate the specific national historical, social legitimacy and political context.

My research and analysis of the policy processes and outcomes of CBNRM in Zimbabwe and Botswana moves the debate on CBNRM policy forward in two ways. Firstly, it argues that the binary choices of decentralisation/devolution have tended to obscure the importance of community agency and local context; and secondly, it emphasizes that there is also a need in southern Africa to re-think the CBNRM emphasis on the creation of autonomous entities as the policy goal in institutional choices – or devolution as the 'holy grail'. Clearly, evidence from the two countries indicates the significant role that local government plays in the political sustainability of CBNRM and in tackling the prevalent challenges of elite capture by central entities or others. The contrasting examples of Botswana and Zimbabwe illustrate that where such local government is not closely engaged there is a high risk of the devolution to semi-autonomous collective

entities failing; and in particular when donor, NGO, academic and other facilitating agencies are temporary or politically marginal. Therefore, this study argues that any policy prescription in CBNRM should recognise the significant and long term importance of local government roles in CBNRM and that strategic and adaptive compromises to the academic or policy ideals of reified 'devolution' or 'decentralisation' will be required not only in CBNRM but also in the closely related policy challenges of local resource management in the context of climate change. As succinctly stated by Murphree (personal communication, 2009):

> *transformation comes by circumstance, guile and coercion. It is not going to come from rational suasion, our long-held academic myth.*

10.2.5 Expanding Imperative

This thesis has illustrated how CBNRM developed in the last three decades from a relatively untested conceptual approach to natural resource management to the status of conventional wisdom in environmental and development discourse. The last decade has witnessed a growing backlash in response and communal approaches are now faced with criticism in what Roe (1991) describes as the narrative-counter-narrative mode. Donors are also choosing alternative approaches having grown frustrated with slow progress (Adams and Hulme, 2001). This response fails to recognize that CBNRM has been grappling with a broad range of issues fundamental to the economic, social and democratic development of African states such as the distribution of power and authority over natural resources, and local democratic governance, socio-economic development and collective tenures systems for land and natural resources. The experience and lessons learnt through CBNRM approaches in the governance of natural resources are then of significance to the future economic and political development of African states, as well as to biodiversity conservation.

The imperative to address the governance challenges facing natural resource management in Africa is expanding. The environment in the 21st century has assumed an

immense transformative influence over global economies. Two issues – climate change and ecosystem degradation – have occupied public and scientific discourse since 2007 and have cast doubt over the assumed independence of economic activity from nature. This has introduced a new range of global stakeholders and interest groups into issues relating to environmental management at international and national levels, beyond even the complex situation described here (Gomera and Rihoy, in press). The interests of some of these may further contradict and undermine those of local people.

Responses to new environmental threats have the potential of undermining community rights and access to resources further. For example, there is a very real danger that policy responses to climate change will trigger a huge new 'land grab' throughout the continent (Rights and Resources, 2008). Many of the policies and responses that are currently being developed will give significant new value to land and natural resources. This new value will be escalated by increasing global demand for food, fiber and bio-energy, which will push up land values further. As the case studies from Botswana and Zimbabwe illustrate, governments and the private sector already have multiple incentives to take advantage of the weak governance structures, insecure property rights and loose regulatory frameworks in rural areas to lay claim to lands and resources on which local people depend. These incentives will significantly grow over the next few decades. The outcome may be that communities will lose access to their only real capital asset – land - pushing millions of people further into poverty and conflict. Thus the need for development of new mechanisms to ensure that policy spaces are created to enable the voices and perspectives of local people to be addressed assumes new imperative. The development of appropriate governance regimes and the provision of stronger rights will be foremost among mechanisms to achieve this.

This amplifies the imperative, already articulated above, that future CBNRM implementation, research and advocacy should be mainstreamed into the global political economy discourse. Traditional wildlife focused CBNRM is unable to accommodate these shifting externalities. This belies the fact that the underlying issues that CBNRM

addresses - resource tenure and governance, democracy, decentralisation and devolution, crisis and change – are all central to climate change and other emerging global priorities. The expanding range of externalities represent a threat to greater local participation but also potentially serve as a catalyst for it if CBNRM implementers and advocates develop the ability to engage a constituency that extends beyond that involved in environmental issues.

10.3 Methodological Observations

This thesis has attempted to link within one explanatory framework two distinct research domains, each with its own conceptual frameworks and literature, in order to explore and unravel how the policy process has determined governance outcomes within CBNRM. This has revealed that it is the nature of the CBNRM policy process – its origin, networks and discourse – that hindered policy makers from engaging with wider political processes thus compromising its ability to deliver appropriate governance reforms.

The adoption of the policy process analytical framework - with its focus on structured political interests, actor networks and discourse analysis - enabled me to systematically construct and develop an understanding of those factors that have been key in determining CBNRM policy processes and outcomes in the two countries and internationally. This approach revealed that in both countries CBNRM outcomes reflect social and political complexities in decision-making dominated by, often interlinked, political and economic interests. In reality, two of these analytical tools, actor-networks and discourse analysis, are intimately and intricately interwoven, overlapping and mutually reinforcing, and it is not always possible to draw clear distinctions between the findings of the different elements. It is also clear that in the context of the Botswana and Zimbabwe, it was the third element, that of structured political interests, that was paramount in defining outcomes. In this context, it became more relevant to evaluate how discourse and narrative affected political interests, rather than to give each 'lens' equal 'weight' in affecting outcomes as envisaged by Keeley and Scoones (2003). Nevertheless, this approach has proven to be an effective tool for unravelling, revealing

and understanding the myriad and iterative social, economic and political processes across all scales that affect CBNRM outcomes.

This melding together of the two analytical frameworks has clearly revealed conceptual shortcomings in the framing assumptions and theory of CBNRM as well as the origins of these shortcomings. These origins, within the field of wildlife management, served to largely obscure and ignore the political dimensions of natural resource management, thus hindering effective strategic manoeuvring (strategizing and manoeuvring) around political and power relations. The contested political nature of CBNRM was further obscured by weaknesses in Common Property Resource Management theory, which also fails to accommodate the political dimensions of natural resource governance.

10.4 Policy Recommendations

This study concludes with six policy recommendations and recommendations for further research. The empirical evidence provided by this study clearly indicates that policy makers and implementers need to recognize the synergy between CBNRM and democratisation as mutually reinforcing processes as only then can this be strategically capitalized upon. To enable this CBNRM must be recognized as a political process and strategies developed to ensure that other political processes are engaged with. This will require greater attention be paid to the practical and strategic compromises required to apply increasingly reified policy prescriptions around devolution and recognition of the significance of local government in activating and sustaining transformations in power transfers to communities.

To ensure greater political engagement CBNRM approaches need to abandon their technical or 'managerial' (Murombedzi, 2006) approaches to embrace those which are driven by community agency. To facilitate this, the current 'project' driven approach needs to shift to one that emphasizes the creation of policy space as the means to

promote greater participation and demand. This would facilitate the development of a politically active rural constituency empowered to engage with and strategically manoeuvre around political processes.

There is a need to recognize the inadequacy of current narratives and conceptual flaws in the way that processes of institutional reform are framed and understood. In concurrence with Chhatre (2007) and Anstey (2008) the findings of this thesis imply that an exclusive focus on correct institutional forms, as embodied by the devolution versus decentralisation discourse within CBNRM, places too great an emphasis on structure and external design. Greater emphasis should instead be placed on the identification of factors which promote community agency in any given context. In recognition of the centrality of community agency, external agents should focus upon playing a facilitatory role in strengthening this agency by providing information, opportunities for experiential learning and privileged access and links with policy processes to allow for the strengthening of enabling conditions. Customary and socially embedded institutions may play an important role in enabling, or otherwise, communities to exercise agency and policy makers need to take account of their presence in framing policies. The implication for natural resource governance reform is that recognition of customary authorities is important but should not be seen as necessarily positive or negative but that the consequences should be investigated empirically with critical scrutiny. Policy frameworks with guidelines for action towards building adaptive capacity and natural resource sustainability are required. Such policy frameworks would build adaptive processes and flexible multi-level governance that can learn, generate knowledge and cope with change.

10.5 Research Recommendations

This research has illustrated that improving understanding of how and why key natural resource governance reforms occur, or do not occur, is a priority area for improving knowledge of key natural resource management issues. Research of a similar nature is

required at all scales to uncover the threads, complexities and implications of any particular context to ensure greater understanding. Further research is required into the role that different governance arrangements can play in catalyzing negotiation and interactions between communities, local government and the state.

Reinforcing Harbeson's (2001) concern, further research, both theoretical and strategic, is required into the relationship between local level democratic participation and national level processes of political reform. This research should elaborate mechanisms to enable the local to influence national political reform processes. Greater emphasis should be placed on understanding the way the larger political context enables or disables the 'demands' or agency of communities to be affected.

Greater research attention needs to be paid to the local and national contexts in which CBNRM policies take shape. What layers of complexity does the historical, social and political context introduce and what implications do these have for future policy developments? Of particular interest in this regard may be Namibia and Zimbabwe. Research into the policy process and outcomes of the CBNRM initiatives in Namibia to reveal why the devolution approach adopted there has apparently delivered positive outcomes (Jones, in press) in apparent contradiction of Ribot and others decentralisation arguments would shed further light on the impact of the policy context for governance processes. Likewise, the implications of the current situation in Zimbabwe - arising from a period of crisis and change resulting in a 'failed state' and the accompanying demise of authority of state institutions and resultant state sanctioned revitalization of traditional authorities – in terms of its impact for democratisation through local governments requires further research.

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