

**Framing Biodiversity Conservation Discourses in South Africa:
Emerging Realities and Conflicting Agendas within the Great
Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area**



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Abstract

Framing Biodiversity Conservation Discourses in South Africa: Emerging Realities and Conflicting Agendas within the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area

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This dissertation explores local people's framing of externally driven biodiversity conservation approaches in the context of transfrontier conservation initiatives. It uses data from the Madimbo corridor, a specific locality within the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, situated to the northeast of South Africa along the South Africa-Zimbabwe boundary. It shows that livelihoods, historical experiences with external interventions and exclusion from policy-making processes and programme implementation influence local strategies for engaging with external interventions. Thus, an analysis of framing of external interventions at a local level should establish the following: i) the role of natural resources in sustaining local livelihoods; ii) local historical experiences with an external intervention; iii) the nature of multi-level actor interactions from local resource dependent people, to national, regional and global actors involved in or affected by an intervention.

The study uses a detailed case study of Bennde Mutale village to trace local people's ideas, ways of speaking and actions in response to the implementation of a large-scale transfrontier conservation initiative. The study finds that local livelihoods play a central role in local responses to the changes that transfrontier conservation bring upon people's lives. Many see further exclusion, while some also see and hope for a restoration of the socio-cultural border region. The globally significant biodiversity - to be conserved for 'future generations' - at the same time constitutes the natural resources that sustain local people's livelihoods. Further, local livelihoods are more diverse than is commonly acknowledged in literature advocating for transfrontier conservation. This lack of acknowledgement of local diversification contributes to the main observation made in this study: that current processes of transfrontier conservation end up replicating and re-inventing the multiple forms of exclusion that have characterised state conservation practices for over a century. While transfrontier conservation enables the freer movement of wildlife, it in fact further constrains the movements of people whose mobility within less closely controlled border regions remains centrally important to survival. At the same time, state actors come into the area with contradicting and conflicting demands ranging from the beneficial advocacy role for land rights to the enforcement of conservation through fences and game rangers, experienced as a direct infringement on livelihood possibilities.

The study concludes that there is a need to rethink transfrontier conservation interventions. The diversity of local livelihood approaches needs to be considered more centrally and clearer understanding needs to be developed of how the promises of opportunities, betterment of lives and increased human mobility actually unfold in practice. In order to succeed and deliver on site - not only to high-class tourists seeking to view unique biodiversity but to local people - transfrontier conservation efforts need to engage multiple actors directly from the ground up and throughout the process of policy-making, programme conceptualisation and implementation.

Declaration

I declare that Framing Biodiversity Conservation Discourses in South Africa: Emerging Realities and Conflicting Agendas within the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area 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.

Webster Whande

Date:

Signed:



Acknowledgements

Like every other journey in life, writing this dissertation has been full of stumbles, doubts and entangled pathways where its all too easy to get lost. Despite the hardships of embarking on this journey, I have been fortunate to have family, friends and colleagues who have guided me when I was in doubt, provided maps of alternative routes when I was lost and stretched a hand and words of advice when I stumbled.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

African National Congress	ANC
Animal Health for Environment and Development in the GLTFCA	AHEAD-GLTFCA
Bovine Tuberculosis	BTB
Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources	CAMPFIRE
Communal Property Association	CPA
Convention on Biological Diversity	CBD
Community Based Natural Resources Management	CBNRM
Contractual National Park	CNP
Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism	DEAT
Foot and Mouth Disease	FMD
Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area	GLTFCA
Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park	GLTP
Joint Management Board	JMB
Kruger National Park	KNP
Limpopo National Park	LNP
Limpopo Regional Land Claims Commission	LRLCC
Organisation of African Unity	OAU
Peace Parks Foundation	PPF
Permission to Occupy	PTO
Protected Area	PA
Reconstruction and Development Programme	RDP
South Africa Defence Force	SADF
Southern Africa Development Community	SADC
South Africa National Defence Force	SANDF
South Africa National Parks	SANPARKS
South African Police Service	SAPS
Spatial Development Initiatives	SDI
The Employment Bureau for Africa	TEBA



Transboundary Protected Areas Research Initiative	TBPARI
Transfrontier Conservation Areas	TFCAs
Transboundary Natural Resources Management	TBNRM
Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa	WESSA
World Commission on Environment and Development	WCED



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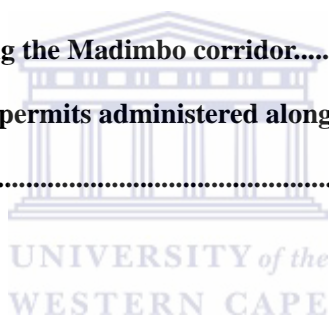
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Setting the Scene: Livelihoods, political and social characterisation of Bennde Mutale village

Grants payments day

On pension and grants payment day, Bennde Mutale becomes a hive of activity. In fact, along the 45km stretch of villages from Sigonde, Gumbu to Masisi, Dovho to Bennde Mutale eastwards along the Madimbo corridor, life appears to stand still. Standing still to accommodate the multitude of elderly people coming out, the multitude of single mothers, disabled and the terminally ill – they all congregate in one place. At Masisi, the development node for the entire area under Chiefs Mutele and Tshikundamalema within ward 9 of Mutale Municipality, a side road is closed off to accommodate the people drawn by the grants payment. In Bennde Mutale the netball field in the middle of a valley, which is usually ‘terrorised’ by young secondary school girls and the similar-aged boys they attract, radiates with colour as people queue to receive their grants and traders chatter loudly trying to outwit the others.

Commercial farmers come out of their enclaves, trailers in tow with dozens of cackling chickens, eggs and some vegetables. Funeral parlours, like vultures waiting for the crumbs of some unfortunate animal, wait on the edges of the field. Patiently, they display their wares, so sure that, at some point or another; everyone will be in need of their services. Of all the traders and business people present on this day, they are the most silent yet very prominent. Vegetable stalls, next to trucks with chicken nests, spring up close to the pension pay point. Colourfully dressed women regale in excitement as toddlers tumble and tussle close to the cooler boxes with drinking yoghurt, discreetly encouraging the kids to persuade their parents to buy the sweet stuff.

It is here that a sense of hope is displayed, underneath all the uncertainties brought by the fact that the village is, in the words of one elderly Alphios Gakato Mashavha, both the beginning and the end of South Africa, and of life itself. Here, people are indeed on the margins, the periphery or boundary of South Africa, of political and economic processes and tellingly, the village is the northernmost in South Africa except for the Beitbridge border post to the west. So it is indeed the beginning and end of South Africa, tucked away in a corner where, by the look of things, life in the rest of the country is passing it by.

Local stories are intricately linked to the place of land and natural resources in sustaining local livelihoods. The stories also animate changes that have visited upon local people through successive governments, and their respective impacts on local livelihoods. External interventions came with different attempts at regulating human movement and controlling human-environment relations, and they have all met with local resistance. For instance, on grants payments day local traders can sell anything from impala, bushbuck or duiker meat illegally obtained from the nearby Makhuya Park, to beef and mutton apparently smuggled from Zimbabwe. The availability of this meat indicates the critical role of the area in sustaining livelihoods, the high levels of poverty that push people across electric fences and risk jail terms, and the disputes over where protected areas’ boundaries should lie.

On grants payment day, the illegally obtained game meat highlights the extent of the local misgivings on the presence of the parks. More broadly, it represents how the presence of the state and its accompanying control mechanisms on local residents is defied. Slowly deploying different ideas of the relation between humans and their environment and using force, the state appears to be in full control using fences to separate people from

protected environments. Yet meat from Zimbabwe finds its way here on grants payments day, a constant reminder of local defiance against controls. The marking of firm boundaries and the use of coercive means to enforce them cannot stop the continued border crossings and illegal import of meat and other goods. Looking at the movements of people here, those currently planning Transfrontier Conservation Areas should try to understand that it is more than the known routes of animal migrations that matter. They need to ask: how can we make a meaningful contribution to local livelihoods? 'Regional integration' should aim to serve and enhance already existing relations.

The local shop owner travels around the village, dropping off 80kg bags of mealie meal to last a family for a whole month. A few households, headed by pensioners, use the mealie meal to make traditional beer called *mahafhe*. The sale of this beer provides a family month long supplies of basic necessities. However, the financial logic does not add up, as one bag costing R200 usually generates only about R150 in beer sales. What matters is the logic of spacing out the expenditure, as the elderly women manage to brew beer every week and obtain some money out of it. Without locking their old age pensions up into the bag of mealie meal, they would not survive the month as they would often dip into the pension coffers. So it is this logic of survival that counts here and not the adding up of sums. Not that beer brewing is without its risks. At times a 210-litre drum goes to waste or is offered at give away prices if the brew is not tasty enough or if there is a lot of competition for that specific week. So grants payments day is the one day when everyone abandons the thoughts of being both at the beginning and end of the world. All the other days of the month money comes from other activities related to the environment.

The everyday and life cycles

For the rest of the month, local residents wake up with the first cock-crow to negotiate their way along the rocky terrain deep into the mopane hardwood forests. This is the way to what is famously referred to as the Madimbo corridor, the apartheid South Africa and Venda homeland creation of a *cordon sanitaire* between South Africa and Zimbabwe. The electric fence here is still intact, despite the fact that, in the words of headman Gumbu, 'the terrorists it was meant to control are now in government' and that in 2004, a land claim by the local residents was supposedly finalised, restoring land and resource rights in the area. Between the village and the corridor fence, some local residents scout for dry trees to chop into small pieces of firewood. This firewood will somehow make its way to the suburbs and shacks of Thohoyandou, Makhado, and Musina and as far away as Johannesburg and Pretoria. For in the same way that ideas about the environment are imported from elsewhere, local residents have come to understand that the flow of environmental resources in the other direction gives them more livelihood options. One has to fill a 3-ton truck of firewood to obtain R850.

Faced with growing controls on what can be cut for firewood, (only the dry pieces and not live or wet trees), the lack of options is beginning to put a strain on the village. Fewer and fewer people are waking up early to go into the bush to cut firewood. Those who do are finding the distances longer and longer, the effort to fill a truck getting more difficult. The pressure to feed families and send children to school is pushing those who still cut firewood to desperate measures to obtain enough to fill a truck. The rest are attracted by the lure of formal employment in Johannesburg or on the tomato farms in the Limpopo province. On the farms, they are pushed to destitution in a farming industry where collective bargaining is undermined by the sheer desperation of those

seeking jobs and an influx of Zimbabweans with much fewer livelihood options back home. Many locals seeking employment on farms do not last. They return to familiar territory, sharpening their axes and chisels, and waiting to fall by the wayside as they slip deeper into poverty. It's a tale rarely told in a South Africa that President Mbeki characterised as in the 'age of hope'.

In Bennde Mutale the age of hope is stunted by increasing conflicts over natural resources. There are more and more fights, literally, as some people steal wood they have not sweated for or disagree on how to equitably share the R850 when people team up to fill a truck. Firewood is fast becoming a rare and high-value resource. This has pushed people to the edge of the Madimbo corridor where they stalk the fence waiting for an opportunity to get in and collect the firewood that has supposedly remained untouched for at least the last three decades. The current occupiers of the land, the South Africa National Defence Force, have also been mired in controversy over firewood in this area with some villagers alleging that the military is taking firewood out and selling it. Some argue that these are the military's illegal hunting grounds; others say that it's a reservoir of wildlife for private game farms to the west of the corridor. Stories abound of helicopters flying in the corridor to drive wildlife into private game farms in the winter months, the traditional hunting season here. So, amidst all the poverty in the villages, there is the promise of milk and honey nearby.

Other resources too, play an important role in sustaining livelihoods throughout the year. In summer, focus along the Madimbo corridor gradually shifts to the anticipation of good rains. Especially important are the worms that eat mopane leaves. The mopane worms draw people into the woodland around January and again at the end of March into April. By the end of April, the mopane trees have been wiped clean of leaves to the extent that they appear to be wilting in the midst of a drought as less agile worms cling to branches and at times fall off. The mopane worms now draw an influx of people from as far away as Thohoyandou about 70km away. This time of the year husbands and wives walk, almost hand in hand for a change, into the mopane forests to spend half the day collecting and literally squeezing excrement out of the worms and drying the worms in the sun or over charcoals. Once dry, the worms provide a regular source of protein as people eat them as an accompaniment to starches. The end of the mopane collection usually coincides with harvest time as women shift their focus to picking and sorting crops in preparation for storage.

Harvested crops ensure a supply of food until summer rains which come around October. At times harvesting is disrupted by elephants from the nearby Makhuya Park, pigs, goats and cattle from the village. From May to the end of August, gardens spring up along the rivers, providing a useful and welcome substitute to the dry mopane worms and the occasional meat sold on pension days. By August, people pull out their corrugated iron sheets, months after using them for drying mopane worms, to dry the vegetables from their gardens. For months on end, dried mopane worms and vegetables are the main dish, often alternating between lunch and dinner. Public holidays interrupt this flow of the seasons.

The village is at a crossroads for migrants travelling across geo-political boundaries. Zimbabweans who have their relatives in Johannesburg cross the Limpopo River and take refuge waiting for their loved ones to come with goods purchased from the city. The Zimbabwean immigrants, of whom the majority are illegal, cannot use the proper channels at the Beitbridge border post. They have to retrace their footsteps as well as avoid often corrupt police or military personnel. With their relatives coming to assist, they split the goods among themselves and, at times, recruit local carriers to assist in evading police and military crookedness. Their presence in Bennde

Mutale is clearly felt as they arrive from Johannesburg and wait around for night fall. They hang around by the tavern, spending money on drinks and, at times, women. A big baobab tree, 200m from the gate to the Kruger National Park, offers a free 'bed' for those wanting quickies with the local women before their sojourn into Zimbabwe. Local boys and girls in search of their first experience also hang out here, far from the prying eyes of parents, brothers and sisters. Now that the baobab tree is the site for a youth tourism project, it should provide interesting fireside tales on its history.

The village mindmap and politics

The baobab tree provides the first reference point to a Bennde Mutale village mind map. It sits on the eastern most side of the village, in line with an area of the village called *Sedzazwau*, literally translated: 'mind your own business.' Houses have recently been built in this section. Often the residents have moved from other sections citing prevalence of witchcraft and wanting to get away from it. It is also not a coincidence that young parents who have recently married head the households in this area. It is an indication of the growing difficulty in finding a free stand in the other areas of the village, as space has rapidly been taken up by the increasing number of cattle farmers or other areas are not conducive for human habitation. The only hindrance to expansion further eastwards is a fence running north-south and demarcating the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park and Makhuya Park and the presence of the Pafuri River Camp, a piece of land 'leased' to a private sector tourist development, that sits on the shoulder of the Mutale River as it dramatically bends to flow southwards.

In the centre of the village is the location of the headman's kraal and some of the oldest houses hence the name of this area is *madala*, used usually to refer to elderly men. This is also the seat of entertainment with three taverns and shops as well as a collection of open markets where traders sell a variety of goods including boiled eggs, vetkoeks¹, cigarettes and popcorn. Occasionally, on Sundays, the headman bangs a piece of metal hanging from a marula tree calling for a meeting, *Khoro*. This is also the space where, in the past, all young boys and girls returning from their initiation ceremonies, *musevheto*, would gather and their parents and everyone in the village welcomed them. But nowadays this is just a location for contested discussions, which often challenge the authority of the headman. Most of the challenges come from the rich cattle owners who live on the Western side of the village, *Madangani*, which literally means kraals. The Western side of the village is interspaced with cattle kraals. This section of the village is home to the majority of the livestock here, with individual farmers boasting of more than 50 cattle each. They are dependent on the cattle and, unsurprisingly, the politics of grazing in the village is largely conducted from here. Most people in this area of the village are also regarded as having come into the area in recent years, compared to the rest of the families, a situation with a significant effect on local social and political dynamics.

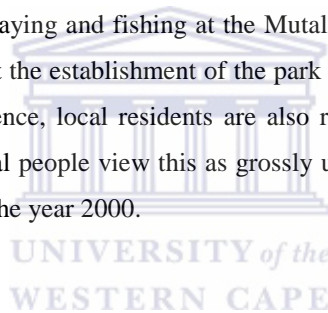
A walk further up the river brings one to a cliff that leads to the netball and football fields. This is a valley with alluvial soils that supports many gardens in the village. Fences and acacia branches traverse the area as protection for summer crops and winter vegetables. A walk further up from here leads to the village cemetery. Here traditionalists and Christians contest for recognition and the right to bury their dead. Days before a funeral, the old traditionalist women of the village spend time with the corpse preparing for the burial. On burial day, however, Christians compete for limelight in a religious contestation that appears to sideline the traditionalists.

¹ Bread made by scooping spoonfuls of dough into hot oil.

The contest between faith groups pits those who believe in both the teachings of the bible and traditional understandings or interpretations of the human condition, *kereke dzemweya*, or the fundamentalist Evangelical Christian Churches, against those believing only in the teachings of the bible. But the traditionalists appear to hold the fort here, often staying with the deceased family for some days long after the Christians have disappeared to 'fish' for more men and women who want to join the faith and contribute to the finances of the church. The traditionalists are joined by the cattle farmers in speaking so passionately about life within what is now the Makhuya Park to the East.

Parks and politics

The establishment of the Makhuya Nature Reserve or Park to the East of the village is viewed negatively as it led to the controlling of who could collect thatching grass and fish in the Mutale River, and when this could be done. Such exclusionary measures have been and are being used by the cattle owners to flare up resistance to any conservation plans in the area. But at the centre of the cattle owners' resistance is the fact that they are unable to access the grazing fields, which are now fenced off in the park. On the theme of grass, the local people have also tapped into popular resistance as a result of their lack of access to thatching grass. Additionally, the majority of old pensioners in the village grew up playing and fishing at the Mutale falls and pools along the Mutale River. These formed critical fishing waters, but the establishment of the park has cut off local residents from accessing the waterfalls and pools. Besides the fence, local residents are also restricted from accessing the fishing area through entrance fees into the park. Local people view this as grossly unfair and unjust, despite the fact that the fishing pools were filled after floods of the year 2000.



CHAPTER ONE: Setting the research agenda

1.1 Introduction

The questions guiding this research arise from the characterisation of Bennde Mutale and the Madimbo corridor. My experiences with the residents of Bennde Mutale and in the area led me to explore how environmental perceptions are created and how they are linked to broader political questions of access to land and natural resources, on the one hand, and to conservation, on the other hand.

I have introduced the themes and issues that guide this research. Firstly, this dissertation explores the place of natural resources in sustaining local livelihoods as well as the character and diversity of other livelihood strategies. Secondly, I point to the contested nature of boundaries in their various forms as political, specialised (such as veterinary fences) and other forms of dividing (supposedly separating different ethnic groups). In addition to the social and political control effects of boundaries, they also adversely have an impact on local livelihood strategies. Thus, livelihoods and socio-political relations among local actors and between local and actors at national, regional and global levels, become important in understanding the impacts conservation interventions have on local processes of human movement and survival. Securing a livelihood is not just a matter of local decision making and assessment of the resources at hand, but is increasingly subject to various national and global processes and opinions such as the setting of global targets for biodiversity conservation (see Brooks *et al*, 2004). These themes are intertwined in the preceding characterisation and vignettes at the beginning of each chapter and in the lives of informants in the study area. The themes represent activities at the interface of broader national, regional and international interests and policy, on the one hand, and local needs and demands for livelihoods on the other hand. The ensuing dynamics are invariably linked to various global processes that result in social and political change at the local level.

The end of the cold war heralded profound changes in security and peace processes globally. Specifically, the threat of inter-state conflicts gave way to new forms of cooperation (Buzan, 1991; Duffield, 2005). Whilst the threat of inter-state conflicts appeared to be on the decline, other forms of conflicts increased. For instance, issues of environmental degradation and their effect on social strife

through competition for scarce resources have become a prominent field of research and analysis in conflict studies (Dabelko *et al*, 2002; Brauch, 2005). Whilst not necessarily inter-state, these conflicts threaten international peace and security. They are fuelled by the increased flow of goods and services across boundaries in an increasingly globalised economy (Duffield, 2005). As a result, conflicts that appear contained within states might very well spill over into neighbouring countries, leading to the threat of inter-state conflicts. Thus, inter-state conflicts are perhaps not just defined by an arms race between the ‘world’s superpowers’ but by a myriad of issues. Similarly, natural resources can play a role in mitigating potential inter-state conflicts through joint management efforts of common resources (Matthew, Halle and Switzer, 2002; Westing, 1993). This in itself is not surprising given the increased globalisation which is understood as “continual integration of countries of the world” (World Bank 1999-2000 quoted in Myint, 2005: 2). There are increased international agreements for collaborative management of shared watercourses, ‘fugitive’ wildlife and other resources, mostly framed, interpreted or viewed in terms of conflict mitigation and avoidance through cooperation for biodiversity conservation and regional economic integration.

Over the last few years, transboundary natural resources management (TBNRM), transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs), transboundary protected areas (TBPAs) and *peace parks* have gained prominence in the world (Griffin *et al*, 1999; van der Linde *et al*, 2001). The objectives of these schemes are as diverse as the acronyms suggest, including meeting biodiversity conservation goals; facilitating regional integration; contributing to local developmental needs and to peace and security (Wolmer, 2003). Whilst the idea of collaboratively managing natural resources along geo-political boundaries is not new¹, the end of the cold war provided a window of opportunity through which transboundary collaborative opportunities could be explored. Thus, transboundary objectives of promoting inter-country peace through conservation or ecologically based regional integration are now prominent. This is especially so for Africa, a continent persistently portrayed in the Western media as prone to violence but also blessed with rich natural resources that can act as a basis for uniting countries. For local resource dependent actors such as those along the Madimbo corridor, however, transboundary approaches are seen as a threat to local livelihood and free human movement (Dzingirai, 2004; Spierenburg, Wels and Steenkamp, 2006).

¹ The first transboundary agreement is widely thought to be between Canada and the United States signed in 1926 to establish the Waterton-Glacier Park. From the 1920s, there have been attempts at various times in southern Africa to establish a transboundary park linking Kruger National Park in South Africa and parks in Mozambique and Zimbabwe – the present day constellation of the GLTP (Wolmer, 2003).

Conservation planning today addresses issues such as the disconnected habitat ‘islands’ through bioregional planning or the ecosystem level approach (Bennett, 2003), or involvement of local actors who were previously excluded from conservation lands. The focus on local actors, communities or indigenous peoples² and their place in national to international conservation processes is consistent with the ‘Global Conservation Movement’ (Igoe, 2005:377) reflected by the strong representations of local communities and indigenous peoples at global conferences and congresses. It has become common practice for conservation planning, including state driven transboundary initiatives, to include in their objectives issues of ecosystem integrity which relies on inter-state cooperation and cultural integrity which places emphasis on reuniting social groups separated through geo-political boundaries. Thus, transboundary approaches are both models of globalisation or integration of countries and localisation or decentralising state authority and administrative functions over natural resources. Various border region issues, in particular social, cultural and ecosystem borders³ straddling geo-political boundaries will be addressed and facilitated. The inherent dichotomies between globalisation and localisation within transboundary initiatives are encapsulated in ”glocalisation” involving “scaling up of some state regulatory functions and the scaling down of others” (Ramutsindela, 2004; 2005: 119).

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) involving Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe is an example of these local and global processes where different ways of seeing the environment are at play (Büscher and Dressler, 2007). The area can constitute, at one and the same time, natural resources for sustainable use by local people, unique globally significant biodiversity to be conserved for others, expansive landscapes for unlimited and unrestricted tourism opportunities or migratory routes for fugitive wildlife. Along the Madimbo corridor, encompassing the South African component of the GLTFCA and the site for this study, local residents, their interests and livelihoods

² I use the terms indigenous people and local communities to highlight the issues of local people and conservation. I recognise, however, that these terms are problematic as there are different understandings of what constitutes a community. Much has been written on the ‘challenges of defining community’, (Kepe, 1998) with various scholars noting that the definition of community as a coherent set of individuals and interests in a clearly defined geographical locale often masks the differentiated nature of groups of people along economic and political lines and the permeable nature of notional and physical boundaries (Mearns, Leach and Scoones, 2000). In southern Africa local communities is more commonly used but I will use here local actors to reflect local agency in engaging with frames conceptualised at national, regional and global levels, local people to highlight the differences from local, national, regional and global levels of biodiversity governance and local residents to denote physical location along the Madimbo corridor.

³ I use the term border to mean transitional spaces that cross boundary lines and in this thesis the transitional spaces include social and cultural groups on both sides of the South Africa-Zimbabwe boundary (see also Newman, 2006). In transboundary conservation approaches, border regions are continuous ecosystems disrupted by political and geo-political boundaries.

remain on the periphery of conservation policy-making and practice. This is despite proclamations to the contrary in official documents which state participation of local communities in the implementation process (Governments of Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 2002).

In this study, I focus on local residents; here also referred to as local people or actors⁴ to highlight their active engagement with external interventions; along the Madimbo corridor and the ways through which they frame their experience with biodiversity conservation in the context of the GLTFCA. First, I explore local people's views and perceptions of conservation, the linkages between various forms of exclusion, including physical exclusion from conserved lands and from policy-making processes. I am also concerned with observing how local people act in relation to external interventions such as conservation approaches. By examining local views and perspectives, I contribute to a growing body of analysis and literature on conservation and social issues (Brechin, 2003; Brockington and Igoe, 2006; Wolmer, 2007).

I will proceed to discuss the research focus of this study, specifically the research objectives. Then I will discuss the research design and introduce the field site. Introducing the case study area, I briefly locate it in broader political, historical and environmental discourses and issues in the southern Africa region and internationally. I then locate the study in broader theoretical and conceptual issues, considering how local actors' framing of their experiences are related to broader questions of social constructionism or how social and political reality is shaped by human ideas and interaction. An outline of the dissertation concludes the chapter, providing a map of the coming chapters.

1.2 Research focus

The primary objective of this study is to explore the way(s) local actors 'frame' their experiences with external interventions. Framing is understood as a prism or window through which social processes are evaluated and understood. As I use framing in relation to processes that can be contested and negotiated, the windows and prisms of understanding external intervention are constantly shifting and repositioned. External interventions invariably impact on the lives of individuals and social groups

⁴ I use local actors in a normative sense and local residents or people in specific reference to the Madimbo corridor..

upon whom they are thrust. At times external interventions are forcibly implemented and at times they rely on a systematic change of conditions under which local actors make a living, or a combination of both approaches. As well as being received by individuals and social groups, external intervention also results in various engagements including resistance, negotiation and mediation to mitigate the impacts of such intervention. This study focuses on the windows and prisms that local residents along the Madimbo corridor use to understand such interventions. The study focuses on conservation as an external intervention. However, the location of the Madimbo corridor along an international boundary makes other external interventions, such as national security, important. These issues are central to the evolving transboundary conservation approaches in the area.

Secondly, I explore local discursive practices in relation to what is now a prominent external intervention in the area of biodiversity conservation. Discursive practice is understood as both ways of speaking about or acting towards a phenomenon. I also investigate the place of natural resources within local livelihood strategies. Exploring the place of natural resources in livelihoods, I research local dynamics and contestations over access to globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems portrayed in policy documents as important for the success of the GLTFCA. Natural resources are integral for livelihood strategies of local actors resulting in certain perceptions, views and imaginations of conservation or other interventions that affect human-environment relations.

Thirdly, I seek to evaluate the discursive alliances that emerge from local views and perceptions and more prominent or official (as observed through policies and legislation) sets of ideas such as those supporting the establishment of TFCAs. In other words, the research seeks to establish the storylines between local ways of viewing and perceiving the environment and prominent discourses. I use here prominent in relation to discourses that are treated as 'received wisdom', but not to imply, as Foucault (1991) notes, that there are inert discourses, on the one hand, and all powerful discourses, on the other hand. As well as alliances, local discursive practices can be framed as opposing and competing with prominent sets of ideas. Thus local discursive practices should not be expected to parrot prominent discourses but mirror the mutual determination of approaches, processes and outcomes. Thus, the objective is not only about alliances, but, to show areas of negotiation and contestation.

1.2.2 Research design

Over the last ten years I have worked in applied research on natural resources management issues in southern Africa. It is envisaged that part of this research, apart from contributing to academic scholarship, will produce empirical data to contribute to policy and practice. These considerations influenced my research objectives and the research design I adapted, a complicated consideration as the opening piece to chapter three (pp. 46) shows.

I collected different sets of data at various levels from local resources dependent actors to national and regional actors. At a local level, I gathered data from residents along the Madimbo corridor on local discursive practices over conservation and on the place of natural resources in local livelihoods. Second, I gathered historical and contemporary data at national and regional levels on state interventions along Madimbo corridor for biodiversity conservation purposes. Understanding local frames of external interventions should be helpful for current policy evolution and practical implementation of conservation initiatives, specifically in relation to local actors' needs and aspirations. An understanding of these frames should enable externally planned initiatives to engage local actors more meaningfully. Focusing on residents along the Madimbo corridor allows an analysis of a variety of historical interventions and an understanding of how local people have engaged with external intervention at various times or how they express and portray their experiences.

1.2.2a Conservation policy, practice and dynamics along the Madimbo corridor

By focusing on conservation as a form of external intervention along the Madimbo corridor, I analyse a variety of interconnected issues such as interventions for consolidating state national and geo-political boundaries, national security and veterinary diseases control. In this section I provide an overview of materials written on conservation and local actors, focusing mostly on Africa.

The nature of relations between the Makhuya Park and local residents is not limited to the Madimbo corridor alone, but reflects common conservation practice in Africa. A prominent feature in African environments is the role of state conservation policies across different countries and sectors (Bernstein

and Woodhouse, 2000). An equally important policy issue is how local actors could continue or discontinue sharing landscapes with wildlife. Throughout the 20th century, with the consolidation of colonial settler societies, conservation policies have led to an increase in the role of the state. As a result, the co-existence between people and nature has been undermined, despite evidence that local actors practised conservation in pre-colonial times (see Murombedzi, 2003). Many local actors, including those along the Madimbo corridor, have been excluded from certain geographical areas viewed as important for conserving nature through protected areas (PAs) (Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Jeanrenaud, 2003) or continually faced violent controls over their use of natural resources (Peluso, 1992). Thus conservation can be viewed as an external intervention in terms of the imposition of ideas on local processes and disregard for existing human-environment relations.

The development of game reserves and PAs in South Africa was shaped by political economy issues that obtained in the country (Beinart, 1989; Carruthers, 1995, see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2a, pp. 88). Emerging literature on biodiversity conservation in the context of TFCAs provides insights on broader global political developments and how these influence specific approaches to conservation (Ramutsindela, 2004; Duffy, 2006; Büscher and Wolmer, 2007; Büscher and Whande, 2007). At the same time, and rather ironically, the growing emphasis on 'local communities' highlights their continued marginalisation in TFCA approaches as opposed to any meaningful engagement (Spierenburg *et al*, 2006; Whande, 2007; Dzingirai, 2004). TFCAs, as a result, are a continuation of the externally driven conservation interventions and local actors, such as residents along the Madimbo corridor, perpetually have to accept, resist and contest these preconceived approaches. Local actors are rarely involved in defining conservation policy and dictating the terms under which it is implemented. In order to understand why TFCAs can be characterised as an external intervention, an analysis of the historical basis of PAs is necessary. In turn, the continuities between practices of PAs as an external intervention and current TFCA implementation need to be highlighted.

The ongoing debates on TFCAs in southern Africa mirror broader engagements on the relative merits of 'fortress conservation' and 'people-centred approaches'. Strict PAs or what is now understood as 'fortress conservation' or the 'fences and fines approach' dominated conservation approaches for much of the 20th century (Brockington, 2002; Brechin *et al*, 2003; Hutton *et al*, 2005). The evolution of

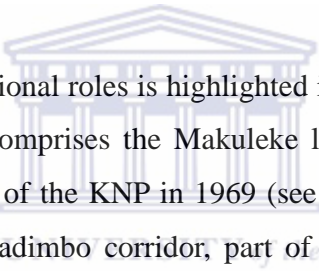
community-based conservation (CBC) approaches was in part to address the historical injustices brought about by the dispossessive nature of PAs in much of the world where they were often set up by authoritarian regimes (Brechin *et al*, 2003).

The paradox of PAs was that they were often designated for the benefit of people, yet in practice they were protected against people. This has been maintained through a system whereby the costs of PAs are largely incurred by local residents and the benefits distributed elsewhere through tourism opportunities (Carruthers, 1995). Specifically, local populations were dispossessed of their land as large tracts of land were set aside for preservation, recreational areas for the colonial settlers and to maintain elite hunting traditions (Anderson and Grove, 1987; Adams and Mulligan, 2003). PAs not only resulted in dispossession but also increased state control over African populations who were contained in reserves⁵ (Carruthers, 1993). Resource use by local actors to sustain livelihoods was outlawed within PAs but often conservation officials extended this to areas outside protection, particularly in relation to wildlife. Such practices are pervasive in most countries in Eastern and Southern Africa and are a source of conflicts between local actors and conservation agencies (Igoe, 2005; Neumann, 2005).

Six PA categories have been proposed with different gradations of use and non-use of natural resources (IUCN 1994, see Appendix III, pp. 1c). However, an important public perception and enforcement at management level of PAs is the idea that these are clearly defined geographical zones with clear boundaries inside which no form of resource use is allowed. This clearly points to the disjuncture between policies as articulated in documents and policies as practice. PA boundaries have historically been developed based on the application of natural science concepts and in particular those drawn from ecology and conservation biology. However, these boundaries have been, and are contested by local and resource-dependent people. These contestations underline the relevance of social sciences that contend that boundaries are first and foremost social constructs (Kolossov, 1998; Fall, 2003) and disrupt borders within which specific forms of resource use to sustain livelihoods happens. As a result, social science perspectives stipulate that PA boundaries cut across socially coherent and livelihood supporting spatial entities.

⁵ After the 1913 Native Land Act in South Africa, all African groups were confined to specific geographical regions according to their perceived tribe or ethnicity. These areas were variously referred to as “African reserves, Bantustans or homelands” (Ntsebeza, 2005).

The establishment of the Kruger National Park (KNP) was a land planning process involving the definition of boundaries within which game management would occur; it was also essentially a political process, involving the conquest of local actors by colonial settlers (Carruthers, 1995). It impacted local resource use and livelihood strategies and was resisted by local resource dependent people. PA boundaries, therefore, were often enforced against local protest. Where PAs were close to international borders, such as the case along the Madimbo corridor, local people had to contend with both political and PA boundaries. The presence of military personnel along the Madimbo corridor often blurred (and continues to do so) the distinction between the two, with the military often assuming control over resource use and conservation officials controlling human and resource (such as livestock) movement across political boundaries (Whande, 2007). Conservation as an external intervention has also resulted in conflicts among local people over territorial boundaries.



The blurring of boundaries and institutional roles is highlighted in the example of a piece of land to the northern most end of the KNP that comprises the Makuleke land where local people were forcibly moved to make way for an expansion of the KNP in 1969 (see Figure 4, Chapter Three, pp. 67). The piece of land also falls within the Madimbo corridor, part of which belongs to the Bennde Mutale village where people were forcibly moved to make way for military bases on the border with Zimbabwe. Both pieces of land are now at the centre of TFCA approaches challenging colonial and political boundaries, arguing for continuous ecosystems and transboundary cultural and social practices on the basis of border regions whose flow was disrupted by geo-political boundaries.

An immediate challenge to conservation as an external intervention is the land claim for the Madimbo corridor. Seven villages along the Madimbo corridor were forcibly moved from along the Limpopo River in 1969, even though systematic removals had been undertaken in the area from about 1942. Following the official end of apartheid in 1994 and the passing of land reform legislation, in particular the *Land Restitution Act* No. 22 of 1994, the seven villages instituted a land claim for the Madimbo corridor, claiming 29,093 hectares (see Section 4.5.2, pp. 93). of these hectares, however, 6,360 have been included in the Makuleke land restitution case in the neighbouring Pafuri triangle (Linden, 2004).

1.2.2b Understanding TFCAs as an external conservation intervention

The World Bank (quoted in Griffin *et al*, 1999: 3) defines TFCAs as ‘relatively large areas which straddle frontiers between ... countries and cover large-scale natural systems encompassing one or more PAs.’ However, there are some conceptual ambiguities regarding TFCAs, Transboundary Protected Areas (TBPAs) and Transboundary Natural Resources Management (TBNRM). Griffin *et al* (1999: 3) note that TBNRM ‘could incorporate the overall concept of natural resource management (NRM) required across all sorts of boundaries in support of bioregional, biosphere, or ecosystem management approach.’ They argue this can happen at a level where local collaborative management of ecological systems is coordinated by local authorities across boundaries, and collaborative management of human movement is facilitated by removal of bureaucratic constraints and the harmonisation of national policies and legislation to facilitate TBNRM. Where PAs straddle geo-political boundaries and are subject to inter-state collaborative management, they constitute TBPAs. Griffin *et al* (1999)’s definition of TBNRM imply that TFCAs and TBPAs can be classified as TBNRM initiatives yet the objectives of the two are slightly divergent. This conceptual ambiguity has meant that TFCAs and TBPAs have been referred to as TBNRM and the other way round.

TFCAs aim to further regional integration and enhance inter-state peace and security, hence the term *Peace Parks* (Simon, 2003). In southern Africa, this offers an opportunity for peaceful resolution of inter-state conflicts instead of by military and forceful means (see Katerere *et al*, 2001). However, the basis of TFCAs on ‘breaking down’ geo-political boundaries is contrary to political positions adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 (see also Section 8.5, pp. 219). Presently, these demarcations are recognised and accepted by the post-colonial political establishment. The OAU noted that boundaries as conceptualised during colonialism play a role in keeping a lid on potential territorial conflicts (Mbembe, 2000). Instead of a break down of boundaries, TFCAs potentially result in increased focus on consolidating boundaries even in politically marginal areas (Mombeshora, 2005; Duffy, 1997; Van Ameron, 2002).

Instead, TFCAs present an opportunity for the merging of a variety of interests including military, political, economic and environmental security concerns (Simon, 2003). For instance, the private sector has taken the opportunities presented by the new approaches and often presents itself as the engine for

success. The many tourism establishments within initiatives such as the GLTFCA bear testimony to this (see Spenceley for a study of tourism initiatives within the GLTFCA, 2005). Conservation agencies explore the possibilities of ecosystem wide biodiversity conservation across geo-political boundaries (see Van der Linde *et al*, 2001), hence ecosystem border regions. However, military and security sectors are now involved in discussions prompted by concerns for national sovereignty and security (Duffy, 1997). Many of the converging interests do not represent local communities, as at times they might be in competition or conflict.

TBNRM is therefore strategic for the management of shared ecological systems such as watersheds, river systems and migratory species (Swatuk, 2005). Whilst TBNRMs create conditions for economic integration and ecosystem level management (Mombeshora, 2005), it remains unclear how local resource dependent people are going to be part of the management regime, or how their transboundary processes are going to be realised. An assumption has been made that community issues are addressed through the upscaling of Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) experiences to a TBNRM level (see Jones and Chonguiça, 2001).

For community-based conservation proponents, TBNRM, and not TFCAs, espoused the extension of the principles of decentralised natural resources management to transboundary scenarios (see Jones and Chonguiça, 2001). As the foregoing paragraphs attest, it remains unclear how decentralized natural resources management would be extended across geo-political boundaries where different legal and policy regimes are in operation (Buzzard, 2001; de Villiers, 1999). Given the economic marginality of most areas where TBNRM has been planned or is being implemented (as opposed to their centrality to national security), this has led to researchers arguing that more constraints on local communities' use of resources are the outcomes of increased state presence (Dzingirai, 2004; Hughes, 2002).

The increased focus on private sector investment in areas where land and resource rights are not secure is further cause for clarity on how communities stand to be part of the jigsaw puzzle of TBNRM (Katerere *et al*, 2001). Currently, TFCAs/TBNRM areas are regarded as multiple land use zones but in reality and practical terms conservation driven ecotourism is the organising aspect for success. These ambivalences towards local systems of accessing and using resources means that the anticipated

'trickle down' of TBNRM and TFCAs are based on an imposition of certain land uses and ultimately affect who benefits and what they benefit from the initiatives.

1.2.2c The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park and Transfrontier Conservation Area

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP), which measures about 35,000km², highlights one of the biggest conservation projects to be undertaken on the African continent. It consists of the Kruger National Park (KNP) and the co-managed Makuleke region in South Africa; the recently constituted Limpopo National Park in Mozambique; and the Gonarezhou National Park, Manjinji Pan Sanctuary Malapati Safari Area and Sengwe corridor in Zimbabwe. It forms the core of the much larger Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) measuring about 100,000km² (DAI Impacto, n.d, see Figure 1, pp. 18 below). The TFCA includes other land that is managed both for conservation and sustainable natural resource use purposes (Great Limpopo Transfrontier website⁶). The broader GLTFCA includes Banhine and Zinave National Parks in Mozambique, Corumana and Massingir development areas and the interlinking (mostly communal areas) areas in Mozambique, private and provincial wildlife reserves in South Africa, Save and Malilangwe conservancies, community wildlife areas and communal areas in Zimbabwe. They are defined as 'multiple use zones' where sustainable use of natural resources is permitted. The Madimbo corridor in South Africa, currently being claimed by seven villages forcibly moved in 1969 (see Section 1.2.2a, pp. 11 above and Section 4.5.2, pp. 93), constitutes a potential area that can be included in the core GLTP or be part of the broader GLTFCA.

Apart from facilitating the movement of wildlife resources within the GLTP (Hanks, 2003), the development of the GLTFCA is for maintaining cultural integrity among kinship groups who were affected by colonial and administrative bureaucratic obstacles. Accurate as this observation might be in the GLTFCA where Venda and Tsonga people in the three countries share a common history, it is not clear how it will pan out in reality. In the case of Bennde Mutale village, a history of intermarriage with

⁶ http://www.greatlimpopopark.com/main.php?main_item=1&nav_id=3&name=Geographic&pos=

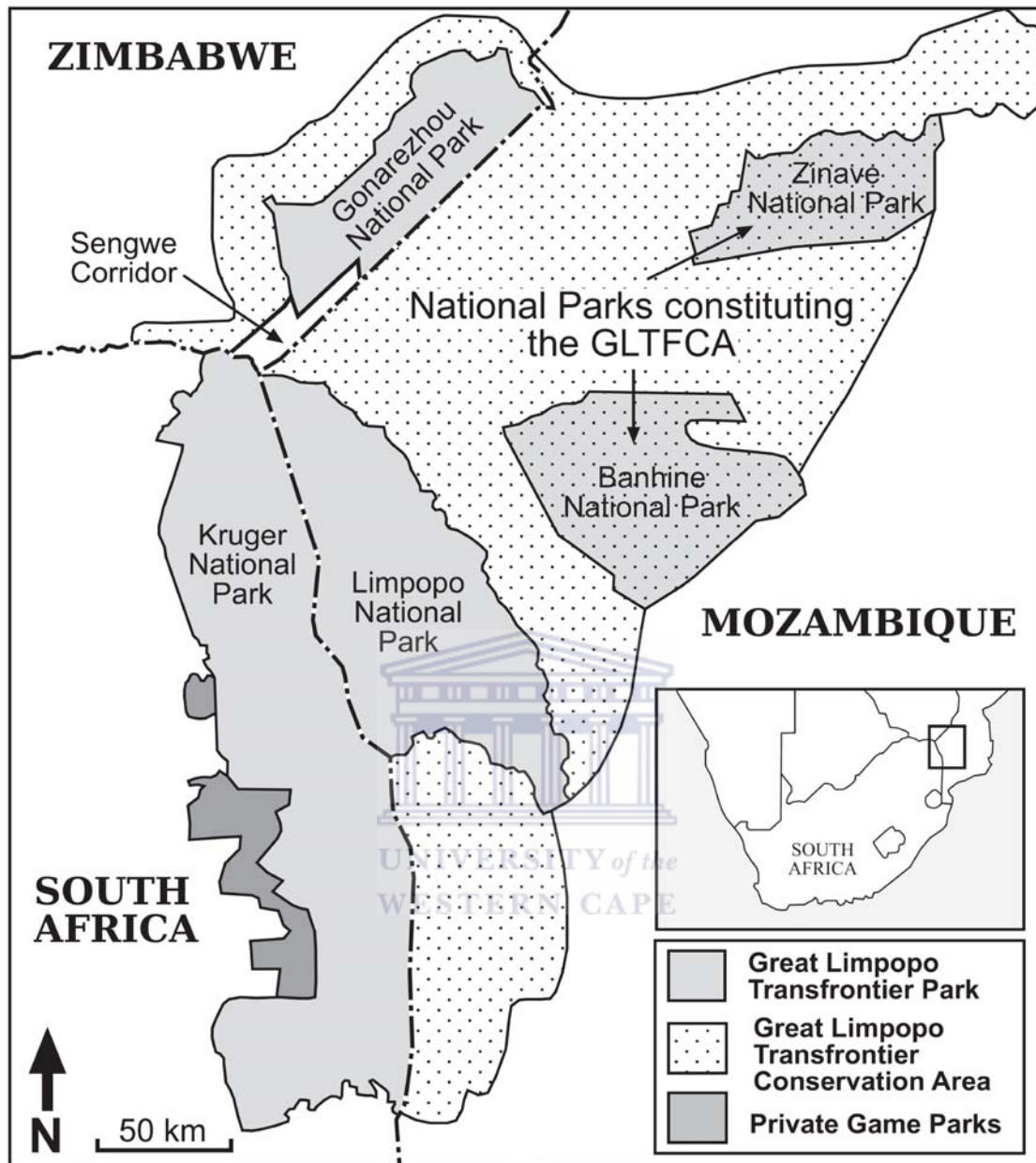


Figure 1: Map of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Source: Peace Parks Foundation

people from Zimbabwe and Mozambique was disrupted by colonial boundaries but never discontinued (Whande, 2007, see also Chapter Eight, pp. 200). It is therefore not clear what the impacts of the GLTFCA on local human movement and transboundary ties are going to be. Dzingirai (2004) argues that these schemes will lead to increased state focus on the area through the GLTFCA hence hindrance of kinship relations across boundaries. Whande (2008) argues that the GLTFCA will result in the

consolidation of geo-political and conservation boundaries, contrary to official claims of breaking down boundaries. Yet by the same token increased focus can also be positive in the sense of increased delivery of basic services and improved infrastructure. However, a recurring criticism of TBNRM initiatives has been that these areas are designed to facilitate wildlife movement, creating habitats into which elephant overpopulation within the KNP can be alleviated (see Ramutsindela, 2004).

These debates should be viewed in the broader context of developments within conservation biology, which argue that linking habitats through corridors can enhance wildlife conservation (Bennett, 2003). The Madimbo corridor directly to the north of Bennde Mutale village, together with the Makuleke land as well as the Sengwe communal lands in Zimbabwe, are important links for the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) connecting Kruger and Gonarezhou National Parks (see Figure 6, Chapter Five, pp. 117). These proposals have generated resistance from local residents along the Madimbo corridor, who mainly depend on livestock and other natural resources to sustain their livelihoods (see Chapter Six, pp. 126). They view the creation of these links as denying them access to the rich grazing fields as well as firewood, fish along the Limpopo and wild fruits in the Madimbo corridor. Apart from anxieties about continued use of grazing pastures within the Madimbo corridor, some of the reservations of local residents are linked to the importance they afford to natural resources within this area and their role in sustaining livelihoods. Clearly, there is a disjuncture between broader policy and discursive arguments for the GLTFCA and local discursive practice in relation to sustaining livelihoods and accessing land and natural resources. These different understandings point to the GLTFCA as an external intervention whose basis or premise is opposed by local resource dependent actors as witnessed by some respondents along the Madimbo corridor.

1.2.2d The Madimbo corridor as a creation of external interventions

The location of the Madimbo corridor on the edge of South Africa is a historical and colonial creation that has resulted in perceptions that Venda speaking peoples on the one side of the river are different from Venda people on the other. The estrangement, first by territorial demarcation between the two countries, and later along ethnic lines predominantly between Venda and Tsonga people, has made the issue of land and natural resources central to the politics of the area. Boundaries are contested,

negotiated and flexible. Grey-haired, wheelchair-bound elders remain the most important source of information on validating land claims, relying more and more on the imaginative orators to demarcate old territorial boundaries, invoking landmarks through nostalgic accounts. Yet these lands are linked to national, regional and international actors who all seek to exert some authority locally.

This study focuses on seven villages along the Madimbo corridor⁷ located to the far northeast of South Africa where the country borders Mozambique and Zimbabwe (see Figure 2, pp. 23 and Figure 4, pp. 67). The villages, while spread out along the Madimbo corridor and interspaced with other villages, have a common interest in that they constitute the official claimants to the land within the corridor and currently occupied by the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF). For this study, I predominantly engaged with the village of Bennde Mutale as a specific locality along the Madimbo corridor. While the main focus of local discursive strategies is on the village of Bennde Mutale, a shared history with other villages along the Madimbo corridor means that some issues had to be explored in the entirety of the geographical area. A number of factors make the Madimbo corridor an ideal site to explore local people's engagement with external interventions.

The Madimbo corridor links a variety of actors in collaborative and conflicting dynamics, most of which are located in historical and external intervention. As a result of external interventions, the local residents along the Madimbo corridor lost access to land and natural resources (the land claim by the Vhembe Communal Property Association (CPA) is meant to restore land and resource rights). Current efforts at restoring these land and resource rights form a basis for evaluating the ways local actors frame external intervention. The forced removals of the 1960s led to the demarcation of the Madimbo corridor as a place devoid of people, thus completed the creation of a corridor. This is despite the fact that historically the corridor had been host to a variety of villages. The creation of the corridor is still subject to controversy.

The Vhembe CPA represents the seven villages claiming a part of the Madimbo corridor, the other part of the corridor measuring about 5,000 hectares was included in the land claim for the Makuleke clan.

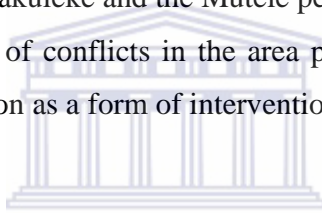
⁷ These villages are Bennde Mutale, Gumbu, Madimbo, Masisi, Sigonde, Tshikuyu and Tshenzhelani (see Figure 4, pp. 67).

The claimants, however, fall under two different chieftainships and after local government reforms in the late 1990s, were also divided into two wards. As a result, the shared commonality they have is the history of the Madimbo corridor and an interest for the restoration of land and resource rights. It is at this level that issues of land uses along the Madimbo corridor, ranging from conservation driven ecotourism, livestock and crop farming and mining (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2a, pp. 95 for a detailed discussion) are discussed and decisions will eventually be taken (see Whande, 2007, Poonan, 1996, Linden, 2004). These land use options show that the Madimbo corridor is, at one and the same time, a strategic location for restoring wildlife migratory routes through the GLTFCA, for restoration of local land rights, for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity, for regional political and economic integration and for maintaining the cultural integrity of ‘communities’ separated by geo-political boundaries.

The area has long been resident to high value wildlife, including the proverbial big five⁸ (Bulpin, 1954), a feature which links the area and its residents to global actors through what Bryant (2000) calls the “politicised moral geographies” of conservation. Restoration of wildlife migration routes thus forms a central premise for labelling the area strategic in the context of TFCAs. More recently with the advent and prominence of biodiversity literature, discussions over the strategic location of the corridor are largely in terms of unique biological diversity, and this formed the basis for a campaign against mining by the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa (WESSA) (see Allen, 1996). What happens here in terms of land and natural resources has national, regional and international implications for biodiversity conservation. As a result, local claim outcomes to land and natural resources are influenced by both localised and broader environmental policy discourses, trends and approaches and this is reflected by South Africa’s grappling with balancing issues of biodiversity conservation and restoration of land and resource rights. It is therefore not surprising that the Madimbo corridor is at the centre of political efforts meant to facilitate regional integration through conservation led ecotourism. However, as a ‘counter’ moral discourse to exclusive conservation, the Madimbo corridor has also been claimed by local residents who were forcibly moved in the late 1960s (see Chapter Four. pp. 72).

⁸ The term big five was coined by game hunters in reference to high priced trophy mammals which include elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*), rhino (*Ceratotherium simum*), lion (*Panthera leo*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and Cape buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*).

Another set of collaborative and conflicting relations involve the neighbouring Makuleke lands, which have since been included in the KNP after settlement of the Makuleke land claim in 1999, including a 5,000 hectare piece of land the Makuleke shared with those along the Madimbo corridor. When the Makuleke clan first instituted their land claim for the Pafuri corner, they approached the village leaders in Bennde Mutale to make a joint application. Historically the Makuleke occupied the eastern Pafuri triangle whilst the Mutele people occupied sections of the Madimbo corridor. The boundaries between the Pafuri triangle and the Madimbo were overlapping, with a 5,000 hectare piece of land occupied by people from both groups. The request by the Makuleke clan to institute a joint application with residents from Bennde Mutale village was in recognition of the blurred boundaries between the territories. This request was initially agreed to by the late Headman Siphuga. When his son took over in 1996 and the land claim for the Madimbo corridor was taking shape, the decision was reversed. This has generated conflicts between the Makuleke and the Mutele people who were part of the claim for the Madimbo corridor. The different sets of conflicts in the area provide a basis for understanding local frames for making sense of conservation as a form of intervention.



As a result of historical land dispossession (exclusion), the prominence of conservation approaches and the location along an international boundary, the Madimbo corridor provides a suitable site for evaluating local people's framing of external interventions.

I chose this area because of the lack of well articulated discussions on the place for local actors within TFCAs. Previous research along the Madimbo corridor had indicated that local discussions on the role of natural resources in sustaining local livelihoods were prominent (Poonan, 1996; Linden, 2004). In the context of conservation approaches such as PAs and lately TFCAs, such questions have assumed a bigger role in the everyday life of local residents. In a similar manner, the place of local resource dependent people in the implementation of TFCAs remains largely undefined. Little understanding of how people located along international geo-political boundaries interact with the environment and their

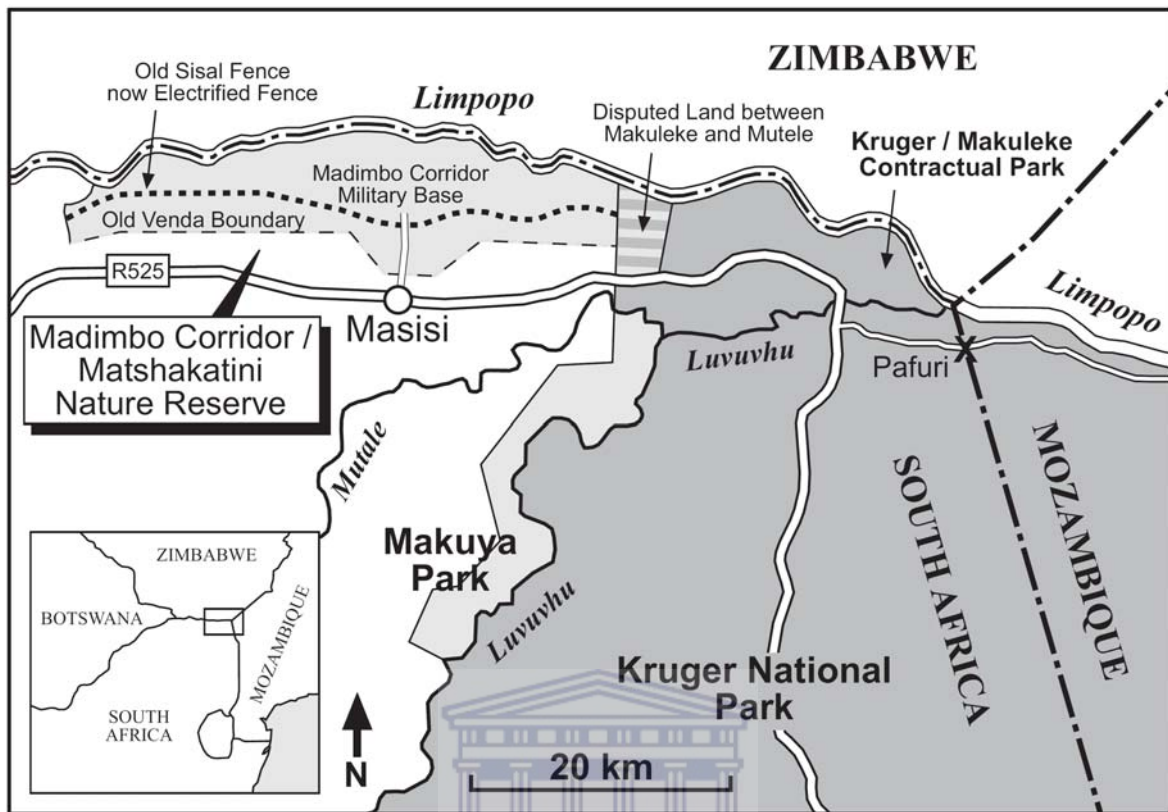


Figure 2: Map of the Madimbo corridor and Matshakatini Nature Reserve.

Source: Allen, 1996

counterparts across the boundaries further fuels the ambiguity in relation to local actors. It remains full of clichés of ethnic and kinship ties but little else in terms of production relations. Many of the clichés mirror global engagement with local or indigenous peoples inherently resulting in creation of environmental ‘subjects’ through essentialisms (Agrawal, 2005). Juxtaposed against the articulations of the importance of biodiversity in the area, the field sites along the Madimbo corridor provide a local case for comparing and contrasting prominent biodiversity conservation discursive practices with local ones.

The interventions of the 1960s can be viewed as creation of security buffer zones to minimise threats from Zimbabwe. The creation of a buffer zone or corridor, however, meant the disregard for certain human/environment interactions, narratives, representations and metaphors that characterised it as a home, spiritual place and source of livelihood –which Ingold (2000) terms a ‘dwelling place’. Issues of

access to natural resources shape local residents' frames of reference along the Madimbo corridor. A main characteristic of their relations with external actors is displacement through forced removals, a process inherently resulting in the restructuring of local production relations.

Agrarian change literature in Africa shows that the differentiation of 'communities' along 'social class, gender, generation and ethnicity' lines can result in tensions and conflicts that mirror the interests of these different groups (Woodhouse, Bernstein and Hulme, 2000; Peters, 2004). Similarly, differentiated uses of the environment can also result in a variety of interpretations of external interventions. Taken comparatively from local to national and global interests, the results are multilayered stories, which are contradictory, competing and conflicting, even at a local level.

1.3 Conceptual and theoretical considerations

The political ecology framework provides an analytical framework for this study. Political ecology involves a number of conceptual and theoretical analytical foundations, including political economy, political institutions and their effect on human-environment relations and the effect of society on the environment often encapsulated in "narratives or stories" about environmental change (Robbins, 2004: 5). Two aspects of political ecology are important for this study. These are the social changes over a period of time and the relations among actors at multiple levels from local to global levels. In this thesis the time dimensions of social change are explored through linking historical experiences of people along the Madimbo corridor to their current practices and perceptions of external environmental intervention. These historical experiences have shaped local relationships both among local people but also between local people and 'outsiders'. As a result, local people are engaged in discussions, confrontations and negotiation processes among themselves according to socio-economic groups, between the local and the national to global, thus they are constantly creating and recreating discourses of the environment and of actor relations.

Discourse is understood to mean different things to various people but a prominent view is as a set of ideas through which meaning is given to phenomena (Hajer, 1995). As ideas develop through acquisition of knowledge, discourses are about how knowledge and power are articulated (Escobar,

1996). A Foucauldian perspective argues knowledge articulation is constitutive, and not a reflection, of how social reality is constructed (Foucault, 1980). In recent years, the prominence of western forms of knowledge or science, its acquisition and application has been linked to political processes grounded in human interests and power relations (Foucault, 1980; Latour, 2005). Science, as a result, is treated as constructed knowledge and a result of competition among different interests. It is also seen as leading to the exclusion of certain approaches, which leads to a narrow focus in explaining phenomena (ByWater, 2005).

Sources of knowledge influence policy and practical interventions, and some sources become prominent and influential to the exclusion of others. Through the exclusion of certain forms of acquiring knowledge, dominant epistemologies create and reproduce power imbalances (Shiva, 1991; Smith, 1990; Foucault, 1980). 'Scientific facts' have been a prominent source of ideas on biodiversity conservation and have shaped policy and practical interventions (Blaikie and Jeanrenaud, 1996; Leach and Mearns, 1996). Viewed from the perspective of knowledge as constructed, the certainty of scientific facts becomes questionable. While it has been pointed out that scientific sources of knowledge have led to an exclusion of knowledge based on local experiences, an interface exists between the two (Pred, 1990) and is characterised by a 'global import and export' of ideas (Shiva, 1991). However, the interface is also the site where negotiation, accommodation and compromise between knowledge happens, a site where, as a discourse, "differentiated subject-positions and subject-functions meet" (Foucault, 1991: 89).

An exploration of local realities, including local practices of sustaining livelihoods, gaining access to, use of, and, managing natural resources is needed to understand this interface. An understanding of local realities as well as ways of articulating ideas becomes important as a context to analyse discursive practices. I follow Ingold (2000) 's contention that ways of acting towards something, in this case conservation, are also ways of perceiving it. Thus, local discursive practices in relation to the environment are constitutive of material practice and not a reflection thereof. The research draws from Ingold's (2000) conception of human-environment relations, viewing 'dwelling' as a prerequisite for shaping perceptions of the environment. It is according to dwelling place that "the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who

have dwelt in it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves” (Ingold, 2000:189). Ingold’s ideas here resonate with those of other scholars, notably Smith (1990) writing from a Marxist perspective, who argues that the construction of nature from a social domination of nature perspective simplifies nuanced, complex and diverse meanings attributed to the environment. The social domination, Smith notes, then results in views of nature as a product of social relations.

By adopting the dwelling perspective, and how it shapes perceptions of the environment, we are able to elicit knowledge resulting from immediate lived experience and combine two sets of questions. On the one hand are questions of the practical and technical interaction of people and natural resources of their environments in the process of obtaining livelihoods, and on the other are questions of how people’s life world is ‘imaginatively constructed in myth, religion and ceremony’ (Ingold, 2000: 42). Here I use Ingold’s ideas in relation to livelihoods and how they inform local engagement with external intervention. However, Ingold’s perspective of human-environment relations does not deal with the politics of knowledge acquisition (epistemologies), dissemination and application. Whilst generating data from a ‘dwelt-in’ perspective can result in detailed local data and hence better understandings of local realities, a localised focus can also mean local-external linkages are not clearly understood. For instance, in southern Africa, the application of environmental knowledge has often been instrumentalised for political reasons and maintaining control over local actors thereby contributes to local conservation discursive practices (Murombedzi 2003; Beinart 1997; see also Chapter Four, pp. 72).

Different concepts are suggested for use in discourse analysis, among them framing, narrating, numbering and coding (see Apthorpe, 1996). This study adopts the concepts of framing; storylines or narrating as they lend themselves to qualitative research methods (see research methodology Chapter Three, pp. 46).

Framing conveys an image of containment, as a window through which a selective process of experiences and events condenses and simplifies one’s life. Apthorpe and Gasper (1996), and, Hajer (1995), discuss framing in terms of who is included or excluded through certain ways of talking. However, as discussed in the paragraphs above, the actual outcome of how something is viewed is a

result of contestations, of interaction between ‘challengers and power holders’ (Steinberg, 1998). The inclusion or exclusion of different actors and issues at multiple scales ranging from local resource users, government, NGOs and private sector is influenced by different factors. These include ‘struggles over meanings and practicalities of livelihoods, values and organizing processes’ (Arce and Long, 2000: 8) as well as the ‘political culture and public discourse’ within which contestation happens (Steinberg, 1998: 846, see also Keeley and Scoones, 2003). The actual outcome of contestation differs in space and time and is ultimately determined by the agency of those contesting exclusion or negotiating different terms of inclusion (Pred, 1990).

Different actors’ possess different knowledge and are influenced by different beliefs, values and perspectives (Fisher, 1997). They interpret events according to frames in order to derive and reproduce meaning. Such meaning is context specific and is reproduced according to the actors’ life experiences (Long, 1992). In deriving meaning of specific events, there are generators, communicators and receivers of discourses or ideas (see Oekes, 1993) that frame arguments to legitimate their views of the environment. Framing can therefore be viewed as advancing certain ideological and practical interests, which may complement or be in conflict with others. Where interests overlap and compete, sites of ‘negotiation, accommodation’ and contestation are created which can result in multiple realities (Long, 1992).

Where interests and ideas converge, they are held together through how they are represented in storylines or narrative. Storylines are understood as combined ‘elements from many different domains that provide actors with a set of symbolic references that suggest a common understanding’ (Hajer, 1995: 62). Roe (1995) argues that an institutionalisation of certain lines of thought can be deduced through ‘stories’ told about the implications of acting in certain ways on the environment. Thus, in human-environment relations, whilst these stories might not be recounted word for word, a certain thread ties them and those who tell the stories to dominant and influential or oppositional and resistant lines of thinking. Alliances can emerge from the way people speak about the environment. At the level of resource users and rights holders, storylines can emerge through analysis of people’s views of (what they see or how the environment is to them) and views on (what people have to say) the environment.

1.4 Thesis overview

This dissertation comprises nine chapters. The first chapter introduces the thesis, offering an introduction to the research questions, research design, as well as a brief introduction to the field site. The introduction outlines the focus of the research on local reference frames for understanding external interventions.

Chapter Two extends the theoretical discussion, exploring political ecology as an analytical framework, in particular to explore the temporal dimensions of political relations among a variety of actors along the Madimbo corridor. I further discuss relations among actors through the prism of specialist knowledge resulting in the consolidation of state authority. In discussing the relations of a variety of actors through analysis of specialist knowledge, I look at how the behaviour of local actors is conditioned through specialist knowledge and how the observation of laws and policies are enforced. Instead of dominant discourses, material in this chapter further indicates that prominent discourses are engaged with, challenged, appropriated and modified according to local conditions.

Chapter Three offers a detailed discussion of the qualitative methodology used in this study, as well as providing an introduction to the field sites. The range of methods used in the study, including interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions and report back workshops are discussed. The chapter also outlines the audio recording, briefing sessions with research assistants as methods of recording data collected in the field. The challenges encountered in the use of the methods are discussed. The chapter ends with a detailed introduction to the field site, providing data on biological diversity, physical factors such as vegetation and climatic factors such as rainfall and average temperatures.

Chapter Four discusses the historical aspects of the case study, highlighting how scientific knowledge such as veterinary and conservation sciences contributed to the consolidation of the colonial state, resulting in increased controls over local people and alienation from natural resources. It explores the discursive basis of forced removals and the role conservation played, creating certain local perceptions of the environment. Post-apartheid legislative and policy changes are meant to address historical injustices in relation to land and natural resources; they form the closing part of the chapter. This

chapter shows that processes of subject formation and subjection were carried out simultaneously.

Chapter Five discusses how the policy-making processes remain far removed from local realities. Colonial conservation was physically exclusionary of local actors such as those along the Madimbo corridor. In a post-apartheid South Africa, the rhetoric has changed to one of including local people, but as shown in this chapter, the reality on the ground is still based on exclusions. Additionally, the policy-making environment in relation to TFCAs remains exclusionary of local people, and as a result, replicate the historical divisions between human action and protected environments. The chapter shows how, in a post-apartheid environment, some of these historically based approaches are being challenged in the courts of law, and the changing strategies that conservation agencies adopt to maintain control over PAs.

Chapter Six explores local livelihood strategies and the centrality of natural resources in their sustenance. The centrality of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods and the exclusionary effects of interventions such as conservation has created specific local views based on local demands to access natural resources and local ways of responding to and framing intervention. The diversity of local livelihoods highlight some of the complexities conservation faces in touting tourism as a ‘one size fits all’ solution.

Chapter Seven discusses local views of conservation (what they see or how conservation is to them) based on historical experiences. The chapter shows that local people base their assessment of PAs on the exclusion from physical environments that are important for local livelihoods. The chapter also shows that there are different responses to exclusionary approaches, with collective recounting of past experiences but largely individual attempts to secure livelihoods based on natural resources enclosed in PAs. The chapter also highlights that while exclusionary processes were experienced at state-local level, some exclusion from local decision making is replicated, in particular in relation to traditional authorities and individuals perceived to have immigrated into the area.

Chapter Eight also offers empirical evidence in the context of TFCAs. It explores current views of

conservation (what local people have to say about conservation) in terms of TFCAs and shows that local aspirations in relation to TFCAs converge on questions of cultural integrity but diverge on approaches to natural resources management and biodiversity conservation.

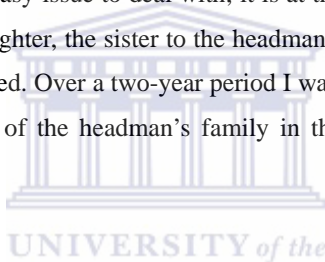
Chapter Nine offers the conclusion, highlighting the theoretical contribution of the thesis, in particular on understandings of framing the political ecology of external interventions. In terms of empirical evidence, the conclusion is that while local people engage with their historical experiences in a collective way, they often diverge on how to approach the future. They are united in their historical experiences but divided in how to confront external interventions they agree have caused suffering through limited livelihood opportunities. The chapter ends by exploring areas of potential research, noting the need to re-evaluate the dynamics of planning external intervention.



CHAPTER TWO: Framing the political ecology of external interventions: Theoretical and conceptual considerations

Three generations and livelihoods on a seven hectare piece of land

One sweltering February midday, Musanda (headman)'s mother, Muofhe Siphuga paces up and down the village. She is visiting her son. Foremost on her mind is the recent approval by the Chief at a village meeting to allocate seven hectares of land bordering the Kruger/Makuleke Contractual Park to the east for a youth tourism project. She is unhappy because the project has fenced off the area she uses for collecting a variety of natural resources. The current season for marula fruit and mopane worms has prompted her to seek the headman's (her son's) audience. Her enterprising step-son, who leads the new youth project, beams with confidence and enthuses at the new beginning for the youth in the village. He notes the tourism project will create jobs for young people and adds that already in its inception phase it is employing ten people. His step-mother, however, is particularly unhappy with the fence that is going up around this seven hectare piece of land. She says the youth have taken over a piece of land that she uses for collecting mopane worms and marula fruit to make the famous marula beer (Mukumbi). This is not such an easy issue to deal with; it is at the interface of individual interests, kinship and leadership obligations. Muofhe Siphuga's daughter, the sister to the headman, also has a son who now works at the tourism project and was instrumental in getting it started. Over a two-year period I watched the unfolding conflicts over this piece of land as epitomised by the three generations of the headman's family in the village. These observations left me with a profound sense of confusion.



The arguments deployed by the members of the family mirror on-going village realities and disputes. They also tap into arguments advanced by NGOs such as the Peace Parks Foundation in their support for TFCAs and Nkuzi in their support for land rights as well as financial institutions such as the World Bank. The youth of Bennde Mutale village, particularly those involved in the tourism project, indicate that it is time to generate wealth for themselves. They do not want to wait for outsiders to come and invest money into tourism. After all, they are the ones who live here and who should lead these initiatives. Thamie Siphuga, the leader of the project, has big plans for the village and the youth project. He notes that this is the beginning of making money and taking charge of what's going on in the villages. The project, therefore, stands to bring them out of poverty using the potential of tourism. In particular, he says, the area is attractive to tourists who like to visit national parks.

His step-mother, however, disagrees with the idea of setting aside a piece of land for tourism development. She finds that anything to do with tourism in the area so far has led to the exclusion of local people, with fences being the ultimate blow to any aspirations of local resource use. She points out that her experience of any tourism project is that they often do not deliver on their promises but instead result in further controls of local people's movements and restrictions on which environments can be accessed and used. It does not matter to her that it is the local youth, all in their twenties, who have

started the project. She points out that the same local youth are employing security guards to stop people from walking within the seven hectare piece of land. She is pacing up and down trying to get the headman to reverse the favourable decision for the tourism project. Her son is ambivalent though, at times imploring the youths to allow elderly people (essentially his mother) access into the area to collect resources such as marula fruit and mopane worms. Occasionally he threatens to stop the project if the youths do not include him in the project implementation decision-making process.

The headman's sister, Florence Tshivhambu, whose son is also involved in the project, despises fences and their exclusionary role. Yet, she now lauds the project for creating employment, noting that her son had not been employed for a long time and the project is positive for the youth. As sister to the headman, she is consulted on major decisions pertaining to land and natural resources. This role means that she wields some influence over the headman when making a decision on the tourism project. In one interview she said that her mother was trying to influence the headman, 'to try and kick off our children from making a living on this land, but we are against that.' However, she was adamant that the fence for the Kruger National Park was a kind of land grab that had to be stopped and that conservation should not be allowed to continue to expand into areas where 'we are trying to make a living'



2.1 Introduction

The broader political dimension of the debate within the Siphuga family is that their arguments are often advanced by prominent NGOs such as Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) and finance institutions such as the World Bank in support of tourism development within the GLTFCA. These organisations invest significant resources to promote conservation driven tourism. Other organisations, such as Nkuzi Development Association, advocate the restoration of land and resource rights. Fay (2007) observes that, in relation to land claims within protected areas (PAs), two sets of NGOs are involved; those concerned with conservation and those concerned with land rights. In a village like Bennde Mutale, the presence of NGOs translates into funding for operations such as the youth project or support for land claims against PAs regarded to have caused displacement and suffering of local people. The on-going argument among the three generations of the Siphuga family is, therefore, a minute detail in a microcosm of interests that have been shaped by historical and on-going experiences. These interests are located at multiple scales from the local to the global, represented by actors in government departments, private sector, local communities, researchers and donors (see Figure 3, pp. 52). More significantly, however, is the changing perspective on boundaries, epitomised in the view of fences. The intergenerational differences in this case poignantly illustrate the changing face of conservation, the older generation highlighting historical experiences with enclosures and exclusion from certain environments, while the younger generation heralds new ideas as a livelihood strategy and the protection of nature. These discussions are iterative, with certain ideas becoming prominent even at a village level to later be challenged by competing and opposing ideas.

This chapter provides a foundational basis for exploring how local resource dependent actors frame their experiences with external interventions such as conservation, militarised security measures and veterinary disease control. The story of the Siphuga family suggests that local people make sense of external interventions and ideas in a variety of ways, including the appropriation of certain ideas, which can be viewed as a process of subject formation (see Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37 below), resistance to some forms of intervention and being ambivalent to approaches expected to result in negative impacts. Most analysts propose the reading of discourses as a process of framing through which actors make sense of and give meaning to phenomena and physical and socio-political realities (Hajer, 1995; Apthorpe, 1996; Fisher, 1997; Snow and Benford, 1988). Such frames are linked to the concept of storylines

(Fortmann, 1995; Hajer 1995). Storylines are an *expressive means* through which messages are communicated (Adger, Benjaminsen, Brown and Svarstad, 2001). Additionally, storylines are combined “elements from many different domains that provide actors with a set of symbolic references that suggest a common understanding” (Hajer, 1995: 62). In the case of the Siphuga family dispute, the storylines that emerge are that tourism development can reduce poverty, especially if there is local ownership of the idea and process; fences are symbols of exclusion and they affect negatively on local natural resources use. These storylines indicate personal and individual interests take precedence over family.

The use of storylines to frame people’s experiences grounds my analysis of the interpretation and communication of local reality. Framing as an iterative process means that “actors adhering to the discourse participate in various degrees to its production, reproduction and transformation through written and oral statements” (Adger *et al*, 2001: 683).

2.2 Political ecology as an analytical framework

Political ecology arose out of the critique of different disciplines such as cultural ecology, ecological anthropology and political economy (Brown, 1998; Peet and Watts, 1996; Bryant and Bailey, 1997). A central aspect of political ecology is the link between political and ecological problems at a regional level (Singh, 2001). The exact balance between political and ecological issues is subject to different analysis, with questions raised about whether it is a ‘politics without ecology’ (Bassett and Zimmerer, 2003: 103) or whether it has simply been a juxtaposition of the words ‘politics’ and ‘ecology’ “without a thorough rethinking of each term” (Latour, 2005: 2). Two aspects of the political ecology framework are important for my research. Firstly, the temporal scale or scales across time, in terms of how historical experiences shape local actors’ engagements with conservation and influence their thinking about the future. A growing recognition is that “it is difficult to understand the dynamics of land-use change at a point in time if [...] not analysed within the context of longer histories of society-environment relations” (Batterbury and Bebbington, 1999: 281). I use temporal scale to analyse the shifts in conservation policy, for instance from fortress conservation or the fences and fines approach of PAs, to growing recognition of the role of local communities in supporting conservation approaches and the way these changes have shaped the way local actors frame their experiences. The location of

the case study site along a geo-political boundary makes national security and control of livestock movement across boundaries an important aspect. This is particularly so in understanding local dynamics over access to land and natural resources.

I also use the political ecology framework in terms of actors at various levels from local resource dependent people to national, regional and global policy formulators and implementors. Political ecology of scale pays attention to a “variety of actors, human and non-human, involved in contestations over power, space and territory” (Natter and Zierhofer, 2002: 225). Contestations over power act as the “determinants of the emergence of cross-scale interactions” (Adger, Brown and Tompkins, 2005). As well as understanding the actors involved in contestations over power, contextual situations and political ramifications can explain environmental change and conflicts over access to resources (Bryant, 1992). I particularly focus on the place of natural resources in local livelihood strategies (see Chapter Six, pp. 126) and the role and extent of involvement of local people such as those along the Madimbo corridor in policy processes (see Chapter Five, pp. 98). This provides a context within which a discursive engagement with external interventions takes place.

Following on Escobar (1999); Bryant and Bailey (1997); Peet and Watts (1996), I use political ecology to evaluate the relationships between science and the political practice of power (see also Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37 below). I examine the TFCA policy dynamics emerging, both at a localised level along the Madimbo corridor and more broadly at a regional level. In particular, I evaluate the way political forces have historically interacted with science, and the way this continues to shape framing processes both at micro- and macro-scales. In the following section, I use the framing perspective to discuss the interactions among various actors from local to global levels, the relations between science and politics to exercise power in the public sphere.

2.2.1 The Framing perspective

I build upon two understandings of framing. Framing is understood, firstly, as a social construction process (Snow and Benford, 1988) and secondly as an outcome of who is included or excluded (Apthorpe, 1996; Hajer, 1995). The use of framing as an outcome conveys an image of containment, a window through which a selective process of experiences and events condenses and simplifies one’s life. It assumes a degree of stasis and the pre-existence of frames into which actors’ on-going

experiences fit. A different view of framing sees social construction process (Snow and Benford, 1988; Steinberg, 1998) that assumes an interchange of ideas. I use both understandings of framing as a template and process.

Framing is “a behaviour by which people make sense of both daily life and the grievances that confront them” (Oliver and Johnston, 2000:41) or the “semi-structured elements of discourse which people use to make sense of information they encounter” (Fisher, 1997: 1). Alternatively, framing is a set of dynamic, negotiated and contested processes, which articulate or amplify pre-existing events, experiences, beliefs and values (Snow and Benford, 1988).

In this study, I use framing as a malleable and emergent process, on the one hand, and a template, on the other. Templates often constitute external intervention, designed and aimed at achieving a set of objectives within given time limits (Long and Van der Ploeg, 1989). However, local dynamics confront external intervention, influencing both the process and the outcome of framing. Framing is reliant on processes that evolve according to people’s life experiences and their interactions with fellow local and external actors. As an outcome of contestation among local resource dependent people, national and global policy makers - framing fits in with the analytical framework of political ecology.



2.2.1a Social and political construction of reality

Much of contemporary engagement with or critique of science as politics or a social construct (Latour, 2005) is rooted in Immanuel Kant’s proposal that people’s ideas constitute objects of the world and not the other way round. Kant’s ideas form a central premise of writings on the social and political construction of reality. For instance, Robbins (2004) notes the origin and history of certain ideas and concepts such as degradation can be traced, denoting specific epochs of their construction, even though they appear natural and inevitable. Such ideas and concepts are rooted in social and political constructivism when they “disallow alternative interpretations, and so mask political motivations and activities” (Robbins, 2004: 110).

Literature on the social and political construction of reality in relation to the environment is particularly relevant for this study. It indicates the problematic elements between constructivism in the advancement of scientific ideas over environmental resources and political economy of colonial settler

establishment in South Africa (see Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37 and Chapter Four, pp. 72). For instance, influences of colonial soil conservation intervention dominated ideas of African societies as ignorant and destructive of the environment (Grove, 1990). Yet resistance to an imposition of these mechanisms on African societies was treated as environmental irrationalism on the part of native Africans and not as engagement with socially and politically constructed knowledge and approaches. The designation and management of PAs followed similar trajectories. Current literature on PAs in South Africa suggests that PA designation was argued in terms of environmental concerns, yet their motivation was firmly located in the social and political dynamics of early colonial settlements (Carruthers, 1995). Singh and van Houtum (2002) link the development of PAs to the political expediency of social and political control over Africans (see Section 2.2.1b below).

Another view of PAs is as spatial entities “constructed by various actors” who contribute to the construction of such spaces (Fall, 2002:243). Fall argues that PA boundaries reify the modernist nature/culture duality, itself a product of the social construction of nature (see also Smith, 1990; Shiva, 1991). Drawing on Lefebvre and extending his argument beyond state boundaries, Fall (2002) contends that an analysis of PA boundaries can be used to trace various forms of spatial practice which abstract life. Fall (2002: 249) concludes “PAs are spatial models constructed out of the struggle of people and organisations which remain overwhelmingly professionally separated along the nature/culture divide”.

2.2.1b Science, power and politics: knowledge and subject formation

The use of knowledge for enhancing social and political control by the state has been explored (Singh and van Houtum, 2002; Escobar, 1996; Peet and Watts, 1996, see Chapters Four, pp. 72 and Five, pp. 98). Much of this literature has drawn on Foucault’s ideas of ‘governmentality’ and subject formation with one of the main focuses on understanding how science, scientific disciplines and knowledge influence governance through the enhancement of power. A constant interplay between power and knowledge results in the expansion of both power and new disciplines of knowledge. The outcome is ‘disciplinary knowledge’ (Foucault, 1982).

For instance, Hill (1996) traces the development of conservation policy in Zimbabwe to show how it led to the consolidation of state power, initially through the dispossession and displacement of African people and later through decentralised natural resources management programmes. Hill (1996: 106)

contends that “the state uses conservation policies in much the same way it uses taxation, investment, interest rate or land resettlement policies: to establish and extend its own interests, which in a relatively new and tenuous polity centre on authority maintenance and extension, and ultimately the creation of political legitimacy.” The actual process in his example hinges on the involvement of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife in Zimbabwe, whose ecologists conceptualised the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) programme using local government District Councils, Ward Development Committees and Village Development Committees to act as appropriate authority for implementation and local level decision-making. Hill (1996: 112) notes that the linkages among rural farmers, conservation officers and local government can lead to “breaking the culture of resistance to wildlife conservation created [.....] in the colonial era, thus furthering the national government’s implicit goal of increasing power and presence in these often marginalised rural areas.” In this study, the relations and alliances among a variety of state and non-state actors in advancing TFCAs as appropriate forms of conserving globally significant biodiversity are explored (see Chapter Five, pp. 98). I use understandings of the collusion among actors involved in TFCAs to evaluate the role of non-state actors, such as the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), in generating knowledge on conservation and tourism that in turn enhances the presence of the state in localities such as the Madimbo corridor. Apart from the “symbiotic relations” between the state and knowledge production, control also relies on the production of certain truths, or a simplification of local realities, such as tourism being the most viable land use in the Limpopo River valley (PPF and Landscape Architects, 2006), in relation to natural resources.

Social and political control is advanced through certain ‘truths’ produced through disciplinary knowledge and discourses about phenomena (Foucault, 1980). The knowledge produced “is part of discursive practices by which rules are constructed, objects are defined, and events for the study identified and constituted [.....], disciplines invest or colonise modern institutions linking them together, honing their efficiency, extending their hold” (Fisher, 2000: 25, quoted in Singh, 2001: 28). For example, Leach and Mearns (1996) note that scientific observations of environmental degradation are used to produce certain unquestionable ‘truths’ which act as ‘received wisdom.’ Such ‘truths’ now permeate institutions of knowledge generation as well as state institutions, international organisations and non-governmental organisations. Keeley and Scoones (2003), for instance, note how state policy-making often deploys scientifically produced facts, figures and statistics in support of specific policy

positions. Strategically located actors produce and use these facts to enhance their own interests. For instance, access to resources is limited as “conventional wisdom dictates that local people’s utilisation of resources in areas where biodiversity is high is in conflict with conservation and tourism” (Brown, 1998: 73). These assumed truths or assumptions are often the basis for policy prescription, leading to monitoring for compliance with such truths and controlling of human behaviour by state institutions.

The monitoring of human behaviour according to disciplinary power is part of a process of subject formation while subjection is premised on the application and practice of power through scrutiny and the gaze of the state (Foucault, 1980). Using Hill’s example again, the processes of subject formation and subjection are actually not quite so distinct, they can be simultaneously implemented. For instance, Mamdani (1996) observes that the recent wave of decentralised approaches, the basis of CAMPFIRE discussed by Hill, in fact, results in certain levels of subjection through enhanced decentralised despotism. In this respect, disciplinary knowledge is used to condition the behaviour of local actors and hence the creation of ‘environmental subjects’ (Agrawal, 2005) while subjection is through enforcement that results in increased control over local actors. Subject formation is achieved through “technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination.... and technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect [.....] a certain number of operations on their bodies and souls” (Foucault quoted in Agrawal, 2005). Subjection involves “political practice into the process by which subjects make themselves” (Agrawal, 2005: 165).

In this way, sets of ideas, knowledge and narratives are mobilised and deployed in an environmental struggle (Robbins, 2004). They become characteristic of the relationship of domination and resistance. As a result, the focus of the state does not always result in the desired outcomes (Agrawal, 2005), as those the state seeks to dominate resort to resistance and opposition to the state interventions. For instance, “most acts of power from below, even when they are protests –implicitly or explicitly- will largely follow the same ‘rules’ even their objective is to undermine them” (Scott quoted in Singh, 2001: 29).

In part, this reflects the coercive aspects of state and the use of institutional and social power in colonial and postcolonial contexts. The result is a duality of the state apparatus, which can be viewed “both as a modern power regulating the lives of citizens and as a despotic power that governed peasants

as subjects” (Mamdani, 1996:136). While Mamdani focuses on subjection from a legal-judicial perspective through the colonial creation of tribal authorities, a continuum exists between his ideas and subject formation in terms of disciplinary knowledge. Singh and van Houtum (2002) also explore the links of expert/technical knowledge to the advancement of both state power and customary elites (Mamdani’s decentralised despots). Mamdani’s observation of subjection can be read as Foucault’s subject formation through ‘iterative production of knowledge’ among human agents. Both subject formation and subjection are useful for this research. Firstly, from a historical perspective, they provide insight into evaluating the links between new forms of knowledge such as conservation and veterinary sciences, on the one hand, and state consolidation during colonialism, on the other hand (see Chapter Four, pp. 72). More recently, they provide an understanding of the appropriation of knowledge by local actors in terms of compliance with scientific goals of conservation, such as the youth for tourism projects. There are also new forms of land and natural resources organisations, which highlight the exercise of state power and authority at a local level.

2.2.1c Framing according to the temporal scale of political ecology

A central aspect of the political ecology framework is temporal scale; in particular issues of environmental change over time which are understood to be non-linear and non-cyclical as well as tracing the emergence of conservation ideas as social construction of nature (Neumann, 2005). Scott and Sullivan (2000: 2) express it as, “a concern with tracing the genealogy of narratives concerning ‘the environment’. Of importance to this study are the historical interventions premised on science, such as conservation and veterinary science. An understanding of the political deployment of conservation and veterinary sciences serves as a basis to examine why local actors along the Madimbo corridor continue to be enamoured with external interventions.

Local actors’ responses to their changing contexts use images of their lived experiences (Comaroff, 1985). They are therefore determined through their own history while at the same time, their social practice is determined through “every day production of goods and meanings” (Comaroff, 1985: 5). Thus, adopting an analysis of the historical basis of contemporary engagement with external interventions does not imply uni-directional receipt of ideas and approaches. Instead, as Giddens (1984) notes concerning the relationship between agency and structure, agency is inherent in systems of social action while the same human agency also constitutes social structures. As a result, the embeddedness of an individual in “larger contexts and in

particular situations” becomes important and that “can only be known through investigations into history, political dynamics and social structure, culture and ecology” (McCay, 2002: 361). Two aspects need to be considered in understanding how local actors along the Madimbo corridor deploy ‘motivations of historical processes’ (Comaroff, 1985: 6) in their claims to territory and dealings with external interventions such as biodiversity conservation.

Firstly, the perception of a “dwelt in world” which results in people’s knowledge of their environments and resources, and their linkages to ritual and livelihood forms a basis for the historical influence on framing of human/environment relations (Ingold, 2000). Much of my analysis is based on my reading of the symbiotic relationship between people and their environment as emblematic of a ‘cultural ecology.’ In cultural ecology, local livelihood skill is predominantly determined in terms of its adaptive significance to ecosystems. Thus, there is a presumed human-ecosystem relation that exists before any form of intervention is introduced.

Secondly, previous experiences with external interventions need to be considered. Along the Madimbo corridor, these include conservation, veterinary disease control, boundary consolidation and military security. Local actors experience detachment and alienation from the natural resources around them through the regulation of access to their environments. Both levels of focus, the local in terms of livelihoods, and the multi-level in terms of interventions and subsequent impacts on livelihoods, can be approached from a decision-making perspective. Locally, the dynamics of access to natural resources is explored through an evaluation of the historical changes in access among various members of the local ‘community’. Yet the local dynamics are (were) intricately linked to the national and global levels. As a result, an assessment of the political ecology of temporal scale is as much about the power and political dynamics among local actors as well as between local and other levels. It is, therefore, an “exploration of *intra-level at the local*¹ and multi-level connections between global and local phenomena” (Adger *et al*, 2001: 682). In my research, I follow Brosius (1999: 278) who asks us to be

“More alert to issues of power and inequality, to the contingency of cultural and historical formations, to the significance of regimes of knowledge production, and to the importance of the acceleration of trans-local processes.”

¹ Own addition.

By tapping into the history of the 'dwelt in world', specifically looking at the link between livelihood skill and the environment, I analyse how local actors frame their experiences of external interventions. An appropriate starting point is the history of PAs. Brockington and Igoe (2006: 424) observe that PAs have a history of displacement that is increasingly the focus of literature, noting that

“Most protected areas were established before 1980. This reflects two processes, first a move within research circles to recover and rediscover protected areas' murky past, and second stronger enforcement of existing legislation”.

My interest in the history of PAs along the Madimbo corridor is, however, not just their displacement effects, but how local experiences have resulted in the framing of conservation through social justice lenses (Zerner, 2000). In particular, I draw on the political ecology framework (see Section 2.2, pp. 34 above), putting emphasis on contestations among a variety of actors, such as chiefs, CPA at a local level and environment and development organisations at broader levels. These contestations are rooted in historical experience with conservation. At a local level, attention to historical issues is useful in understanding contestations over land uses between PAs and options more premised on use of natural resources.

The contestations over nature conservation, PAs management and, more recently, biodiversity conservation are well documented globally (Brechin *et al*, 2003; Hutton *et al*, 2005; Jeanrenaud, 2003; Brockington, 2002; Carruthers, 1995). For much of the twentieth century, PAs, or 'fortress conservation', generated controversies partly due to the way they were set up and their negative impacts on local resource dependent people.

2.2.1d Local agency in framing experiences with external interventions

“All forms of external intervention necessarily enter the existing lifeworlds of the individuals and social groups affected, and in this way they are mediated and transformed by these same actors and structures” (Long, 2001: 13).

Participation in the production of discourses can take various forms, including being in opposition to or critically engaging prominent sets of ideas. Multiple storylines exist for a single phenomenon such as transboundary approaches depending on the dynamics among a variety of actors ranging from local resource dependent, national, regional and international actors. The evaluation of “struggles over meanings and practicalities of livelihoods, values and organising processes” (Arce and Long, 2000:8) as well as the

“political culture and public discourse” (Steinberg, 1998: 846) are important in understanding the multi-level connections between the local, national and global. Arce and Long (2000: 2) speak of the “significance of processes of dismembering and reconfiguring Western ideology, discipline and techniques [.....].”

Environmental issues are a critical area of focus today, from global climate change, loss of globally significant biodiversity, desertification and institutional issues in relation to shared watercourses. Environmental issues pervade global policy-making, and proposed solutions to environmental problems remain predominantly focused on managerialistic discourses (Adger *et al*, 2001; see Chapter Five, pp. 98). However, managerialistic approaches conceptualised at a global level are problematic in that they are often far removed from local resource user dynamics. They rarely reflect the livelihood needs of local actors (Adger *et al*, 2001). Arce and Long (2001) say that localised practices provide a reworking of external interventions and a possibility to engage with policy interventions that impact on local processes and give insight into local forms of engagement with imported ideas.

The rapid proliferation of organisations responsible for environmental management and governance has resulted in a “globalised political space in which new forms of political agency are being invented and contested against both established and newly reconfigured structures of domination” (Brosius, 1999: 277). Environmental concerns play a growing role in local struggles over resources and result in national and international debates on the environment. Not only have environmental organisations at grassroots level grown in number, but policy-making has increased too, as can be witnessed through a variety of international conventions, meetings and global funding mechanisms for environmental conservation approaches². For instance, the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requires member countries to develop National Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plans (NBSAPs) whose focus fulfils convention requirements (see also Chapter Five, pp. 98). Compliance with general guidelines ensures funding for implementation through such possibilities as the Global Environmental Facility, specifically designed as a funding mechanism for the CBD related work. As a result of this, several patterns in terms of policy and practice are emerging in relation to environmental issues.

² Conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (<http://www.cbd.int/>) and funding mechanisms through the World Bank, United Nations agencies.

The first is a structural analysis of global policies, institutions and how they impact on local strategies and patterns of resource use. However, structural modes of analysis have been criticised for not explaining “adequately the sources and dynamics of social heterogeneity” (Long 2001:11), and hence the second aspect is an actor-oriented approach, which not only emphasises the role of external factors in understanding social change, but also asks about the interplay, relationships and mutual determination between internal and external factors. These relationships shed light on how local actors process, internalise or reject global environmental discourses.

Despite the hegemony of conservation ideas such as PAs, various affected actors engage with and challenge discourses. The weak often devise means and ways, predominantly as ideas and beliefs, to withstand powerful actors (Scott, 1985). Much of this resistance does not include open rebellion for fear of losing material well-being and even of violent reprisals.

In my research, local discursive practices did not imply isolation of local actors from the broader policy and political processes, but reflected constructive engagement with and challenge to prominent discourses. Prominent discourses always meet responses from local actors who are affected. Whilst prominent and external discourses reflect the agency of actors such as donors, governments and NGOs, local responses, either in appropriating or contesting some of these discourses, imply local agency. They are testimony to a generation of the “politics of the subject that can be better understood and analysed by considering both practice and imagination” (Agrawal, 2005: 165). As a result of local responses, sites of contestation, negotiation and accommodation are created resulting in multiple realities (Long, 1992). Discursive practices are a reflection of these contestations and their analysis tends to focus on actors with an “emphasis on conflict, process and shifting accommodations” (Murphree, 1997).

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the conceptual and theoretical basis for analysing empirical observations along the Madimbo corridor and within the GLTFCA. I have proposed that the political ecology framework is useful for evaluating dynamics between local resource dependent actors along the Madimbo corridor, national and global conservation actors. In particular, I have proposed that an analysis of these dynamics focus on two important aspects of political ecology, firstly, the dynamics among multi-level actors, the role of scientific knowledge in determining the political and power

dynamics among these actors, and secondly, temporal scale and the impacts of historical experience in influencing local framing of external interventions. Therefore, I have discussed the role of knowledge in conditioning the behaviour of local actors, in the subject formation. I have also highlighted that subject formation often accompanies control over local actors, hence subjection to state authority. Both subject formation and subjection are engaged with, contested and challenged by local resource dependent actors. The following chapter discusses the methodology used in this study.



CHAPTER THREE: Research methodology

An African researcher – insider or outsider?

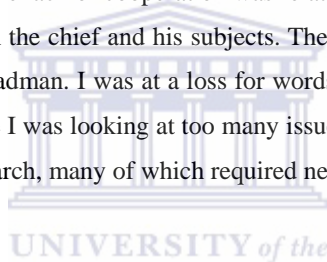
In November 2004 I met with Chief Mutele, under whose jurisdiction the village of Bennde Mutale falls. Other villages involved in the Gumbu-Mutele land claim also fall under his authority. After a short discussion during which I informed him of my intentions to undertake research in Bennde Mutale, he invited me to the office where a group of village headmen had been attending a meeting. There he introduced me to Headman Nelson Siphuga and requested him to assist me with what I wanted. However, he also requested that I stay a little, as he wanted to ask me some questions regarding my research. What was billed as questions – which I had assumed to be of an administrative nature- turned into a very useful information session. The Chief told me of his efforts at land restitution but also of his dreams for conservation driven ecotourism. He stated his interests in investing in the area for ecotourism, indicating that the expected investment will run into millions of South African Rand. I could not have asked for a more astute start into the issues I wanted to research. At the end, the Chief wished me well in my endeavour and hoped that the research would shed some light on the potential of tourism in the area and that it can contribute to job creation for local ‘communities’. I was only too glad that this had gone so well.

A few months later, in the scorching heat of the Limpopo River Valley, my research assistant and I sat at the house of the Communal Property Association’s chairperson, waiting to present my proposal and request permission to interview CPA members. When he eventually arrived, he was accompanied by the vice-chair of the CPA, and they started asking what business we had come about. We introduced the research project and presented a copy of the proposal and a letter from the University confirming that I was a student. After a few minutes, the chair of the CPA indicated that they could not allow me to interview CPA members. The reason, he noted, was that the provisional title of my proposal had the word ‘conservation’. I was taken aback, but later, when reading land claim documents, I realized that the CPA had already refused potential land use workshops to be held in the villages. I tried to explain, but he had made up his mind. The vice-chair calmed him down, saying that ‘this young man is an African and should be allowed the opportunity to do research here, the same way we have welcomed white researchers’. He further noted that, coming from Zimbabwe, I should understand the history of land in the area. He, however, laid down the conditions under which I would be allowed: that I get the same information as other researchers before me and that I present a report to the CPA some time during my research. He added that even if my title has the word ‘conservation’, I should make it clear in my reports that the local communities do not want conservation on their land.

From here on my repeated returns to the field would result in the different receptions every time I went. The reception from Chief Mutele in March 2007 is indicative of these changes. Whereas he had been very welcoming in the past, on this occasion he was not. He said he did not want me to run around the area conducting research on boundaries. This, he indicated, was his territory and if I wanted to know anything about boundaries, I should go to his place and he would show me where the boundaries to the villages are and where his territory ends. Instead, he told me that I should focus my research

on local livelihoods – the changes in the way people made a living in the past. I pointed out that livelihoods and the role of the environment were only one aspect of my study, but that the whole research is really on boundaries – boundaries in terms of national geo-political boundaries and local understandings of boundaries. However, he was adamant that boundaries should not be the focus of my research. I wondered what had triggered the chief’s reaction to my research as I had always spoken about boundaries right from the beginning of my meetings with him.

Thinking back to another encounter the previous day provided me with some clues. At Pafuri River Camp, where the former manager had always welcomed me for interesting discussions, the new manager informed me that I was no longer welcome there. I could come only if I paid the full amount for accommodation like all the other guests. When I pointed out that I did not want to stay there and I was only coming occasionally, he said he didn’t care. I asked at whom this policy was aimed, if the villagers who have always used the land here in the past are also unwelcome now to have a drink or socialize with the guests at the camp. He was adamant that even the villagers were not welcome unless they paid to stay overnight. He also indicated that the reasons for this were related to a lack of cooperation from the local headman. When I asked why he thought the headman was not cooperating, he just spoke of incompetence. He indicated that authority to build the tourist camp came from the chief. I further asked if the lack of cooperation was related to the fact that there might be differences of opinions on how to best use the land between the chief and his subjects. The Camp Manager’s final comment was that if it were before 1994, he would have shot the headman. I was at a loss for words, but I suspected that this discussion found its way to the chief who then decided that maybe I was looking at too many issues in my research. Such was the fluid nature of the interactions I encountered during my research, many of which required negotiation.



The very different reaction in March 2007 from the one I had received earlier from the chief in 2004 perhaps indicated the shifting balance of power and authority in a democratic South Africa. The different receptions I received also point to the contested nature of land uses in the area. I mention this because the issue of an African conducting research on issues of natural resources management would surface a few more times including in interviews with policy and decision makers. It intersects with issues of trust and perhaps the idea that I am an ‘insider,’ in this case based on my background. Being seen as an ‘insider’ left me excited, that I was seen as making a contribution to solutions regarding collective problems of conservation, land and natural resources governance. At another level, it also left me slightly overwhelmed. Overwhelmed because here was a phenomenon to which I was supposed to contribute to and for which different actors were optimistic. The three incidents with the chief and the CPA clearly pointed to the contested nature of the debates and approaches. At the same time, policy and decision makers at national level had land use ideas that often contradicted those espoused by either the CPA or the chief. These thoughts raised questions on the best ways to capture the diverse range of views and interests in relation to conservation and natural resources use. As well as the presentation of the findings in a way that contributes to the search for solutions rather than perpetuating the differences between different land use options, and more importantly, dealing with the insider/outsider polarity in my analysis and writing. This chapter discusses the methods and methodology that guided this study. It explores the research methods used in the field, the theoretical aspects of research methodology and the constraints encountered in the field.

3.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this study is the analysis of how local people along the Madimbo corridor in South Africa frame external interventions that facilitate social and political change. It does so by exploring local discursive practices in relation to biodiversity conservation in the context of the GLTFCA. In particular, it uses qualitative research methodology to analyse local actors' framing of biodiversity conservation discourses. This chapter discusses my research strategies and methods of collecting and analysing data, as well as the challenges faced during fieldwork. Various methods were used during the, in total, five months which I spent in the field, spread over two years. I undertook eleven trips to the field, including visits to the National Archives in Pretoria and interviews with policy and decision makers in several cities (see Appendix II, pp. 1b). Two field research assistants resident in the village of Bennde Mutale assisted me and they continued to collect data when I was not present. They provided continuity in the field throughout the two years of conducting field research. Since the Madimbo corridor is only one specific locality within the GLTFCA, to gain a broader understanding of the natural resources issues in the rest of the GLTFCA, interaction and discussions with other researchers working in Mozambique and Zimbabwe were undertaken.¹

3.2 Research methodology

The research objectives for this study are three-fold:

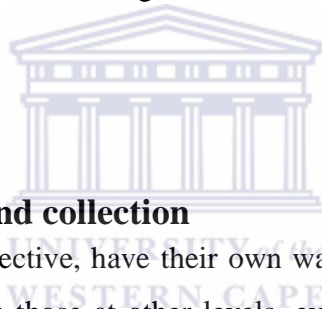
To analyse the means by which local actors understand external interventions that facilitate social change, in particular the local framing of biodiversity conservation;

To examine the role of natural resources in local livelihoods and evaluate local discursive practices in relation to biodiversity conservation, in particular in relation to the GLTFCA;

To examine alliances at a local level, and between the local and external actors. I look at how policy-making emerges from discursive practices that are shaped by these alliances as well as confrontations and contestations.

¹ In Zimbabwe, I contacted and obtained documents from Cesvi, an Italian NGO that implemented a programme in the Sengwe communal area within the GLTFCA. In Mozambique, Clara Bocchino conducted doctoral research in the villages immediately across the Mozambique South Africa border in the Pafuri region.

I conducted field research in South Africa, where the largest number of proponents for TBNRM in Africa are located and within the GLTFCA, the biggest and most ambitious transfrontier initiative in the world (see Hanks, 2001). Specifically, I researched local ideas on conservation along the Madimbo corridor and the ways local residents engaged with externally driven interventions. Due to the proximity of the corridor to the Limpopo River, the official boundary between South Africa and Zimbabwe, other issues related to external interventions included geo-political boundaries consolidation and security. The area is of strategic importance for the objectives of national security and emerging transfrontier conservation initiatives (see Whande, 2007; Steenkamp, 2001). The area generates high interest from the state, from local and international NGOs and some regional bodies, as witnessed by conservation approaches, presence of the military and veterinary officials. External actors have had a profound effect on how local actors view state intervention (see Chapters Four, pp. 72; Six, pp. 126 and Seven, pp. 169). I undertook detailed research in Bennde Mutale village. Bennde Mutale village is located closest to PAs: Makuleke/Kruger Contractual National Park (CNP) as well as the provincial Makhuya Park.



3.2.1 Data requirements and collection

Local actors, both individual and collective, have their own way of life, views and ways of speaking about the environment, different from those at other levels, even though they may mimic prominent representations of the environment. Therefore, a differentiated understanding of local realities in relation to biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods becomes important. Thus, I collected a wide variety of data in trying to analyse local discursive practices in relation to the environment. My data includes historical processes in relation to the environment; local and outside interactions in processes aimed at controlling access to land and natural resources, and, the place of natural resources in local livelihoods. The following summarises the data sets collected to assess local framing of external intervention:

- To understand local differences in the frames through which external interventions are understood, I undertook social mapping exercises, generating data on social differentiation and household typologies.
- I traced local livelihood strategies, in particular the role of natural resources and transboundary approaches in local residents' livelihoods.

- The impacts of historical processes on local resource dependent people's views of the environment were explored.
- I collected local interpretations of external interventions such as conservation, military/security issues and geo-political boundary consolidation.
- I observed local actors' actions in relation to external interventions such as conservation and transboundary human movement controls.
- I documented representations of the Madimbo corridor in policy and in projects conceptualised by a variety of "external" actors.

To determine household typologies in the village of Bennde Mutale, I undertook social mapping exercises with different groups of local residents. Social mapping relies on local knowledge of a variety of issues such as the physical location of homesteads and their occupants, numbers of people in a household, livelihood strategies pursued by a household and ranking of households according to local understandings of wealth. I used social mapping to generate data on local understandings of a household, on wealth and to produce homestead maps. I also used social mapping to understand parameters used locally to determine social differences and household typologies.

The household typologies, generated according to wealth categories, assist in analysing people's abilities and capabilities to access and use certain environments. Social mapping, therefore, enables an analysis of household based framing of external interventions. I also used social mapping to determine the linkages between specific household typologies and certain livelihood activities as well as the bearing this had on frames of understanding external interventions. Access (or lack thereof) to certain environments also generated questions and issues around the authority that defined different understandings of boundaries and land uses.

Nemarundwe (2003: 55), in relation to catchment boundaries in Zimbabwe, notes that 'defining the precise biophysical boundaries [.....] limits the understanding of how local actors in communal areas share natural resources within and across villages.' In the case of the Madimbo corridor, the sharing of

resources across boundaries is not only limited to village boundaries, but reaches across ethnicities and countries, presenting a more complex scenario and messy matrix of actors, possibilities and constraints. At local level, often the decisions about specific boundaries are related to decision-making over what forms of land uses can be undertaken where, when, how and by whom.

To capture the nuances and complexities involved in this study, a multi-level approach was adopted (see institutional framework in Figure 3, pp. 52). First, detailed and focused research was undertaken at local level along the Madimbo corridor and, specifically, at Bennde Mutale village to understand the livelihood strategies of local resource dependent people. Additionally, this focus generated data on the framing of external interventions as well as the discursive practices (both in terms of how local actors view and speak about the environment and their actions in relation to the environment). A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used for the livelihood aspects.

The historical and discursive aspects of the study were undertaken using qualitative methods. It is recommended that research dealing with ‘contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context where boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined’ use a case study approach (Yin, 2003:13). A case study approach involves an empirical investigation of an issue “using multiple sources of evidence” that produce both quantitative and qualitative data (Robson, 1993). Different methods that seek to avoid a conflation of narrative (i.e. views on and how people speak about the environment) and views of the environment (i.e. what people see and how they act towards the environment) were employed in this research: participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions and discourse analysis.

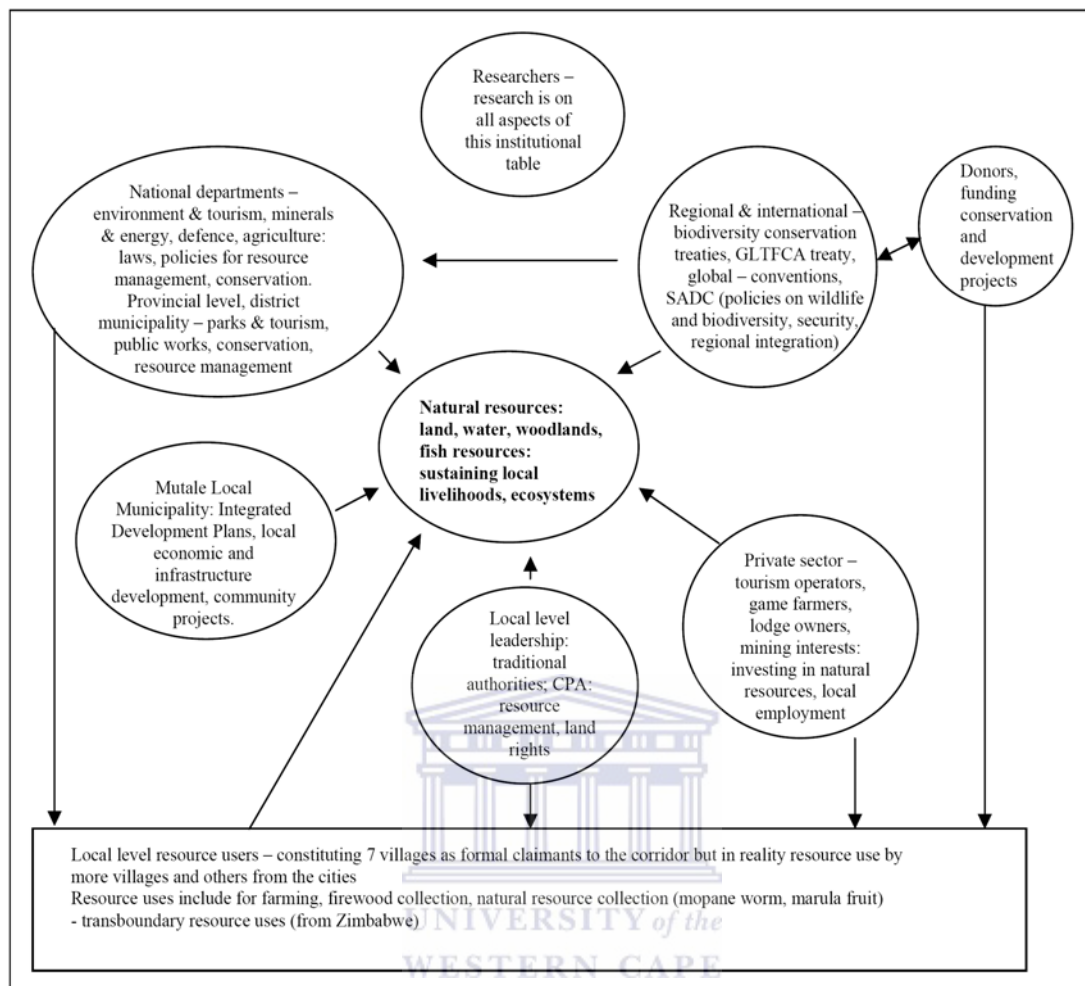


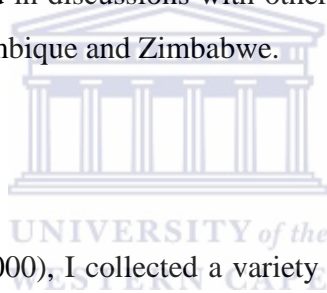
Figure 3: Institutional map for the actors and organisations involved with land reform, conservation and research along the Madimbo corridor.

To understand the way local actors frame external interventions, I analysed the range of actors (see Figure 3 above), externally driven processes in relation to land, natural resources and social control. Considering that the “environment” is broad and encompasses a range of factors such as ecosystems, surrounding conditions and processes, local views of the environment are interpreted here in relation to PAs, boundaries and interventions related to TFCAs. To be specific, this view of the environment deals with the socio-political dimensions of the interpretations of the environment and the effects on human relations as well as human-environment relations.

3.2.2 Identification of the case study site

The choice of the Madimbo corridor for this study was a combination of extensive consultations with other researchers, NGOs and government officials involved in the conceptualisation of the GLTFCA. As an ecosystem, social, cultural and livelihood border region, the Madimbo corridor offered conditions in which I was able to research local dynamics in relation to transboundary possibilities and constraints. It also offered an opportunity to interact with Zimbabwe based local resource dependent actors. I considered these issues when finally settling to conduct a single country focused research within the GLTFCA.

I initially intended to conduct this research in three villages, one each in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. I opted for a single field site as this offers more depth in understanding local dynamics over land and natural resources and the ways local actors relate to external intervention. However, I joined research networks and engaged in discussions with other researchers working in those contexts and I am aware of the issues in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.



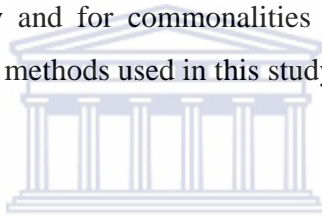
3.2.3 Research methods

Following on Denzin and Lincoln (2000), I collected a variety of materials ‘that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives.’ This research was undertaken at various scales ranging from local village level to trilateral level (through participating institutions in the GLTP). Local actors’ framing of biodiversity conservation reflects their experiences with on-going external efforts of biodiversity protection. In this respect, the broader policy environment and actors from local government and regional bodies were also engaged to understand how they contribute to local experiences (see Chapter Six, pp. 126). Thus, policy-making and implementation formed the context for analysing local actors’ discursive practices and their engagement with external intervention.

I used a combination of methods in this study. They include what is now generally classed as participatory research methods (see Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995; Nemarundwe, 2003) and conventional research methods, providing a continuum between the two than a clear cut preference for one of them. The methods included interviews, observations and focus group discussions to capture the role of

natural resources in local people's livelihoods, and to trace institutional factors that impact on access to natural resources as well as understand local views of and perceptions of conservation strategies.

Research at other levels was done predominantly through literature reviews, interviews with key policy makers and implementers, attendance at southern African regional meetings and presentations at workshops and conferences. Local leaders were interviewed to gain an understanding of issues in other villages along the Madimbo corridor. While not forming a statistically representative sample, "leaders can be studied, not as elites, but as representative spokesmen for a mass" (Gaventa, 1980). I remained aware, however, that leaders are part of the local dynamics and that their own interests influence them. To supplement my findings from the leaders in relation to the entire Madimbo corridor, I also attended meetings and functions organised for residents along the Madimbo corridor. Thus, with the use of a variety of methods and the consultation of different sets of local actors, the research findings were triangulated to check for consistency and for commonalities and differences in interpretation. The following sections discuss the specific methods used in this study one by one.



3.2.3a Social and natural resources mapping

My research examines local framing of external intervention and the place of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods. Chambers (2006: 4) notes social mapping can be used to identify "people, livestock, people in different livelihood and social categories, wealth and wellbeing groups." I used social and natural resource mapping in Bennde Mutale village to generate data on areas of natural resource importance, on settlement patterns in relation to these resources (see Figure 7, pp. 131) and to generate data on wealth and wellbeing of different households. The relations with external actors were analysed based on local claims to certain areas earmarked for conservation.

To capture a variety of perspectives, the social and natural resource mapping exercise was undertaken three times: first with a group of men, mostly local village leaders; secondly with a mixed group of youth, and, finally, with a group of women. I also conducted transect walks, which are understood as observatory walks to study local issues such as natural resources and problem areas (Mascarenhas, 1991), with local residents. I used transect walks to verify or triangulate some of the data and gain a

better understanding of the natural resources in the area and where local residents understood their boundaries to start and end.

The social mapping exercise was also used to research local understandings of household and locally defined wealth indicators. Discussions were facilitated on local understandings of what constitutes a 'household', and secondly, to determine local understandings of wealth. Participants in the social mapping exercises also listed the assets that each of the 120 households² in Bennde Mutale possessed and the strategies each engaged to sustain livelihoods. Based on local understandings of wealth (*upfumi*), the groups then ranked each of the households, resulting in five wealth categories (see Chapter Six, Table 1, pp. 133). The exercise of allocating households to specific wealth categories was repeated a number of times with smaller groups of key informants. This was because the larger discussion groups had generated heated arguments, which were prompted by the misunderstanding that the wealth ranking was going to be used to determine who gets government support, either in projects or via the provision of grants³. The wealth ranking exercise also provided important indicators about household livelihood strategies and, specifically, about the natural resources each household depended on. This information, together with consideration for gender balance, age and leadership, was used to sample households for further key informant interviews (see section 3.2.3b below).

Five households were initially chosen from each of the household categories, for the detailed assessment of the role of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods. Apart from the exercise with key informants that resulted in the allocation of households into different wealth categories, choice of households for detailed and long-term interviews was also influenced by expressions used in the discussions. Often participants in the three groups and smaller key informant discussions would use expressions before assigning a household to a category. The choice of households was therefore also influenced by comments such as 'this household is totally poor' (*tshishayi tshote*), 'this man is wealthy', 'without the child support grant they would be dying'. With time, however, it became necessary to include other households and individuals in interviews as a means to capture the

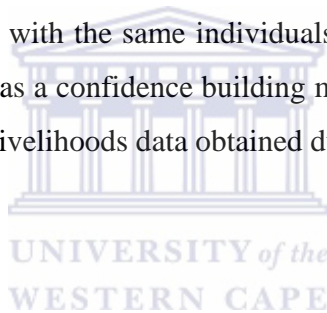
² At the time of this exercise, there were 120 households in the village of Bennde Mutale but a year later the number had increased to about 136 as a result of immigration predominantly by cattle farmers.

³ For instance, a man with two head of cattle had been included in the wealthy group even though he did not have any other source of income and a family with two incomes and a herd of cattle had been placed under the poor category, contrary to emerging trends in the classification.

discursive nuances involved in framing external intervention.

3.2.3b Talking about livelihoods and local/external relations in natural resource management: key informant interviews

Interviews are a critical means to generate data for social science research, and estimates are that they account for 90% of data generated (Briggs, 1986). Holstein and Gubrium (1995: 4) argue for an ‘active interview’ and note that “all interviews are reality-constructing, meaning-making occasions”. In this study I followed Holstein and Gubrium’s injunction, resulting in my use of semi-structured open interviews that followed on the interviewee’s leads than a predetermined sequence. I interviewed key informants identified through the social mapping exercise and according to wealth categories, and those involved in local leadership structures. My questions were organised around themes, including the role of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods, perceptions of PAs and understandings of boundaries. Follow up interviews were conducted with the same individuals over the entire research period partly as a data verification process but also as a confidence building measure. Key informant interviews also provided an opportunity to verify the livelihoods data obtained during the social mapping exercises (see Section 3.2.3a, pp. 54 above).



One on one interviews enabled certain groups of people, such as women and the youth, to articulate their views in a situation that did not replicate the local level power and gender dynamics. Additionally, it deepened my understanding of the different conceptions of problems with access to land and natural resources based on one’s socio-economic standing. Looking at socio-economic differentiation is important for understanding the nature and character of livelihood strategies.

The interviews provided an understanding of the complex ways in which local actors across different wealth categories characterise, engage with and experience conservation as external intervention. These issues were also reviewed with members of the Bennde Mutale village and those from other villages along the Madimbo corridor in informal discussions. Additionally, facilitated focus group discussions were held to follow up on some of the emerging issues.

3.2.3c Facilitated focus group discussions

Focus groups are important for obtaining the views and perspectives of actors who would otherwise be excluded through gender and power dynamics (Pini, 2002). They constitute interviews with small groups of people (Short, 2006). I used facilitated focus group discussions to generate data on local understandings of boundaries and on how current boundary formations limit or facilitate the local use of certain resources. Focus groups were also convened with local women who were often identified by other villagers as being engaged in 'immoral' livelihood strategies such as sex work in order to get their views and perceptions on the role of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods. Some of the focus group discussions also involved local actors and conservation officials. This was despite the inherent conflicts over notions of land use and access to certain environments. In this way, some of the problematic issues around boundaries, specifically in relation to PAs, and the authority of conservation officials beyond such boundaries were discussed in an open session. Mosse (1994) cautions that power relations in the group can affect focus groups, that they can be sites for contestation. Most of these discussions were pre-arranged, but at times a small group of people drinking beer in my presence would initiate a discussion based on their interest in the issues, specifically on the claims to land and natural resources, territorial boundaries and movement of people across geo-political boundaries. These 'organic' groups seemed to generate the most interesting discussions, partly because people were participating out of their own accord. In such instances, I limited the prominence of my facilitation to occasionally asking questions that shifted the direction to issues specific to my research. At times it was necessary to follow up on discussions with individuals or to verify what was said with other interviewees. Undertaking research on discursive practices also required that I not only listened to narratives but also observed local actors in their daily routines.

3.2.3d Observing local actors' livelihood and natural resource access strategies

Participant observation was used to understand some of the nuances of local discursive practices. It offered an opportunity to understand local actors' relations to environmental resources and to external interventions through an analysis of their actions and daily routine. Through participant observation, I could witness, explore and observe a variety of approaches, some of which were deliberately kept out of sight of external actors and law enforcement agents. Bernard (2002) recommends the use of

participant observation where there are contestations between actors, as verbal expressions are at times unable to capture the nuances and contradictions involved. Participant observation, however has been critiqued as masking differences and romanticising the locals since in real practice the difference between the researcher and local actors still exists and makes it difficult for researchers to be integrated in the settings they are trying to understand (Cheater, 1986). To deal with this, I combined participant observation with informal discussions as well as relied on research assistants to interpret certain events for me. These activities provided some basis to analyse the contradictions between what local actors said about conservation and how they acted towards it.

Participant observation was undertaken using various strategies. The first involved sitting in on the village meetings that were mostly on Sunday mornings (see Appendix I for a list of meetings attended, pp. 1a). This was important to observe interaction among the leadership, men, women and youth but also the processes of decision-making on matters relating to land and natural resources. I also participated in most social activities in the village, including going to soccer matches at the village stadium or to the local tavern to watch televised soccer. I also accompanied local people to collect natural resources, such as mopane worms or marula fruits, or as they made ilala palm wine. This was important in the further understanding of access to resources by different groups in the village but also as continued transects to the mapping exercises.

3.2.3e Historical profiling

Historical profiling was used to understand the historical patterns of resource access and use in the area. Elderly people, who are knowledgeable on the history of the area, were interviewed. Life histories were conducted to 'map' local changes in access to land and natural resources and to document when external interventions took place. The choice of the elders was made as a recommendation from key informants. I also consulted the Vhembe Communal Property Association (CPA), which leads the land claim for the Madimbo corridor and has undertaken a historical assessment of where people moved from, their livelihood strategies then and how their lives were impacted by the move. To increase the number of people interviewed, the snowball method was also used in which those interviewed are asked about other persons knowledgeable of the local history (Vogt, 1999). This method did not yield any more names than had been provided by the Vhembe CPA.

It was important to understand the ways local actors related to the environment, and how they accessed and used various aspects of the environment for their livelihoods and shelter. This was also critical to understanding local claims to land and natural resources. The stories, however, told to legitimise current claims to land and natural resources were often elaborated with regard to boundary issues that are deeply contested. Recognising the potential of filtering historical information to validate current claims to territory, I combined local historical accounts with archival searches and secondary sources of information. Archival sources of data were very useful in verifying and complementing historical data on resource use and human movement in the context of international political boundaries. I also consulted the archives to obtain conservation records in relation to the neighbouring Pafuri triangle. Records from the 1960s provide ample evidence of external interventions in the form of planned villages.

3.2.3f Presentations in the villages

Getting feedback from residents along the Madimbo corridor was an important aspect of my qualitative research methodology. It allowed verification of reflections and conclusions from the process and allowed the further development of new ideas and insights (see also Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). I gave presentations at various stages of the research to get feedback from residents along the Madimbo corridor. A total of five presentations were conducted along the Madimbo corridor:

- research introduction to the chief and his advisors in November 2005
- research introduction at Bennde Mutale in April 2006
- research introduction to the Vhembe CPA in April 2006
- preliminary research findings to residents along the corridor in October 2006
- preliminary findings to Bennde Mutale residents in October 2006.

Presentations also combined other non-substantive issues such as the slide show at Bennde Mutale village. The photos, highlighting critical environmental resources in the area, generated discussions in the village that individuals also followed up on when they met me later in the village. I found that the

presentations also opened avenues of communication with individuals who previously had not been very welcoming of my questions. Over all, invaluable comments were provided on the preliminary research findings, offering opportunities to follow up on certain issues and to rectify certain misconceptions that might have resulted out of my own bias.

3.2.3g Research methods at other levels

A critical aspect of the political ecology framework is the multi-level connections among a variety of actors (see Section 2.2, pp. 34). This research involved multiple levels from the local resource dependent users to regional bodies such as the GLTFCA. Primary and secondary data sources were consulted on TBNRM policy. There has been a recent upsurge in literature on the processes, potential challenges and actual impact of TBNRM in southern Africa (Wolmer, 2003; Spierenburg *et al*, 2006; Braack, Sandwith, Peddle and Petermann, 2006). Additionally, I also relied on project documentation such as treaties and regional strategies and official correspondence among the three country agencies involved in the GLTFCA (GLTFP Joint Management Board, 2002; PPF and Landscape Architects, 2006; Katerere *et al*, 2001). As part of the research proposal preparation, I compiled an annotated bibliography on CBNRM in Southern Africa (Whande, 2007).

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Primary data collection was through semi-structured interviews with individuals involved in TBNRM policy and implementation work (see Appendix II for a list of actors involved, pp. 1b). I also attended and presented at regional meetings and workshops dealing with issues of indigenous peoples, local communities and PAs, a useful platform for following up on recent developments of TBNRM. I attended four workshops in the course of research period:

- The Transboundary Protected Areas Research Initiative (TBPARI) workshop, April 2005 (see Büscher and Whande, 2007).
- The World Conservation Union Regional Office for Southern Africa (IUCN-ROSA) workshop in November 2005.
- Animal Health for the Environment and Development within the Great Limpopo Transfrontier

Conservation Area (AHEAD-GLTFCA) annual workshop, March 2006.

- Animal Health for Environment and Development (AHEAD-GLTFCA) workshop in March 2007.

I also used electronic discussion fora dedicated to TBNRM research, analysis, networking and communications. These platforms were useful to reflect on emerging research data and get feedback on my research from peer practitioners and scholars in the field.

3.2.3h Recording field data

Different approaches were used to record data depending on the specific method used. For instance, key informant interviews and life histories were recorded digitally. Participant observation, however, relied on getting involved in actual activities in the villages and keeping a diary of what was observed on a daily basis. Diaries are useful in recording routine or everyday processes (Elliot, 1997). The diary was reworked on a weekly basis with research assistants during reflection sessions. Additionally, the activities observed led to questions in one-on-one interviews, allowing for multiple interpretations and explanations of observed routines. At village meetings, I also relied on a number of local youths who provided their analysis of the contestations that usually characterised such meetings. I did not record the actual meetings but relied on listening and entering my reflections in the diary in the evenings as well as 'post-mortem' discussions with a few key informants. The vignettes at the beginning of each chapter are edited versions of some of the diary entries.

3.2.4 Data analysis and presentation

Qualitative data analysis is both iterative and reflective; research findings are reviewed as more questions arise, connections in processes are discovered and themes emerge (Miles and Hubermann, 1994). The iterative nature of qualitative data analysis enables a deepening of the understanding of complex social and political processes. The qualitative data obtained for this research was analysed in phases through reflective notes after each of the field visits that helped to assess emerging themes and comparison with some of my pre-conceived ideas as well as preparation for the next field visit. The

reflective notes enabled the emerging issues to be sorted into themes, but also allowed a follow up on issues that needed clarity. In part, the identification of themes for this research was influenced by literature on natural resource management and my own practical experience in working on natural resource management. The themes were also identified based on their relevance to natural resources and local livelihoods, and their interconnections to local perceptions of exclusion (as well as how access and use is (re)negotiated), their linkages to issues of land rights and conservation.

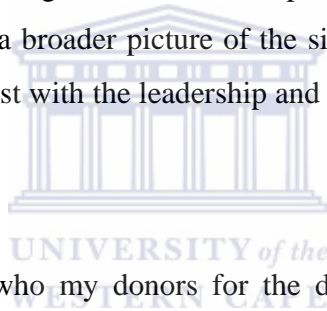
Various factors shaped the ways in which I approached and present my research data. The data is organised according to two scales to reflect historical and location dynamics along an international geo-political boundary. Firstly, there are historical time lines (see Chapter Two for a conceptual discussion of temporal scale, Section 2.2.1c; pp. 40, Chapter Four for a detailed historical account, pp. 72), and secondly there is a spatial scale in relation to specific localities considered relevant for regional politics and global conservation concerns. The place or location dynamics are approached through analysis of multilevel politics. For national state actors, the corridor was (and still is) important for national security issues (see Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4, pp. 217; and 8.5, pp. 220) and is characterised as a “corridor” or “buffer zone” where the pursuit of national security objectives can be undertaken without hindrance. For conservation, the corridor represents a critical link between PAs for transfrontier conservation purposes (see Chapter Five, Figure 6, pp. 117).

Some of the views and perspectives of local residents along the Madimbo corridor can implicate individuals in what are considered illegal activities, in particular within the PAs. I have chosen not to use people’s names in this research to protect my sources from possible harassment.

3.3 Challenges encountered during fieldwork

As the opening piece alludes, natural resource management policy changes can bring insecurities for local resource dependent actors. At the same time, local actors in leadership positions are well positioned to anticipate potential benefits from the changing policy environment. Thus, the entry into the field felt like a tussle to win me over as a researcher and a person who might shed some light on viable land uses within the Madimbo corridor that can produce favourable results for one or the other

actors. The chief's strategy embraced my research. He was upfront that it should lead to clarity on issues of land and natural resources. The strategy of the CPA was of initial disengagement, and then slowly embracing the research process as it went along. Both the CPA and the chief, however, sought to influence the outcome of the research by portraying their respective positions as legitimate. This was a difficult terrain to navigate as both leadership entities had local supporters. It was common for people to ask, in the middle of an interview, who I thought was right between the chief and the CPA. Even when I organised report back workshops and invited both the CPA and the chief, they would independently ask if the other was coming. In the end, the CPA and the chief never attended the report back workshops together, relying, instead, on me to report back to them separately. Where a group was present for the feedback, it usually involved members of one 'camp', and not the other. The challenge, therefore, was to balance competing and conflicting systems of authority and interests without appearing to take sides. To gain the confidence of both leadership entities I made sure that each time I was in the field I would call on them and give them a brief report on how my research was progressing. I also made clear to them that to get a broader picture of the situation I needed to consult them both. This was necessary for building up trust with the leadership and reassured them that my research aimed to be as objective as possible.



At policy level, I was often asked who my donors for the doctoral research were and what their positions were on transfrontier conservation. One senior advisor for TFCA development went as far as to imply that whatever I was going to write was ultimately determined by those who were funding the research. The policy level actors were generally suspicious and guarded about the answers they gave. In the end, I felt this was an obstacle to an open discussion, in which the policy advisor concerned would speak freely without fear of being misquoted. Even representatives of the biggest proponent of transfrontier conservation, the PPF, were hesitant to engage in discussions that focused on local actors. When I requested to make a presentation of my research findings to the Joint Management Board, consisting of different working committees such as veterinary, conservation and security, the responses from the government officials from Mozambique and Zimbabwe were positive and welcoming. However, I was told by the South African coordinator that I “should forget about talking to government officials on my research findings.” When I challenged her on where government officials would then get current information about what's happening on the ground, the coordinator noted that I should just forget the presentation and instead seek out NGO meetings to make presentations. I was unable to

make presentations at the JMB meetings but I engaged individuals who I also sent copies of my research report to (Whande, 2007). Not being able to present to the JMB collectively, as a result, remains a gap in this research.

3.3.1 Challenges with specific methods

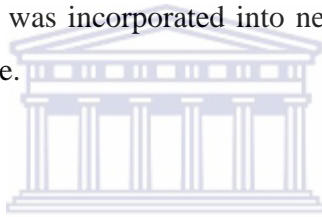
Conducting research on discursive practices when one does not speak the local language presents a number of challenges in capturing the nuances of people's responses. Even though I learnt some Venda, I still needed an interpreter to understand the nuances of idioms and proverbs. I further recorded interviews on audio tape to allow translation and transcription by others not from the area. The challenges encountered as a result of language were also overcome with the increased use of participant observation.

Social and natural resource mapping is usually based on a subjective interpretation of those present. For instance, in three social mapping exercises, one person in the village was continuously characterised as being among the poorest. However, through repeated interviews with her, she noted that she had about 200 head of cattle in Zimbabwe, clearly qualifying as being classified as wealthy according to the criteria used by local respondents. This example shows that data obtained can be inaccurate.

The focus groups convened generally involved local actors in dialogue on their understanding of the history of land and natural resources and on issues of boundaries. However, the focus groups also presented challenges, specifically over the representativity of participants. In part, this was because of the busy schedules that local actors were engaged in. Additionally, the gendered roles in livelihood strategies often meant that it was difficult to have a group of both men and women at the same time. I handled these challenges by being spontaneous and seizing on informal opportunities for focus group discussions. For instance, once I joined a group of men and women who were drinking beer at the local tavern, and when they started talking about issues of land and natural resources, I started asking questions in a way that was non-intrusive. Such informal sessions provide a relaxed ambiance, which allowed people to openly express their views and perspectives without the pressure of interviews (see also Long, 1992). Another way of getting to talk to local actors without taking too much of their valued

time was to join them in their daily activities. For instance, I joined a group of men and women making bricks to talk about livelihoods, and a group of young men putting up a fence to talk about boundaries.

I used audio recording to capture data. Whilst the interviewees were aware of the recording, this was a digital recorder that I could keep in my pocket thus preventing it from being intrusive. Additionally, by working together with two research assistants, I also ensured that, where I could not record data, we would be able to reflect and recollect what had been said. In most cases, this meant convening a discussion with the research assistants afterwards to reflect on the interviews and compare notes on whether our understandings were the same. Since my research assistants were from the area, I also considered that they might be part of certain social and political circles and that this might influence their interpretation of what had been said. As well as relying on the two research assistants for their support, I also asked other people in the village on their reflections of village meetings. Additionally, factual data obtained from interviews was incorporated into new questions with other respondents to get a variety of viewpoints on one issue.



3.4 Description of the case study site

The Madimbo corridor is located in the far northeast of South Africa within Limpopo Province (see Figure 2, pp. 22). It falls within the Mutale Municipality of the Vhembe District Municipality. The Mutale Municipality borders the Kruger/Makuleke Contractual Park as well as the Makhuya Park to the east. The Madimbo corridor, which is also contiguous with the Matshakatini Nature Reserve, forms the northern cap of the Mutale Municipality to the Limpopo River where it borders with Zimbabwe. The area, however, never used to be a corridor until 1969, when local people were forcibly moved to make way for military occupation (Poonan, 1996; Whande, 2007). The occupation by the military was to 'protect' national boundaries. The southern boundary of the Madimbo corridor is the old Venda homeland boundary (Figure 2). This is significant because the corridor was under the authority of the government of apartheid South Africa as opposed to the Venda homeland which was the northern most territory. Since the official end of apartheid in 1994, the Venda homeland was reintegrated into South Africa. The South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF), however, continues to occupy the corridor.

Families of Venda descent were settled in the Venda homeland, while the Tsonga clan of Makuleke was settled in Gazankulu. The Pafuri triangle, from where the Makuleke clan was moved, is a triangular wedge of land in the far northeast of South Africa bounded by the Levhuvhu and Limpopo Rivers (see Figure 4 below, pp. 67). To the west and stretching for about 45Km from Pafuri is the Madimbo corridor, named after one of the villages that was forcibly moved⁴. To the north, the Limpopo River bounds the corridor and to the south a veterinary fence. After the 1969 forced removals, the South Africa Defence Force (SADF) occupied the Madimbo corridor after obtaining permission to occupy it (PTO)⁵ in 1972. The Pafuri triangle was incorporated into the Kruger National Park, shifting the northernmost boundary of the park from the Levhuvhu River to the Limpopo River and bordering the then Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The military further declared the corridor as the Matshakatini Nature Reserve in 1992⁶ and these two entities overlap and occupy the same territory. Following successful post-apartheid land restitution for the Pafuri triangle, the Makuleke clan have chosen to continue using the land for conservation purposes under a contractual park agreement with South Africa National Parks (SANPARKS) resulting in the formation of the Kruger/Makuleke Contractual Park (Steenkamp, 2001).



⁴ Ironically, the word Madimbo means ruins or desecrated homestead in Venda (discussion with Prof. Ralushai, 2006).

⁵ PTOs could be obtained from Tribal Authorities who effectively acted as the local government structures during apartheid and homeland years (see Ntsebeza, 2002).

⁶ Administrator's Notice 4 (Provincial Gazette 4799, 1 January 1992).

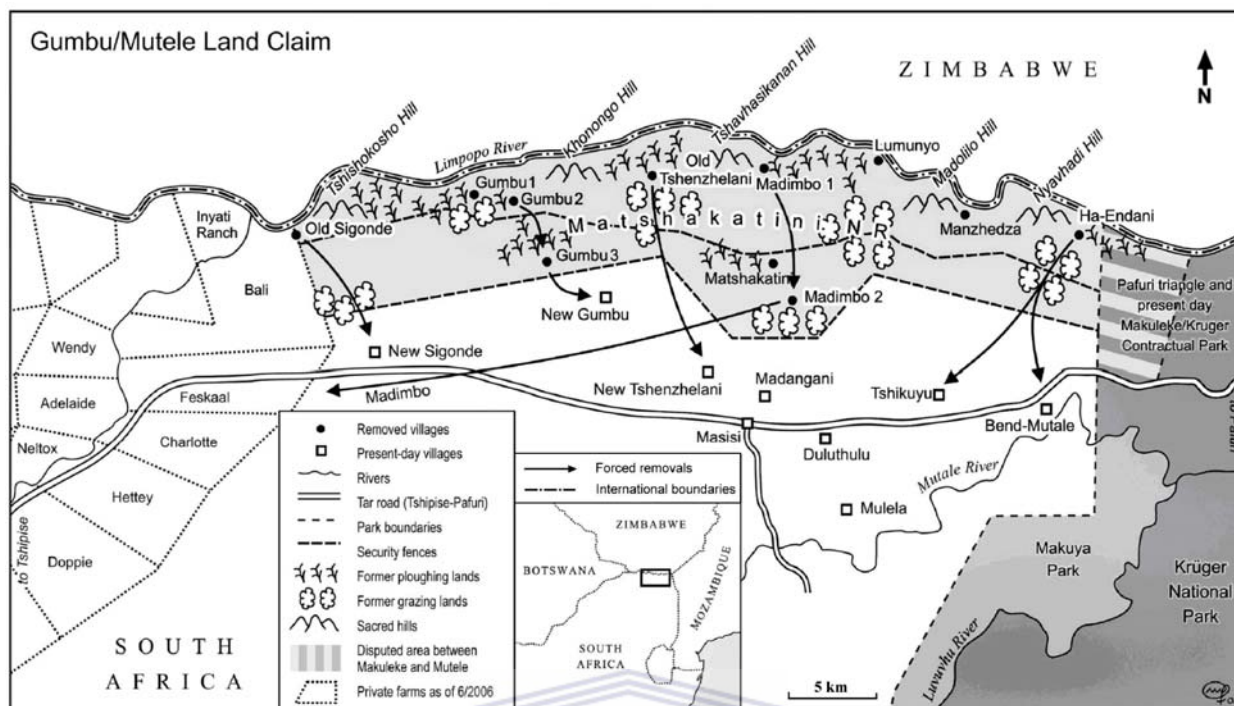


Figure 4: Map of the Madimbo corridor showing areas from where local people were forcibly moved.

Source: Nkuzi Development Association

The area has been characterised by different interventions for biodiversity conservation, notably the establishment of the Kruger National and Makhuya Parks. Other interventions have involved veterinary controls, which have mostly been in terms of fences running parallel to the Limpopo River to control livestock movement in the area.

The history of state intervention to consolidate geo-political boundaries, for veterinary purposes and for conservation has affected local livelihood strategies for generations (see Chapters Four, pp. 72; Six, pp. 126 and Seven; pp. 169). For example, Makhuya Park used to be grazing land for the Mutele and other groups of people. Local actors also used the Mutale River for fishing. Now both areas are restricted. Such exclusion is still pertinent to local political and livelihood processes.

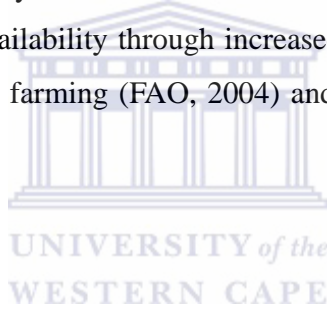
3.4.1 Climatic conditions and biodiversity

The entire southern African subcontinent is located at the confluence and transition of climatic zones

(FAO Subregional Office for Southern and East Africa, 2004), which has implications for climatic conditions. The Limpopo River basin, within which the Madimbo corridor falls, is impacted on by different air mass regions. The Madimbo corridor is a low-lying semi-arid, dry and hot area.

3.4.1a Temperatures along the Madimbo corridor

No temperature records exist for the Madimbo corridor. However, data obtained from the neighbouring Pafuri triangle shows the area to be characterised by warm to hot summers and moderate winters (Zambatis, 2005). Average summer temperatures exceed 40°C while night winter temperatures may drop to as low as 0°C. Altitude as well as closeness to the ocean affects temperatures in the Limpopo River Basin (FAO Subregional Office for Southern and East Africa, 2004; Lahiff, 1997). There is a general increase in temperature as one moves from the high elevation areas around Thohoyandou northwards in the Limpopo River valley where Madimbo is located. The high temperatures within the Limpopo River valley affect water availability through increased evapo-transpiration. Evaporation has a major effect on dryland subsistence farming (FAO, 2004) and the generally low rainfall in the area further influences this.



3.4.1b Rainfall

The Madimbo corridor is a summer rainfall region. It receives an annual rainfall average of approximately 450mm (Zambatis, 2005). About 90% of this rain falls within the summer months from November to March (Lahiff, 1997). Indian Ocean Tropical cyclones and south-easterly winds influence the rainfall along the Madimbo corridor (Ashton *et al*, 2001). Further estimates are that the area suffers at least one drought every ten years. In addition to poor rainfall, the middle (where the Madimbo corridor is located) and the lower reaches (in Mozambique) of the Limpopo River do not have any surface water run-off in drought periods as a result of the poor drainage of soils and a broad sandy channel (Ashton *et al*, 2001). The soils along the Madimbo corridor and in surrounding low-lying areas are predominantly shallow. The geology consists of sedimentary and basaltic lava classed in the Karoo super group (Lahiff, 1997). When exposed, the nutrient rich substrata of the sedimentary Karoo system support a variety of vegetation. In spite of the low rainfall and soil types, the lowveld is still regarded as having a competitive advantage in agriculture, mining and tourism (PIMS, 2006).

3.4.1c Biodiversity

This semi-arid area supports three main habitats; riverine, mopane woodland and shrubland, and rocky outcrops. The vegetation is composed mostly of mopane shrubland (*Colophospermum mopane*) with pockets of mixed bushveld and lowveld riverine forest. The mopane woodlands are characteristic of poorly drained clay and sandy-clay soils, while the bushveld reflects the low rainfall patterns of the area. The mopane woodland is important for ecosystems as it supports a variety of animal, bird and invertebrate species. The Madimbo corridor and Pafuri regions have high bird diversity, which attracts a wide array of bird tourists. Bird watching forms a central activity for planning tourism visits to the area (see the Great Limpopo Birding Route website⁷). An estimated 400 species of birds are within the ranges, spanning from the end of the Soutpansberg Mountains to the Limpopo River. The mopane woodland also supports a widely known invertebrate, the mopane worm (*Imbrassia belina*; *Mashonzha in Tshivenda*). Mopane worms are important for local livelihoods. They provide food and are a source of income (see Chapter Six, pp. 126). Elephant and buffalo populations generally fare well within the mopane woodland and shrubland. A wide variety of mammals has been recorded within the Madimbo corridor as well as in the neighbouring Makhuya Park. Other characteristic species include the baobab tree (*Adonsonia digitata*) whose distribution is more scattered than the mopane. Whilst the mopane woodland vegetation is on poorly drained soils, the riverine habitat along the local network of rivers is generally more fertile. The Limpopo riparian zone, for instance, is relatively fertile and supports a unique ecosystem of rare riparian forests (Poonan, 1996). The riverine habitat is important for biodiversity as it forms an important refuge for a variety of mammals. Additional habitats along the river are the floodplains and river pans. These features have sustained wildlife populations for a long time with a variety of species still available along the Madimbo corridor (Knill, 2000). The floodplains have always been important for seasonal food provision for the local populations (see Chapter Six; pp. 126).

⁷ www.limpopobirding.com

CHAPTER FOUR: From encounters to exclusion, and back to encounters? History of the Madimbo corridor

Madimbo corridor: a place of encounter turned into a zone of exclusion

On 14 October 2006, the Vhembe Communal Property Association invited me to an outing in the Madimbo corridor. The Vhembe CPA leads the land claim for the Madimbo corridor and regularly holds gatherings in the corridor to visit ancestral graves and discuss future land uses within the corridor. The programme of the day was to start with visits to the ancestral graves at Manzhedza, mostly for residents to the east of the corridor at Bennde Mutale and Tshikuyu villages. The procession was to go on to the old Madimbo village site, further upstream along the Limpopo River and to the locally famous Tshavhasikana waterfalls. To get to Manzhedza, we had to obtain keys for the veterinary fence (also referred to as the red line) from the Madimbo military base. However, the military indicated that Jack Greef, the security manager contracted by the Wilderness Safaris, had the keys. In the ensuing confusion and counter references as to who had the keys, the Manzhedza graves visit was cancelled. In reality, though, there is not one padlock and key for the gate. The gate is locked with five interlocking padlocks, each representing the different actors with an interest in the area, except for the local Bennde Mutale people. The military have their own padlock and key, so does the veterinary department and the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park. The padlocks represent the power dynamics of the area, which were acted out on that day. Unable to go the Manzhedza gravesite, we proceeded to Tshavhasikana, but even this had its own drama. As the car rolled up and down the rocky surface, a military vehicle stopped our party and indicated that we could not proceed any further, as the area we were in was a shooting range. In the ensuing argument, accusations and insults flew, but the local leaders stood their ground, and we eventually passed through to go to Tshavhasikana, the sounds of gunfire and the sight of brightly coloured ammunition close to the road making our party a nervous one. On reaching Tshavhasikana, some groups from other villages were already there, walking up and down the dry Limpopo River bed and taking photos by the waterfalls. Old people took out their fishing rods and walked up the dry riverbed to the pools along the river. Middle-aged men crossed the river into Zimbabwe where, apparently, one could buy wild animal meat at an informal settlement just across the river. Cheaper ilala palm wine was apparently also in abundance. The rest of us visited Tshavhasikana but soon settled beneath tall shady trees to escape the heat in the build-up to midday. We occasionally spoke to elders about the significance of Tshavhasikana and of the day. They unanimously agreed that the day was significant as an indication of ongoing battles for the return to the land. In between, we idled around, keenly eyeing the goat that was being skinned under a tree and the pots that were simmering with pap, the staple stiff maize porridge eaten in all parts of southern Africa. This, and the waiting game for the *mahafhe*¹, which some of the party members had gone to buy, quickly became the focus of informal group discussions with everyone wondering why it was taking so long. The CPA leadership, sensing low voiced grumblings about the delayed *mahafhe*, kicked into gear to invoke memories of living along the Limpopo River, emphasising the symbolic value of everyone's presence that day.

¹ Traditional beer made out of sorghum.

Within the Madimbo corridor, any discussion on the history of the people along the corridor invokes the legend of Tshavhasikana waterfalls. A young couple, besotted with one another, defied their family elders. The parents of the girl had resolved that she could not marry the boy, for he came from a poor family. Faced with the prospect that they would never be married, they did the unthinkable. They huddled up on top of the falls and jumped to their deaths in the Tshavhasikana Falls. The story now epitomises a living testimony for the people of Madimbo corridor, their connection to speaking of the land and water resources of the area. It represents something of the ancestral lands left there, apart from the graves and village ruins, the actual additional proof that people have lived in the area. The story of Tshavhasikana Falls reaches even further than physical graves left in the area, for such a story is malleable. It can be hammered into different shapes and sizes depending on who is telling it, what meaning they attach to it and how it serves them in the now.

The story is told both by those in the villages in support of conservation driven ecotourism and by those in support of settlement, grazing and farming. All tell the story with much conviviality and a convincing flair of why they think the land should be used for the specific uses they are in support of. While there are differences in terms of the future of the corridor, the telling of this story invokes one voice in relation to the past. That voice relates to the fact that the corridor was once a zone populated by people, that it was full of life. This was interrupted when people were forcibly moved and other forms of social control were established. The story of Tshavhasikana therefore signifies this life of the past. There are many other stories of people's connection to 'place', which were told during my fieldwork but I have chosen the Tshavhasikana story as it is different from the stories that describe the actual physical removals. The story of Tshavhasikana is unique in that those who tell it connect and disconnect it to current discourses on land and natural resources in ways that support their specific point of view. But beyond the arguments and counter-arguments for what to do with the Madimbo corridor- the forward looking impulse- all groups tell the story asserting that these were lands they once occupied and that they should be allowed to either go back or make decisions on how to use them.

I listened to many stories representing the history of the Madimbo corridor. In this chapter, I explore this history and link it to various political and environmental discourses that have shaped local polities in relation to land and natural resources as local struggles over meaning continue.

4.1. Introduction

The events described above highlight the on-going land and natural resources conflicts along the Madimbo corridor. These conflicts are rooted in the colonial and apartheid land seizures, now at the centre of government efforts to redress historical injustices. The prevailing post-apartheid political situation allows villagers, such as those along the Madimbo corridor, to officially challenge past exclusion from their ancestral lands. Conflicts, both in historical and contemporary terms, are as much about access to land and natural resources as they are about the meanings attached to land, as Peters (1994) discusses in relation to Botswana. Local actors deploy images, stories and metaphors to regain access to land and natural resources (Walker and Peters, 2001).

This chapter draws from the history of the Madimbo corridor to explore the encounters experienced in the area in pre-colonial times. I trace the historical importance of the area as, initially, a meeting place of various African groups and traders. Later though, it became a zone of exclusion with the consolidation of the South African state. I rely on secondary sources of literature to reconstruct the history of the Madimbo corridor and areas surrounding it. Socio-linguistics between Venda and other languages and the history of trade are useful in inferring the dimensions of encounter in the area in the past. While encounters in the 19th century also involved competition over natural resources and often involved subjugation (see Stayt, 1931), they did not yet result in large scale exclusions of some of the groups that would follow in the 20th century.

I also explore the exclusionary effects of various forms of external interventions and highlight the collusion between environmental discourses and the dispossession of local people, barring their access to land and natural resources. Specialised knowledge, such as veterinary and conservation sciences and arguments of national security were deployed at various stages of the development of the South African state to advance social and political control (see Beinart, 1989). Apart from emerging scientific understandings of the environment and animal diseases, environmental features were also used to consolidate national boundaries and disrupt local processes. For instance, the 'partitioning of Africa' often relied on environmental landforms to ease mapping territory. Water bodies and courses, such as the Limpopo River, and mountain ranges that had been a resource for several nations, were turned into political, administrative and physical boundaries (Mbembe, 2000; Ralushai, 1982), often under the impression that they formed natural division of territories (Brigham, 1919).

4.2 A place of encounter

Different approaches to colonial encounters are evident in literature, from a dichotomous elucidation between the coloniser and the colonised (see Ranger, 1999) to a view of encounters as characterised with mimicry, hybridity, negotiation and alienation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007). In this study I use commercial, sociolinguistics and political encounters to understand the dynamics along the Madimbo corridor. An assessment of encounters can be through religion, commerce or political acts of domination and resistance. The Madimbo corridor has been characterised with various encounters, some of which led to the evolution and development of the local population while others involved conquest and subjugation. In tracing the history of encounter along the Madimbo corridor, we can see how an area where various people met was turned into a zone of exclusion, through processes of a.) subject formation through conditioning local actors' behaviour, and b.) subjection as a result of increased monitoring of local processes.

4.2.1 Encounters before 1800

The historical sources for the Madimbo corridor² remain extremely scarce. For instance, no archaeological research has been undertaken since the 1970s, due to the presence of the military along the corridor (Poonan, 1996). The area has thus not benefited from the archaeological research in sub-Saharan Africa that started in the 1970s (see Maggs and Whitlow, 1991 for a summary). In light of limited archaeological research within the actual field sites³, I draw conclusions from research in other low-lying areas along the Limpopo River including from a review of archaeological research of food producing communities in southern Africa (Maggs and Whitlow, 1991), historical research of settlements at the Mapungubwe settlement to the west of my field site (Holmgren and .berg, 2006). Much archaeological evidence, such as changes in land uses and the construction styles using stones and artefacts from Asia, is indicative of encounters among different groups of people (see Section 4.2.1a, pp. 76). I also explore oral history and socio-linguistic analysis to support the archaeological evidence of encounters (see Ralushai, 1979, 1982; Stayt, 1931). While trade and socio-linguistics indicate the encounter dimensions within the Limpopo River valley, such encounters were not always friendly; at times, they involved raids on other groups for cattle, women and children (Stayt, 1931).

² I use the term 'Madimbo Corridor' here for continuity; even though the area was only considered a corridor after the forced removals of the late 1960s (see section 4.4.2 below, pp. 86).

³ Loubser (1989) undertook some research in the Soutpansberg region but not along the Limpopo River where the Madimbo corridor lies. His research, however, was useful in understanding the history of the Venda people and I used it as historical information on the Madimbo corridor.

4.2.1a Trading as evidence of encounters with the outside world

The unique resources of the Limpopo valley attracted various groups of people at different times in history (Bailey, 1995), with major migrations resulting in changes in livelihood strategies and land uses. The early groups in the area were the hunter-gatherer San/Bushmen (Hammond-Tooke, 1993). Around 300AD Bantu groups settled in the area. They introduced the use of metal implements, cultivation and the herding of cattle, goats and sheep. The period 850 to 1290 AD saw agricultural expansion within the Shashe-Limpopo area (Leslie and Maggs, 2000). However, agriculture remained vulnerable to climatic conditions along the Limpopo River (Holmgren and Öberg, 2006). Cattle ranges were limited due to animal diseases (Lindenmann, 2005; Wagner, 1987) and malaria affected human settlement (Wagner, 1987). These conditions meant that besides practising agriculture, the growing settlements also relied on hunting and gathering. Linkages with the outside world also ensured that their livelihood strategies constantly shifted to respond to new opportunities and meet local challenges.

Archaeological evidence indicates that contact between the permanent settlements in the area and Arab, Indian, Chinese and later Portuguese people resulted in trade (see Van Warmelo, 1940; Liesegang, 1977; Hammond-Tooke, 1993). The presence of glass beads in many parts of southern Africa (Maggs and Whitlow, 1991), and in particular at Mapungubwe, indicates early trade relations with the Far East. Africans traded in a range of products, such as gold and ivory, which resulted in increased wealth accumulation and a further consolidation of cities such as Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe (Huffman, 1982, 1996). Trade in wildlife and its products offered an alternative to the challenges of keeping livestock in an animal disease prone area. For both the Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe societies, trading formed only one of a variety of livelihood strategies that included cattle herding, agriculture and hunting (see Zachrisson, 2004).

The neighbouring Tsonga people, for instance, traded in gold, ivory, iron, copper, beads and amber among the Venda, Sotho and Portuguese (see Peires, 1986). Because of their geographical spread on the east coast, north and south of present-day Maputo, they acted as intermediaries for the Portuguese who set up a trading post at Delagoa Bay in the fifteenth century (Hammond-Tooke, 1993). Ivory from what the Portuguese called 'Beja'⁴ arrived at Delagoa Bay at least from the early 18th century (Wagner, 1987).

⁴ This is equivalent to Bvesha, the Tsonga name for Venda.

These activities indicate that the Limpopo River valley was a commercial centre of encounter between various groups of people. Apart from trading, socio-linguistics indicates that the area was also a zone of encounter between African groups.

4.2.1b Socio-linguistics with externals

Tshivenda, Shona and Sotho languages are linguistically related (Stayt, 1931; Ralushai, 1979; Hammond-Tooke, 1993), but the origins and history of the Venda people are subject to competing and conflicting hypotheses (Ralushai, 1977; Maggs and Whitelow, 1991). This resonates with other groups in southern Africa. The region's history appears to have been hybrid and contested with little evidence for authentic 'single-tribe' tales of origin and emergence of institutions for natural resources management. This observation is similar for the neighbouring Tsonga who were not a distinct linguistic group but had a set of diverse languages even in the nineteenth century (Harries, 1989). There seems to be unanimity that Tshivenda developed to its present form as a result of social, political and economic interactions between the *Ngona* (the original Venda people), Sotho and Shona (Maggs and Whitelow, 1991; Hammond-Tooke, 1993), resulting in mutual influences (Ralushai, 1977). Specifically, "the phonetics and phonology of Tshivenda finds its nearest equivalent in the Karanga group⁵, and it is quite sharply distinguished from the Sotho and Thonga groups in this regard, though from the former far more than the latter" (Lestrade, quoted in Stayt, 1931: 9). Such affinity in the languages is explained, for instance, by some place names, legends and spiritual/ritual undertakings, which are similar between the Venda and Shona people⁶. The joint thanksgiving ceremonies between the Mbedzi from Zimbabwe and the Vhembedzi from South Africa at Mianzwi are cited as evidence for the prevailing transboundary relations back then. The movement of groups of people through history can explain the continuing affinity between the Tshivenda and Shona (Ralushai, 1982).

The movement of people across the Limpopo River in either direction was both for major migrations but also other small-scale movements. This implies that besides the recorded major migrations between

⁵ I use Shona and Karanga interchangeably in this dissertation as Karanga is part of a much wider Shona group and the differences are only in dialects rather than in the structure and character of the language.

⁶ Stayt (1931) lists place names such as Makonde, Nzhelele and Thengwe, which exist in Zimbabwe's Shona (Karanga) speaking areas as well as Venda areas of South Africa. Ralushai (1979) notes the significance of the Njerere place located in Zimbabwe (in Venda Nzhelele) for rainmaking rituals even among the Venda people in South Africa who sometimes travel to Njerere in Zimbabwe for rain making rituals.

South Africa and Zimbabwe, which were triggered by changing climatic conditions and attraction to more resource rich areas (see Holmgren and Öberg, 2006), other significant and continuous movements happened. For instance, the Venda people settled in South Africa (including those at Ha-Mutele and along the Madimbo corridor – see Figure 5 below, pp. 78) and occasionally travelled to Zimbabwe in small hunting parties that acted as pathfinders for major migrations (Stayt, 1931). Ralushai warns that the Shona/Venda similarities reflect mutual linguistic influence between the two groups and not the domination of one language over the other⁷. Changes in accessing land and natural resources provide further evidence of the interaction between the Shona and Venda groups.

In the seventeenth century, the *Vhathavhatsindi* invaded the *Ngona* already settled in present-day Venda, resulting in changes in land holding systems (Hammond-Tooke, 1993). The invaders introduced a class based system for accessing and using land and natural resources, which resulted in the stratification of local actors (see Hammond-Tooke, 1993; Stayt, 1931). The new land holding system vested authority in the royals, upsetting an inclusive land and natural resource access system that had prevailed among the *Ngona*. The result was that the original inhabitants, who were not royals, were instead regarded as tenants on the land that was now owned by the emerging chiefly lines (Stayt, 1931).

This has specific historical significance for the Madimbo corridor, as one group of people fled from Dzata and Nzhelele areas when the invasions took place. This group of people, the Vhalembetu or Vhanzhelele, settled at Ha-Mutele to the far northeast of Venda (see Ralushai, 1979 and Fig. 5 below). This is the area my study is concerned with. In the 19th century, socio-political as well as socio-ecological relations in the regions were subjected to increasing changes as a result of the northwards movements of colonial settlers from the Cape as discussed in the next section.

4.3 Encounters in the 19th century

The nineteenth century, while better documented in literature in general, scarcely covers the Madimbo corridor. I once again rely on inferences from other studies undertaken along the Limpopo River, among the Venda as well as the Tsonga people. Specifically, the history of the Tsonga Makuleke clan within the

⁷ Personal communication, March 2006, Thohoyandou.

neighbouring Pafuri corner is illustrative for this purpose (see Harris, 1989, Bulpin, 1954; Connor, 2003). Further oral history and linguistic analysis at Ha-Mutele is also important for understanding the history of the Madimbo corridor (Ralushai, 1979, 1982). Ethnomusicology, in particular as it relates to the acquisition of musical skills and their link to social skills, provides an understanding of the Venda history (see Blacking, 1995 (1967)). The general history of southern Africa, in particular the rise of King Shaka and the resultant migrations of different groups of people to the north, is useful in understanding some of the present-day dynamics along the Madimbo corridor.

The predominantly Venda-speaking residents of the Madimbo corridor increasingly encountered other groups of people in the 19th century, including commercial hunters based at Schoemansdal, a colonial farming and trading town to the south of the corridor (Wagner, 1987). To the east, they were in direct contact with the Makuleke clan of Tsonga descent. Tsonga settlements extended into present-day Mozambique on the coast. The Tsonga people in present-day Mozambique have occupied the area since the first millennium years of the Christian calendar. The Makuleke clan, who originally settled on the confluences of the Oliphants and Limpopo River in present-day Mozambique, moved into the Limpopo River valley at the confluence with the Pafuri/Levhuvhu River in the early nineteenth century at the time of Shaka Zulu's power consolidation, *Mfecane* or *difecane*⁸ (see Friedman, 2005).

The historical significance of this interaction with the Tsonga people is that it facilitated commercial encounters with the Portuguese, further contributing to a consolidation of the relations with outsiders. However, the colonial encounters of the later nineteenth century would bring major changes to local socio-political and socio-ecological relations.

Other groups who were in contact with the Venda were part of the advancing Great Trek of Boers, the Afrikaners who arrived by the middle of the nineteenth century (Stayt, 1931). The Boers in contact with the Vendas mainly traded (Stayt, 1931) and hunted large mammals for ivory and skins (Wagner, 1987). The interaction between colonial settlers and Africans was initially characterised by cooperation in hunting expeditions (Carruthers, 1995). However, these seemingly mutual relations between Africans and

⁸ The consolidation of the Zulu nation under King Shaka is referred to as *Mfecane*, it resulted in massive migrations of smaller groups of people such as the Ndebele as they fled the rise of King Shaka.

settlers would gradually change with an increase of sport hunting, which emphasised hunting solely for the collection of wildlife trophies and the development of policies for protecting the environment, which were premised on separating humans from nature (see Anderson and Grove, 1987).

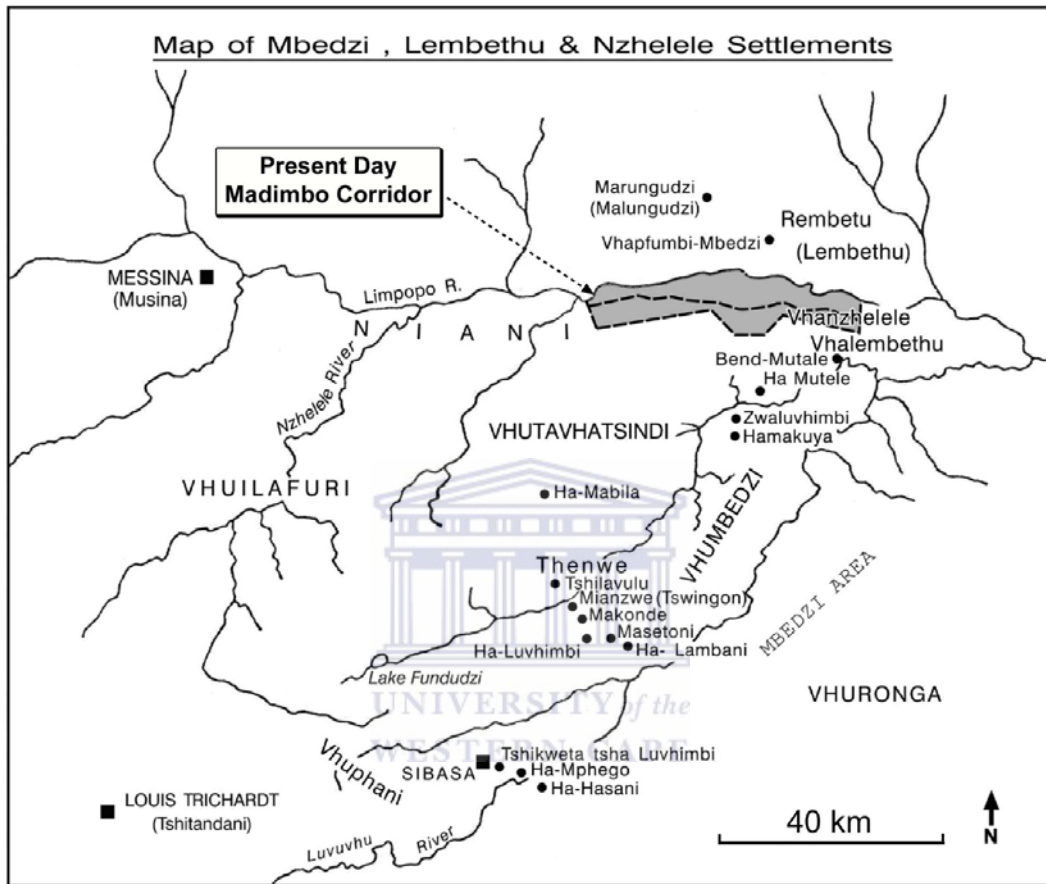


Figure 5: Map of Venda areas showing Ha-Mutele and settlements along the Madimbo corridor (marked Vhanzhelele and Vhalembetu).

Source: Ralushai, 1979.

Discourses of separating humans from nature, as well as racialised land policies adopted by the colonial authorities from the late 1890s, signalled the transformation of the Madimbo corridor from a zone of encounter into a zone of exclusion. These policies, resulting in the designation of nature reserves, were a precursor to the nature of emerging political relations along the Limpopo River, specifically to the exclusion of local actors from areas designated as PAs.

To illustrate how the Madimbo corridor turned from a place of encounter into a zone of exclusion, the following section discusses how efforts to control animal diseases and extend conservation areas acted as extensions for state authority. State consolidation and social control along the Madimbo corridor did not happen over a short period. The consolidation of state authority resembled the growth of grasses with ‘rhizomes’ that rely on underground extensions from the stem and all of a sudden pop up in areas far away from the source. State consolidation relied on specialist knowledge, such as veterinary and conservation science, as a basis for ‘rhizomatic expansion’ marking the gradual sectoral presence of state bureaucratic structures that aided in increasing state control over local processes.

4.4 From encounter to exclusion: ‘Rhizomatic extension’ of the state along the Madimbo corridor

The collusion of veterinary disease control, conservation and national security efforts at Madimbo corridor provide an example of how disciplinary power and specialist knowledge work together to reinforce and enhance social control (see Chapter Two, Section 2.2.1b; pp. 37; Singh and Van Houtum, 2002). Along the Madimbo corridor, specialist knowledge aided such ‘rhizomatic’ extension of the developing state in Pretoria and paved the way for social control over local resource dependent people.



4.4.1 Encountering exclusion – veterinary controls along the Madimbo corridor

Livestock was a critical element in colonial frontier expansion. The parcelling out of land to cattle farmers by the colonial administration accompanied the advance of the colonial front from the Cape (see Beinart, 1997). Even in remote areas, “settler cattle production was part of the institution and extension of colonial power into the rural areas of the Transvaal after the end of the South African war” (Milton, 1997: 199). Similar processes took place along the Limpopo River and in the Madimbo corridor.

The surveying of farms along the Limpopo River, most notably at Mapungubwe, started in 1871 as part of a scheme to provide land to poor Afrikaner families (Lindenmann, 2005). Two issues hindered the immediate occupation of these farms. Firstly, tsetse fly infestation made it difficult for livestock rearing. Secondly, Chief Makhado, a local Venda Chief, had successfully driven out a group of Afrikaners from Schoemansdal in the late 1860s. Only after the defeat of the Venda in 1898 did Afrikaner farmers start to

move into the areas along the Limpopo River for permanent settlement, a year before the beginning of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. The Anglo-Boer war is significant to mention here in relation to controls along the Madimbo corridor as during the war a military base was established as a flash point between the British controlled southern Rhodesia and the Transvaal (Burrett, 2002).

Cattle farmers rented farms (ranches) on the western edge of the present-day Madimbo corridor, predominantly along the Nwanedi and Limpopo Rivers (see Figure 4 above for the farms that have since been subdivided into smaller units). The Transvaal Ranches, a group of land speculators, had a concession for grazing cattle north of the Soutpansberg Mountains, including the sparsely populated Madimbo region⁹. These cattle farms served two purposes, to alter demographics in marginal areas as well as to increase state authority through territorial claims and the implementation of a European land settlement scheme (Maxted, 2002).

The land settlement scheme, planned and executed by the Transvaal Department of Agriculture, was a precursor to political control in areas such as Madimbo corridor. This control was accompanied by the application of veterinary knowledge, the consolidation of land surveys, and by erecting fencing and beacons (Milton, 1997). Thus, the colonial state consolidated its authority over vast territories of land through the designation of settler cattle farms.

In rural Transvaal, African people still outnumbered the settlers, even though the African settlements were scattered. Villages along the Madimbo corridor were located along a network of rivers, ranging from the Pafuri or Levhuvhu, Limpopo and Mutale. Archival material shows that the only settlement that was well established was the Makuleke at Pafuri triangle, while the Madimbo corridor villages were scattered in expansive areas¹⁰. Control over these vast tracts of land (not only in reference to Madimbo corridor) was gained through territorial claims, which, according to Carruthers (2003), was through the use of mapping. Carruthers (ibid) notes specifically that the extent of the Transvaal had previously been defined and limited by surrounding African polities, until 1877 when a mapper F. Jeppe included the polities within

⁹ National archives – KAB/1/321/118.

¹⁰ National archives, KAB/MI/3057-58.

the boundaries of the Transvaal. It is within the areas formerly occupied by Africans that settlers increasingly moved into, resulting in clashes with Chief Makhado in the late 1870s (see Lindenmann, 2005) yet culminating in demarcation of grazing areas for white settlers' livestock at the beginning of the 20th century. African populations were moved into “reserves”, which were in most cases characterised by poor environmental conditions. By settling cattle farmers in remote areas, the cattle farmers acted as ‘shock troops’ for colonial control over African people. The role of cattle farmers, as a result, was an advancement of a process of subject formation of African people – creating conditions for them to behave in certain ways- (see Chapter Two, Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37). This was pursued through confining Africans to less adequate land to sustain livelihoods, resulting in African people continuously forced to work on the mines as well as settler farms. The change in behaviour or subject formation, was therefore achieved through livelihood insecurities.

The increase in settler cattle farmers was meant to reduce the ratio of Africans to settlers and for colonial exercise of authority over “a zone of potential colonization within a pre-existing set of recognized international boundaries *-as defined through maps¹¹*”, on what could be defined as a frontier of secondary settlement” (Milton, 1997: 199). However, minor shifts in ratios of Africans to white settlers were recorded, in part because designated ranches were relatively large grazing camps with dispersed white populations. The large size of the camps impacted directly on the local African populations who were often moved from such areas and coerced into working on the farms but did not have an impact on the demographic ratios. To the contrary, ratios of Africans to white settlers increased as a result of increased population among Africans in the non-urban districts bordering Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana (Hugo, 1988), hardly surprising given the population differences between whites and blacks. The presence of the farmers, even in small numbers, however, gave effect to the maps that had been developed and set conditions for the increased subject formation activities by the state, especially through expert scientific knowledge such as veterinary disease control. The presence of settler cattle farmers is therefore more relevant for the control by the state than the actual changes in demographic ratios.

Cattle farming in the area attracted veterinary inspections and controls of animal movements. The veterinary officials also often extended such controls to human movement by patrolling along the

¹¹ Own addition and emphasis

Limpopo River. For instance, a 1909 suspected outbreak of East Coast Fever on some of the land in the area led to the Transvaal Department of Agriculture issuing an instruction for fencing off the area and farms to avoid animal movement¹². Fencing of the area invariably affected the movement of African people across such new boundaries within the Transvaal.

These developments had a direct impact on the villages along the Limpopo River and within the present-day Madimbo corridor. While settler cattle farming might have contributed to the rhizomatic expansion of the state, along the Madimbo corridor it also served to consolidate an international boundary, disrupting the various aspects of the border region. Thus, if a 'European land settlement scheme' was directly tied to early colonial consolidation and establishing control over African people, in the boundary region along the Madimbo corridor it also served to emphasise the territorial and spatial boundaries of colonial nation-building.

According to an account of a farmer whose family moved into the area (Interview 12 October 2006), veterinary officials patrolled along the Madimbo corridor in the 1930s. To the west of the corridor, where settler cattle farmers were most concentrated, the Transvaal Department of Agriculture planted sisals as an attempt to limit livestock movement across the Limpopo River (see Figure 2; pp. 22). When sisal controls did not yield the envisaged results, a fence was erected heralding a strict enforcement of the red line¹³. The fence controlled the movement of livestock between South Africa and Zimbabwe, but it also formed the basis for controlling human movement. In an interview with one elderly man¹⁴, he indicated that he had worked on building the fence and that, while it was always portrayed as a control for animal movement, it also controlled human movement. One impact, according to him, was that the veterinary officials who often came to the area increasingly monitored human movements across the river. He also noted that local people resisted the presence of the fence through various means, including cutting or just jumping over it to travel to the other side of the river¹⁵. The restrictions over human movement and the systematic dispossession of African people also served the increasing need of the colonial state and economy for cheap labour that resulted in the migrant labour system of South Africa.

¹² National Archives, TAB/217/A5242.

¹³ Veterinary lines divided movement of animals from one region to another. In this case, it ran south of and along the Limpopo River.

¹⁴ Interview conducted 17 October 2005 at Tshikuyu Village.

¹⁵ Interviews with Headman Gumbu, Tiunus van der Westheisen and Endani Guvhane, October 2006

4.4.1a Settler cattle farms and the exclusion of Africans from grazing pastures and agricultural markets

The advancement of settler cattle farming was also related to the rapidly industrialising country and increasing demand for beef. The supply of meat to the industrial centres in the Witwatersrand became the exclusive privilege for settlers (Milton, 1997). Additionally, the Union of South Africa ushered in different arrangements of land holding that formalised the stripping of Africans of their land. Of particular reference is the 1913 Land Act, which curtailed Africans' ability to own land. The majority of Africans, as a result, were confined to less than adequate land for their agricultural production, thus pushing them into wage labour both in the mines and on the emerging white owned commercial farms. The developments on the confluences of the Nwanedi and Limpopo Rivers, and indeed further west along the Limpopo River at Mapungubwe as discussed by Lindenmann (2005), are linked to the broad political economy issues in the Transvaal, which relegated African populations to wage labour and exclusion from land-based livelihoods.

Farms such as those on the western edge of the Madimbo corridor weakened African populations through appropriation and fencing off of communal rangelands but more broadly limiting Africans' access to the expanding beef markets in the Witwatersrand. By excluding Africans from accessing pastures for their livestock, the colonial state constrained the accumulation of wealth by African people. New technological farming advances were not available to Africans (Milton, 1997). As a result, marginalisation of African farmers came with the import of "science based production methods, private property...." (Milton, 1997: 200).

The social controls on the western edge of the Madimbo corridor were through cattle farming, while on the eastern part it was control of criminal activities, a subject formation exercise premised on certain natural resource based livelihoods as detrimental to the environment and punishable offences. The presence of hunters on the eastern part necessitated state controls.

4.4.1b State presence on the pretext of controlling crime

Colonial control over areas at Pafuri triangle and the Madimbo corridor were further necessitated by the presence of hunters, most of them fugitives from the law who operated from 'Crooks Corner'. Accounts of hunting expeditions into present-day Mozambique and Zimbabwe from Crooks' Corner are documented even for the 1920s (see Bulpin, 1954). The hunters at Crooks Corner also engaged in labour recruitment for the mines in the Witwatersrand even as authorities tried to control the influx of Africans (see Section 6.3.6, pp. 162).

Attempts to intercept migrant labourers passing through the area included the formalisation of recruitment through the establishment of a camp within the Pafuri triangle where people from other African countries could be recruited. The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA) camp was established on both sides of the Limpopo River in present-day Mozambique and South Africa in 1901 and 1902 (Connor, 2003). However, records show that whilst the official recruitment sites were used, a proliferation of informal recruiters operated within the area (Murray, 1995). Recruitment was profitable for them as they managed to intercept Africans from other countries and for whom they would be paid by mining companies. It also ensured that they did not have to venture off the Pafuri corner as they employed Africans who would often move around scouting for recruits. Chief Mutele¹⁶, before and after his appointment in 1966, was a labour recruitment agent (see Ralushai, 1979). In the 1960s, the labour recruitment camp at Pafuri gave way to the extension of the KNP.

4.4.2 Forced removals at Pafuri triangle and along the Madimbo corridor: enforcing exclusion from the 1960s?

In the late 1960s, widespread land dispossessions perpetrated by the apartheid government were effected along the Limpopo River to create what is now referred to as the Madimbo¹⁷ corridor and extend KNP

¹⁶ The father of the current Chief.

¹⁷ The word Madimbo is used in Venda to mean ruins, especially in the context when a family moves from one place to another. In this sense, it is a desecrated homestead – discussion with Professor Ralushai, October 2005. Whilst I have referred to the Madimbo corridor in the text above, it should be noted that the 'corridor' itself only started existing as a result of forced removals. It is from the time that all residents were forcibly moved that this should be referred to as a corridor. Earlier references to a corridor in this dissertation are for orientation for the reader.

into the Pafuri triangle. The official rationale for the removals was 'betterment planning,' an ironic terminology of apartheid planning designed to dispossess Africans and move them into more densely populated villages. The removals relied on a 1939 Proclamation for the Control and Improvement of Livestock in Native Areas and heralded the formalisation of betterment planning meant to deal with concerns of soil erosion and overstocking of livestock (De Wet, 1995). Until the 1960s, sporadic removals had taken place along the Madimbo corridor. For instance, Gumbu village had been moved but each time to a location within the corridor (see pp. 66). By the 1960s, however, application of the 1939 proclamation as well as a 1951 Tribal Authorities Act saw forced removals at an unprecedented rate, argued by the apartheid state to be for betterment planning. The Tribal Authorities Act effectively recognised tribal authorities as a form of local government in the former homelands (Ntsebeza, 2002). The functions of tribal authorities, however, were more as decentralised despots for the apartheid regime and therefore facilitated state control over local processes. Betterment led to the forced removals of people into demarcated residential zones as part of the transformation of rural settlements and land use in African 'reserves'. It was envisaged that this would reduce soil erosion and overstocking by dividing rural land into residential, arable and grazing areas. Farming land was limited to 0.2 hectares. The outcome, however, was increased impoverishment and overcrowding, making it easier for state control to be effected (De Wet, 1995). Most villages within the present-day Madimbo corridor were designated for betterment planning in the late 1950s¹⁸. The outcome of betterment planning, ironically, was the forced removals of entire villages to be settled in supposedly 'planned' yet overcrowded villages.

The forced removal was the last step in a systematic process of alienating the Limpopo River from the local African people. Effectively, a river that had been a resource and a point of mutual encounter for African people in South Africa and Zimbabwe was turned into a boundary through the enforcement of geo-political boundaries. One way of operationalising this boundary was through conservation, particularly the extension of the KNP. Thus, whilst livestock largely defined the boundary in terms of livestock, the east became increasingly associated with wild animal movements.

Prior to the removals, present-day Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park was occupied by a Tsonga clan, the Makuleke, while Venda settlements were scattered westwards along the Limpopo River. Venda and

¹⁸ National Archives, SAB/NTS/10222 Volume 14/423(9).

Tsonga families shared a 5,000 hectare portion of land (see Fig. 4 above) and local tales indicate that some Tsonga families might even have been resident in the village of Bennde Mutale. The 5,000 hectare land, now contested between Venda and Tsonga families, might have been shared as a result of a lack of clear cut boundaries between the two groups, a condition now affected by the requirements of the land restitution process to survey and map actual areas that were previously occupied by claimants. Currently the area has been restituted to the Makuleke clan and constitutes a part of the Makuleke/Kruger contractual park. These two groups suffered the same fate in terms of their removals. However, they were moved to different places in line with their ethnicities fulfilling apartheid plans for separating people based on race and ethnicity (see Harris, 1989). As a result, the Tsonga Makuleke clan was moved to Gazankulu about 80km southwest from their location at Pafuri. The Venda families were moved to various villages a few kilometres to the south along the Madimbo corridor (see Figure 4, pp. 66). Apart from achieving goals of betterment planning, the forced removals advanced objectives of homeland or Bantustan consolidation, separating people considered Venda from those considered Tsonga (Whande, 2007).

The broader implications of the forced removals were processes of subject formation and subjection. Subjection formation through forced removals was to give effect to Tribal Authorities who were effectively the local government. By separating people based on ethnicities and settling them with others 'similar' to them in culture and language effectively consolidated the control of Tribal Authorities. As Ntsebeza (2002) notes, Tribal Authorities were 'decentralised despots' of a racist and exclusionary system. They controlled their subjects on the basis of culture and tradition while also serving political control. The second aspect of the forced removals is that it led to the subjection of Africans by the state as some Tribal Authorities acted to control local political activities of their subjects to the benefit of the colonial and apartheid states.

4.4.2a Conservation at Pafuri triangle: pursuit of science or political instrument for exclusion?

In South Africa, various PAs were established from the early 1900s after a realisation that subsistence, commercial and sport hunting in the late nineteenth century contributed to substantial declines in wildlife (DEAT, 2003). Whilst wildlife might have declined substantially, the actual process of establishing PAs was linked to broad political developments in the country.

The coalescing of Afrikaner and British settler economic interests specifically led to African people being forced into wage and migrant labour through a systematic undermining of their land and resource rights. According to Carruthers, the development of PAs such as KNP, whilst in pursuit of game preservation goals, reflect how access, or lack thereof, to land and natural resources was used to push Africans into wage labour on the emerging settler farms and mines. This resonates with Milton's (1997) observation of the development of cattle farms in the Transvaal at the end of the nineteenth century (see Section 4.4.1 above, pp. 81). Conservation at Pafuri in the 1960s followed similar trajectories with differences only in terms of the external factors the apartheid government was responding to. The decision to extend the KNP into Pafuri corner in 1969 was partly influenced by external security threats to the apartheid government as well as the need to consolidate Bantustans or homelands (Whande, 2007).

This was largely instrumentalised through the invention of 'tribes and making sense of African identities' which enabled colonial and apartheid authorities 'to move entire populations of indigenous Africans into communal areas' and Bantustans 'whilst enclosing resource rich regions in the form of parks' (Singh and van Houtum, 2002: 257). The resulting inequities and conflicts over land and natural resources were at the centre of struggles against colonial and apartheid rule.

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The expansion of the KNP into the Pafuri triangle was linked to South Africa's changing security situation in a region increasingly agitating for political independence. Whereas the turn of the century was characterised by colonial consolidation, the mid-century saw increased political organisation among African people fighting for political independence. Conservation at Pafuri triangle provided a possible avenue for increasing security in South Africa through limiting human movement from other countries. It is in this context that in 1969, the Makuleke clan at Pafuri triangle was forcibly moved for the extension of the KNP. Other forms of operationalising security along the Madimbo corridor include the use of coercive means such as the military.

4.4.2b Enforcing exclusion: militarised state security along the Madimbo corridor

The liberation movements of the 1970s in Mozambique and Zimbabwe increased polarisations between South Africa and these two countries. One reaction of the apartheid state was a tightening of its international boundaries (Poonan, 1996). Due to apartheid security concerns, the families along the Madimbo corridor and at Pafuri were forcibly removed to consolidate the homelands or Bantustans but also to secure South Africa's borders against possible terror attacks. The KNP was extended into Pafuri triangle and the Madimbo corridor was occupied by the military. This effectively created a security buffer zone where the threat of Maoist type guerrillas moving into the country through the border villages of Pafuri and Madimbo would be thwarted.

In terms of human movement, the fears of the apartheid state were not unfounded. Both the Venda and Tsonga people within Madimbo and Pafuri had intricate and intimate relations with people across geo-political boundaries in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Marriages across boundaries were common and in some cases polygamist families were hosted on either side of the boundaries with the husband located in one country whilst the second wife and kids lived in another (Whande, 2007; Connor, 2003). Whilst marriages across the geo-political boundaries were an indication of the social and production relations that tied the peoples together, they constituted some kind of threat for the apartheid government. In other words, the social and cultural border regions continued to thrive despite the imposition of administrative and political controls through demarcation of boundaries.

Additionally, villagers in the area also colluded with illegal immigrants often selling their identity documents to enable immigrants to work (Friedman, 2005). Thus, the area was of interest to an increasingly insecure apartheid state, which sought to control human movement in the area as a pre-emptive measure against 'terrorists'. By the 1970s, the Madimbo corridor and Pafuri triangle were cleared of people with Pafuri being incorporated into the KNP and the corridor occupied by the then South Africa Defence Force (SADF).

Enforcement of control over human movement was also gained through building alliances between the military and other interests such as conservation agencies and commercial farmers (Whande, 2007). The

strategic location of the areas along the Limpopo River for security purposes is also noted around Mapungubwe (Lindenmann, 2005). Commercial farmers were actively involved in intercepting liberation movement fighters. The state's response to this ally was to upgrade infrastructural facilities such as roads and water around the farms. As a result, commercial farms to the west of the corridor were never occupied by the military as they served the same purpose of security maintenance for the apartheid state.

Military reinforcements along the Madimbo corridor were introduced in the early 1980s after political independence in Zimbabwe¹⁹. The SADF built an airstrip, the Scorpion, within the corridor. The airstrip was used for military flights into the southern Africa region. In addition to the airstrip, the military also declared a nature reserve, the Matshakatini Nature Reserve. The reserve, established in 1992, saw the eviction of the last village from the Madimbo corridor (see Figure 4, pp. 66). The reserve is contiguous with the Madimbo corridor. It is not clear why the military formed this reserve but local residents argue that soldiers used the area for hunting. The reserve has not seen any dedicated personnel allocation, instead relying on management from the town of Musina about 80km away (Limpopo Regional Land Claims Commission, 2004, see also Chapter Five, pp. 98).

In a post-apartheid South Africa, however, conservation and security are being spoken of as one. Conservation is seen as a possible vehicle for guaranteeing security through the creation of conditions for regional economic integration, ecotourism development and provision of benefits to local actors. At the same time, issues of restoring land and resource rights lost because of colonial and apartheid policies form prominent discourses.

4.5 Changes since the early 1990s – land and conservation reform

Before I discuss the specific changes related to the Madimbo corridor, it is important to discuss the policy context within which the 1990s progressed. Firstly, conservation reform in South Africa was influenced by the 1980s changes to conservation approaches to focus more on the contribution of local actors; and secondly, by the re-emergence of protectionist approaches to biodiversity conservation from the mid-1990s.

¹⁹ interviews with Tiennus Van Der Westheisen and MP Khuba; October 2006

The 1980s heralded profound and widespread changes to conservation approaches within the southern Africa region. These changes were premised on striking consensus between local actors' demands for natural resources and sustaining livelihoods with conservation policy and approaches. As a result, the approaches of "fences and fines" and the exclusion of local actors were soon running parallel to decentralised sustainable use initiatives, with emphasis on local actors' contribution to the successful management of natural resources. The conceptual, and at times, practical boundaries between conservation and the need to sustain local actors' livelihoods were increasingly blurred; with the effect that actors from NGOs, governments, donors and local communities repeated the virtues of community conservation as if with one voice. However, by the mid-1990s, there was growing criticism of the decentralised approaches, specifically the aspects of sustainable use. Much of the basis to question decentralisation is its association to sustainable use of natural resources, which is seen as contributing to resource depletion, no matter how controlled such use might be (see Teborgh, 1999). Additionally, the fragmentation of PAs was not adequate for effective conservation of entire ecosystems (Bennett, 2003) and was seen as presenting points of weakness in efforts to maintain biodiversity (see Watts and Selman, 2004). As a result, we see the growing importance of bioregional planning to conservation, premised on conservation initiatives at ecosystem level. Transboundary natural resources management evolved in this context to extend conservation areas and efforts across geo-political boundaries. In part the developments along the Madimbo corridor have mirrored these processes, first through a social justice approach to conservation and later through tendencies to exclude local residents, yet, as indicated in the opening piece (Chapter Five, pp. 98), local people question their exclusion using livelihood and access to jobs arguments.

Post-apartheid South Africa inherited competing and conflicting goals for nature conservation and land rights (Kepe *et al*, 2005). The post-apartheid government has since instituted policies and programmes to redress historical and racially based inequalities. Land reform is one priority area and it is approached from three aspects: restoring land rights through a land restitution process arising from the 1994 *Land Restitution Act*; redistributing land to cater for the millions of landless and historically disadvantaged people and finally through tenure reform to secure the rights of rural residents. These efforts have met with various challenges. One of these challenges, as noted by Kepe *et al* (2005), is to balance the issues of land rights with those for biodiversity conservation. The Madimbo corridor and Pafuri triangle are

again illustrative of the challenges faced in trying to restore land and resource rights in areas where biodiversity conservation is also a priority. The many actors trying to influence the land use in the restituted lands impact on these dynamics.

4.5.1 Restitution of the Makuleke lands (Pafuri triangle)

In 1998, the South African government resolved the Makuleke land claim for the Pafuri triangle. The Makuleke, as part of their negotiations, agreed to use the area for conservation purposes, in the process foregoing settlement rights. At various global meetings, the Makuleke restitution case is often presented as an example of a win-win situation between the needs for biodiversity conservation and those of local resource dependent people²⁰. However, the Makuleke lost a certain way of life, predominantly in terms of their use of natural resources in the Pafuri triangle area and the cross border nature of their livelihood strategies (Friedman, 2005).

The Makuleke land also includes a wedge of land that they shared with those of Venda descent. At the beginning of their land restitution application, the Makuleke invited the village of Bennde Mutale to make a joint application. This was clearly in recognition of the fact that some of the land they were claiming had been shared between people of Venda and Tsonga descent. However, the people of Bennde Mutale decided to 'go with the other Venda applicants²¹', for the application for the Madimbo corridor. The Makuleke claim, including the wedge of land they had shared with the Venda families, was restituted in 1998. This has triggered unhappiness with Venda families who lived with the Makuleke. Yet at a broader policy level, the incorporation of the Makuleke lands into the KNP is strategic for the GLTP and GLTFCA. A somewhat different process to restitution has happened along the Madimbo corridor.

4.5.2 Restitution of the Madimbo corridor

The Venda families that were moved from the Madimbo corridor have also instituted a land claim. However, unlike the Makuleke, they have to negotiate with the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF) as the military occupies the Madimbo corridor. The Madimbo corridor case took a different

²⁰ personal observation – the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002; World Parks Congress, Durban 2003

²¹ Nelson Siphuga, Bennde Mutale village headman, 25 March 2006.

course as compared to the Makuleke. This was partly because of use rights the military held and still hold, and the strategic location of the corridor for national state security as opposed to conservation. As a result, the Matshakatini Nature Reserve within the corridor did not command the same conservation status and operation resources as the KNP. Because of the low status of the Matshakatini Nature Reserve and the fact that it was never part of the KNP, conservation interests did not have the same prominence along the corridor.

What the Madimbo corridor lacked in conservation terms, it compensated in terms of transboundary security issues. While the military denies that the corridor still holds the same strategic security role as in the past, their operations indicate otherwise. This is especially tied to the potential of human movement through the area given the economic and political situation in Zimbabwe.

The Madimbo corridor land claim was ‘officially²²’ finalised in 2004 when the Minister of Land Affairs approved the claim. During the ‘handover’ ceremony, talk of a return to the land and a restoration of land and resource rights were predominant. Whereas the Makuleke land claim contained a conditional clause for the conservation related land uses, the Madimbo corridor contained a condition that the military would continue using an un-demarcated eastern part of the corridor for training purposes. After two years of delays on finalising the plans for the Madimbo corridor, the military indicated they need half of the land given back to the Gumbu-Mutele people.

The military request has sparked conflicts among the local leadership, specifically between Chief Mutele and the CPA. Chief Mutele accuses the CPA of being secretive with what was happening with the land claim whilst making concessions that do not restore the land rights of local actors. Specifically, he argues that the CPA should not have agreed to the condition, which essentially keeps the most fertile part of the corridor under the occupation of the military. The CPA has responded by imploring local actors to get ready for a possible reapplication for restitution, one in which they would not agree to any preconditions. In essence, the conflicts are over land uses within the area, and who gets to decide, the CPA or the chief, on these land uses.

²² A signing ceremony for the handover of the land to the claimants was signed in August 2004 but discussions continue as to the land the military should continue using

4.5.2a Political ecology of authority along the Madimbo corridor: land use contests

The historical background of the Madimbo corridor and current national policy shifts (see Section 4.5, pp. 91) indicate the interplay of various ideas on biodiversity conservation, and I trace the contested nature of these ideas in the area over time. Firstly, it falls within the proposed Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) which, at 100,000km² is the biggest conservation initiative of its kind in the whole world (Hanks, 2001). However, this global status has a meaning to global actors that makes local realities, predominantly contestations over land use, less visible and of little importance.

Different views exist among local residents, land and conservation NGOs, and the private sector on what land uses should be adopted along the Madimbo corridor on completion of the land restitution claim led by the Vhembe CPA (Lahiff, 1997; Viljoen and Naicker, 2000; Poonan, 1996; Whande, 2007). The first land use option is potential mining for diamond and nickel. In the mid-1990s, a prospecting licence was issued to a diamond mining consortium to explore diamond deposits along the Limpopo River. After a public outcry led by the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa (WESSA, formerly the Wildlife Society), the possibility of mining was not pursued. It is unclear if the silence from the mining companies means the acceptance of 'defeat' at the hands of environmental organisations or if the diamond deposits in the area are too low for mining to be feasible. However, local people continue to point out that mining is one land use option in the area. Local support for mining is based on experiences of mining operations; including graphite mining in the 1930s at the old Gumbu site (see Figure 4, pp. 67) and coal mining at Tshikondeni mine. The Mutale Municipality mentions mining as the largest employment provider in the municipality (Gaffney's Report, 2004-2006).

At the time of contestations by the WESSA and other conservation agencies, a proposal for using the area for a second land use option, conservation driven ecotourism development, was proposed. The argument was that the area is of global biodiversity significance, particularly the wetlands within the Pafuri triangle (Allen, 1996). The wetlands are now listed as Ramsar sites in recognition of their global significance (Ramsar Wetlands Convention Secretariat, 2007).

This option would have seen the maintenance of the Matshakatini Nature Reserve, which is contiguous with the Madimbo corridor. It is because of the proximity of the area to PAs as well as private game ranches to the west that it is highly regarded in terms of tourism. The Mutale Municipality even views tourism as presenting ‘unlimited opportunities’ (Gaffney’s report, 2004-2006). Proposals for tourism development in the area include combining the Makhuya Park, the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park and Matshakatini Nature Reserve into a new Makutele Conservancy (Koale Investments 2004). Local chiefs initially negotiated the idea of the Makutele Conservancy. However, the Vhembe CPA, whose leadership is opposed to both conservation driven ecotourism and chiefs, leads the Madimbo land claim (Whande, 2007). The Vhembe CPA does not cooperate with Chief Mutele who is the most vocal advocate for conservation driven ecotourism. Such conflicts over land uses have resulted in divided local leadership, with the majority of the CPA leadership proposing to use the Madimbo corridor for grazing pastures and mining, while the chief opts for tourism development.

The CPA, in arguing against tourism development, points to the historical role of PAs in land dispossession (see Whande, 2007; Linden, 2004). Specifically, CPA members also argue that some of the PAs, such as Makhuya Park, exist because chiefs ‘sold’ the land and benefited directly through annual fees paid by the government. Rather than support land use which local actors are not directly involved in, they argue, the area should be used for activities directly supporting local livelihoods, such as intensive irrigation or grazing. In practice, however, most of the CPA leadership is mainly in support of grazing as a form of land use. This is because the majority of its leadership are cattle farmers. Crop farming and settlement in the area is one of the proposals but does not enjoy the same prominence as mining, tourism and cattle grazing.

Returning to the land, from which people were forcibly removed, is proposed mostly by the older generation who invoke the good old days when they used to live here. Their arguments, still located in the past in terms of unrestricted access to land and natural resources, appear oblivious to the changes that have taken place in terms of authority over resources and demographics. Nevertheless, their arguments for returning to the corridor are also informed by their observations of commercial agriculture to the west of the corridor, where irrigated tomato farms seem to be doing very well. Thus, they argue that they should be allowed to return to practise crop farming and use irrigation technology, in the same way that

commercial farmers are. They are also not amenable to arguments that the area is marginal in terms of agricultural soils and rainfall.

These issues form an important background on how local residents along the Madimbo corridor frame external interventions in relation to their needs and aspirations. Contestations over land use happen across levels ranging from local resource dependent users to local authority structures such as the Mutele Traditional Council leaders and Vhembe CPA elected officials, to administrative government units such as the Mutale Local Municipality. They also involve specialist units such as environmental affairs, the veterinary department, military officials and the national departments of land, environmental affairs and tourism all the way to regional and international actors. The latter, while not always present on the ground in practice, are represented through various projects or initiatives that filter globally sanctioned ideas on conservation and resources to the area.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the impacts of changing political authorities on encounters among many African groups within the Limpopo River Valley. Specialist knowledge, specifically veterinary science, nature protection and later biodiversity conservation as well as state militarised approaches, were important in defining relations among a variety of actors. To the extent that these knowledge were used in consolidating state authority, they further highlight the relationship between knowledge and politics, which is mutually reinforcing. The chapter further highlights the linkages between the role of knowledge in subject formation, through conditioning the behaviour of local actors, and subjection through the increased 'gaze' of the state. The next chapter explores how, through the GLTFCA, policy-making is leading to the exclusion of local actors from providing inputs into policies that arguably have the biggest impact at a local level and from a livelihoods perspective.

CHAPTER FIVE: Bureaucratic authority and policy-making

From tall rises to a sweltering Limpopo River Valley – exploring the policy filter funnel

I had an interesting discussion with Jorge Ferrao on the GLTFCA. My main interest was to know if there was actually a common TFCA policy, to which the GLTFCA signatories subscribed. He emphasised that the treaty was the binding document and to the best of his knowledge, all the countries were developing their own respective policies. He was busy writing the Mozambique one. As an afterthought, he added that he didn't expect them to be radically different in any case. There were broader issues nationally, regionally at southern Africa level and internationally, that dictated or influenced how policy would develop. He noted, however, that the context of each of the countries determines how some tensions between resource use and protection are defined, adding that policies are always in a state of flux.

A few weeks later, when I was in the field at Makhuya Park, having a focus group discussion with game rangers, I wondered how much of the policy ever makes its way 'down' here. I wondered, indeed, how these game rangers, some of whom have served in the Makhuya Park since its inception in 1988, had changed how they operated around villages as a result of the changing political environment and conservation policies. In the ensuing discussion, it became clear that any changes in how these rangers operated was dictated more by local conditions than policy documents. In the discussion, the rangers indicated their relations with local actors; they spoke of friends and beer drinking mates, of girlfriends in the neighbouring villages and of the situation that they themselves came from. When they are not working here, they are with their families who live along the Makhuya Reserve on the southern end where they face similar survival challenges. These considerations mean that at times they are sympathetic to those they find on the wrong side of the fence and the law. Even though they work for the Makhuya Nature Reserve, they are also treated as outsiders, not allowed to enter certain areas within the park. Such areas include private tourism concessions. As one ranger pointed out: "Here we are just doing our job. We belong to villages such as Bennde Mutale." This point would be further emphasised on my return to the field in March 2007. One of my key informants, who told me that he regularly snuck into Makhuya Park to hunt or collect resources such as honey, had found a job as a game ranger and had been placed at a reserve some hundreds of kilometres from the village of Bennde Mutale. I thought of the contradictions in his job, and what his new appointment would entail, especially given his past experience with illegal off take of resources from the park. Moving from a position of resistance to strict protection to acting as a guard for the resources, the irony could not be more profound! However, in an earlier discussion, he had indicated that only people like him would be able to deal with poaching issues, as he knew the tactics very well. Nevertheless, he knows the poverty in villages such as Bennde Mutale very well, so it is difficult to imagine how he will force people to comply with the law at all times. His background, while it will serve him better in knowing some of the tactics resource users employ within protected areas, will also influence the exact methods he will use in apprehending offenders, sometimes having them locked up or sympathising with their poverty and dire livelihood situation. After all, he himself has been in a similar situation before the new job. In fact, in his new appointment he will have to deal with local

people's complaints about not having jobs, about being restricted from certain areas where 'people from other localities are employed to enforce conservation rules.' At a mixed focus group discussion with local actors and game rangers, this issue was very prominent with local actors challenging the rangers on how they got jobs on their doorstep. At one point the discussion threatened to derail when one ranger reacted angrily, telling people to wake up and stop complaining. The situation was saved by a senior ranger who calmly diverted the discussion by asking: How do porcupines have sex if the female has thorns on the back and the male cannot mount? How does the female lie on its back with the thorns?' When everyone laughed and demanded to know how porcupines indeed have sex, he just said: "I can imagine with great difficulty." Such difficulties, he continued, are probably the same between 'rangers such as myself' and local actors wanting to use natural resources in a park.

These discussions above and the story of the former hunter-turned game-ranger illustrate some of the challenges and opportunities presented by and to conservation. The seat of political power and policy formulation remains aloof while the game ranger's situation on the ground stays the same and realities are dictated by how people perceive and relate to the conservation officials on the ground. These different observations provide the context from which I approach this chapter. On the one hand, I engage with policy and administrative issues and actors, while on the other I sketch the experiences and insight of officials who are tasked with implementing policy and who also deal with the anger and frustration of local actors directly affected by policy changes.



5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the history of the Madimbo corridor, specifically in relation to state consolidation through the use of specialist knowledge such as veterinary science, conservation and security. These processes have one thing in common in that they are (or were) part of policy-making processes that reflected the exclusionary approach of the politics of the day. In this chapter I trace policy-making processes in relation to TFCAs. In addition to the historical experiences (see Chapter Four, pp. 72), policy-making is another factor influencing local views of conservation. These views are articulated in relation to interactions with outside actors who establish localised presence such as game rangers who are, in fact, a kind of ‘street level bureaucrats’ (Lipsky, 1980). Their interventions are often supported by the use and deployment of scientific expertise on land and natural resources (see Keeley and Scoones, 2003). The relationships between outside interests and local resource dependent people are characterised with conflicts, accommodation and compromise.

Networks highlight the increased involvement of non-state actors, such as international NGOs, in influencing policy evolution through a range of political engagements and financial powers. Because of the reliance on specialist knowledge, policy-making is often at the exclusion of local actors who are sidelined in the relevant debates and processes. A general lack of involvement of local actors as equal partners in policy-making results in policies that do not reflect local realities, especially with regard to livelihood needs (for further discussion, see Chapter Six, pp. 126). To local actors, exclusion (and even displacement) has been a major factor of protected areas (PAs) policies and approaches (Brockington and Igoe, 2006; Brechin, 2003), even though the rhetoric has shifted considerably in favour of local actors (Barrow and Fabricius, 2002). TFCAs, in practice, continue with the actual exclusion of local actors from certain environments and resources. Such exclusion reflects two key aspects of policy making – that it is based on technical and specialist knowledge, and the actual exclusion of local actors from networks that influence policy direction. As a result, official policies do not reflect the contestations that policy implementation faces on the ‘ground.’

This chapter approaches policy-making from three perspectives. Firstly, I outline the reliance of policy-making on specialist knowledge in relation to TFCAs, followed by a discussion of policy-making in relation to TFCAs in terms of networks that are seemingly informal but provide an important structure within which policies are proposed, negotiated and contested. Thirdly, I explore policy implementation at local level and sketch the interactions and relations between policy implementers and local actors.

5.2 Conducive Conditions for Conservation Policy Evolution? Southern Africa in the 1990s

The end of the occupation of Namibia by South Africa in 1990, the end of the civil war in Mozambique in 1992 and the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 heralded critical changes for regional cooperation in southern Africa. Specifically, the geo-strategic focus on military security and the destabilising role of South Africa were giving way to new forms of regional cooperation, peace and security. In a move from state level militaristic approaches, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) adopted an expansive agenda that embraced issues such as regional economic integration and political and institutional reform (Nkiwane, 1999; Gibb, 1998). This heralded the transformation of the regional formation from a pressure group against apartheid South Africa to a forum with a developmental agenda.

These developments reflected global trends at the end of the Cold War with shifts in the conceptual understandings of security from narrow state militaristic views to broader definitions of security, including issues of human and environmental security (see Chapter One, pp. 6; see Buzan, 1991, Duffield, 2005; Brauch, 2005). Issues of human and environmental security are regarded as increasingly important, specifically the role of degraded environments in causing social conflict (Khagram and Ali, 2006; Dabelko, Lonergan and Mathew, 2002). Competition over scarce environmental resources has however, long been a determinant in conflicts, but such conflicts have often been characterised as ethnic-based (Shiva, 2002).

As much as environmental resources are viewed as a potential source of conflicts, they are also a vehicle for inter-country cooperation, especially in the case of shared ecosystems (see Nkiwane, 1999; Ramutsindela, 2004; Duffy, 1997). For instance, the SADC signed a regional protocol on shared watercourses in 1995. Environmental cooperation in southern Africa has also centred on wildlife resources that occur along international boundaries, as witnessed in the 1995 SADC Wildlife Policy meant to promote the establishment of TFCAs as a vehicle for inter-state cooperation in the sustainable management of ecosystems that transcend geo-political boundaries. In 1999, the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement was signed to promote inter-country cooperation in developing a common framework for conservation and the enforcement of laws. In 2006, SADC

published a Biodiversity policy, which largely draws from the two protocols as well as from international developments in biodiversity conservation approaches (SADC, 1995, 1999, 2006). Transboundary approaches to biodiversity conservation and natural resources management (see Chapter One, pp. 6) are now a prominent feature of inter-state cooperation for managing shared natural resources across political boundaries.

Despite the positive post apartheid outlook, a number of issues reflect the difficulty of labelling conflict threats as national or sub-national. For instance, new, predominantly internal threats as a result of growing networks of criminals and the free flow of goods (including small arms) have regional implications (see Cock, 1998). Secondly, approaches to funding regional integration have shifted to embrace market mechanisms. The adoption of free market policies and a neoliberal agenda to foster regional cooperation and development led to 'the expansion of hegemonies from the core' which are 'laden with contradictions at the periphery' (Leysens, 2001: 376). If the periphery means the predominantly rural, politically and economically marginalised people of southern Africa, this has specific meaning and ramifications. Social issues and the role of the state in meeting some of the challenges derived from historical dispossessions, increasing poverty and demands on natural resources have received attention through the framework of current discourses of neoliberalism. Yet it is doubtful that neoliberalism can address the social challenges of a post-colonial and apartheid southern Africa, with observations that neo-liberalism has contributed to more poverty in the Southern Africa region (ANSA Secretariat, 2007). Having initially adopted policies for a strong state and strong markets to address issues of poverty in South Africa, in 1996 the post apartheid government shifted to adopt neoliberalism as the main strategy for addressing poverty and encourage growth (Cheru, 2001). The adoption of neoliberal approaches in South Africa and other countries in the region in the face of internal social challenges requiring strong state intervention continues to create 'a periphery' characterised by the poor.

This is clearly demonstrated by the three countries involved in the implementation of the GLTFCA. At the conception of the GLTFCA, the three countries were undergoing various changes in their economic and political structures. This, as noted by Ramutsindela (2004), revolved around how they would balance demands for an improved social system with the adoption of neoliberal policies espoused in

Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes. TFCAs in southern Africa are viewed as part of a neoliberal agenda, with little focus on local communities (Boscher and Dressler, 2007; Boscher and Wolmer, 2007). It seems therefore that conservation policy changes in favour of TFCAs might lead to the increased marginalisation of local actors and to more defined struggles for the use of resources and involvement in policy-making. The extent to which political conditions in southern Africa after the end of apartheid presented a platform for genuine conservation reform in relation to local actors is therefore questionable.

5.3 Policy-making in the time of TFCAs

Transboundary approaches resonate with a 'decolonising' argument through the breaking down of geopolitical and colonial boundaries (see Ramutsindela, 2004). Policy makers cite historical and cultural linkages to argue for increased emphasis on transboundary local relations, that gives credence to TFCAs as a kind of decolonising project. It gives the impression that both human and ecosystem arguments have seen equal consideration in the development of TFCAs; that a socio-cultural as well as an ecosystem border region is finally recognised. However, they have not. Most official TFCA documents, for instance the GLTP treaty, spell out the benefits that accrue to local actors as well as their involvement in the process. However, in operational terms, breaking down boundaries is increasingly related to wildlife migratory routes and not to people. The arguments for community-based approaches within TFCAs, therefore, feature as legitimising discourses meant to portray TFCAs as inherently about people when in reality, quite the opposite is happening; local social relations and economic transactions continue to face transboundary constraints.

Thus far, the TFCA approach has been limited to core PAs, sparking concerns from proponents of community based approaches that they are part of a movement promoting the return to "barriers" or strict PAs (Hutton *et al*, 2005). The tag of a 'return to barriers' implies the exclusion of local resource dependent people and is in line with approaches of PAs management in the past. To a certain extent, this is how the GLTFCA is developing, even as the treaty establishing the core GLTP declares the development of "frameworks and strategies whereby local communities can participate in and tangibly benefit from the management and sustainable use of natural resources" (Governments of Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 2002). The operationalisation of this section of the treaty is hindered by

the fact that the treaty itself is for the establishment of the core GLTP and not the broader GLTFCA, which includes areas currently inhabited by local people such as along the Madimbo corridor (Figure 1, pp. 18). Furthermore, it is not clear in what capacity local actors are supposed to participate and benefit from the TFCA. As a result, any benefits, no matter how insignificant, become a benevolent point of reference for conservation actors. While the implementation of the GLTP treaty affects local actors, such as through removals from the Limpopo National Park (LNP) in Mozambique and proposed land use changes within the Sengwe corridor in Zimbabwe, such effects are not officially acknowledged and engaged with (Daconto, 2003).

While local people are excluded, other actors such as conservation NGOs and the private sector are involved. In the words of a member of the GLTFCA Joint Management Board (GLTFCA-JMB), “communities were involved in the beginning but later on it was felt that the respective governments can competently represent local communities since on their own communities will not enter into any agreements anyways” (Interview, March 2007, Mozambique). However, other actors such as NGOs and the private sector have access to policy makers that local actors do not have.

While governments are ultimately responsible for finalising TFCA policies, the ideas are subject to exchanges between and among a variety of organisations, institutions and individuals. In relation to the evolution of community involvement in Zambia, Gibson (1999) describes the alliances and conflicts among organisations, agencies and institutions including donors, parastatals, government departments and NGOs. Policy-making, as noted by Ferrao (Interview, Maputo, February 2006), is both internal to the nation-states involved but also supra-state driven by regional and international trends and resources. It is therefore akin to what Solway (2006) calls “discursive scaffolds” involving interactions among organisations operating at localised levels to national and global levels¹. In this study, the “scaffolding” involves a complex web of ideas, institutions (organisations, rules of the game and treaties/international laws) and individuals involved in the non-linear and complex processes of policy formulation and implementation (Keeley and Scoones, 2003). Keeley and Scoones (ibid.) further note that such processes involve issues of power, knowledge and politics and involve local, national and international relationships.

¹ Presentation at the University of K In, November 2006.

This is best illustrated by Ferrao's comments discussed in the introduction to the chapter and the actors involved in the evolution of the TFCA policies. Ferrao noted that the countries involved in the GLTFCA were developing policies in relation to TFCAs. These policies, while specific to each country, would be guided by the overall objectives of the TFCAs as spelt out in the treaty for the establishment of the GLTP. At the same time, Ferrao noted the existence of global policy 'frames' to which governments subscribed² in policy-making. Two issues from Ferrao's comments are relevant to this study, the broader conditions, such as international agreements and targets for biodiversity conservation, within which policy-making is attempted, and the interactions among the transnational technical experts and political actors in influencing the direction of policy.

5.3.1 Biodiversity conservation policy-making: national to international linkages

Biodiversity conservation policy making is increasingly guided by international agreements. Keeley and Scoones (2003: 28) note that the "internationalisation of science-policy interaction has become an important feature of the contemporary scene" since the United Nations Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. Specifically, they note that the international stage helps to exchange knowledges through conventions and scientific meetings. Scientific meetings and conventions, in turn, shape and frame environmental discourses, set political targets and ensure commitments for projects such as the percentage of the earth's surface dedicated to Pas. An area where this plays out is the conceptualisation of conservation projects. The implementation of conservation projects is then often tied to conditions that further the achievement of targets set at international scientific meetings and contained in conventions. Compliance with targets set at global levels is achieved through provision of funding from institutions like the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). Kasisi and Jacobs (2002: 1) note in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that, "the laws and regulations of the signature countries must be amended in accordance with the Convention's provisions." The main objective of the Convention, the conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity and its components, is an integral obligation of the countries involved in the GLTFCA; these aims are also

² Ferrao's comments suggest that while governments are involved in TFCA policy making, the actual outcome of such policies is somehow pre-determined.

supported by the SADC, as witnessed in the recent regional biodiversity conservation strategy (SADC, 2006). In South Africa, this focus is present in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which states that the objective is to “conserve and manage terrestrial and aquatic resources to enable the sustainable and equitable benefits to the people of South Africa, now and in the future” (DEAT, 2005: 30). TFCAs are, therefore, part of an international framework for biodiversity conservation.

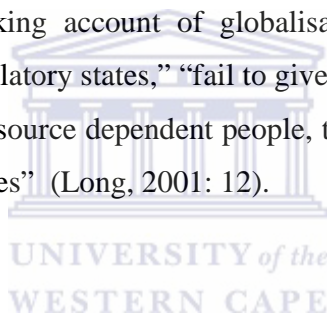
While the national contexts provide the overriding conditions and principles for TFCA policies, most national objectives mirror the biodiversity conservation and sustainability aspects required by the CBD. The objectives for the establishment of the GLTP are wide ranging. Some are contradictory and competing, but in general they do not deviate from the framework set up by the CBD:

- Foster transnational collaboration and co-operationwhich will facilitate effective ecosystem management in the area.
- Promote alliances in the management of biological natural resources by encouraging social, economic and other partnerships.... Including private sector, local communities and non-governmental organisations.
- Enhance ecosystem integrity and natural ecological processes by harmonising environmental management procedures across international boundaries.
- Facilitate the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable sub-regional economic base through appropriate development frameworks, strategies and work plans.
- Develop transboundary ecotourism as a means of fostering regional socio-economic development, and,
- Establish mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of technical, scientific and legal information for the joint management of the ecosystem (Governments of Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 2002).

Besides the international frameworks of the CBD and GLTP treaty, various regional southern Africa protocols and strategies apply to TFCA policy. Specifically, the regional biodiversity strategy aims to “provide a framework for regional cooperation in biodiversity issues that transcend national boundaries

and to stimulate the combined and synergistic efforts by SADC member states and their communities in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use” (SADC, 2006: 1). Apart from the primary goal of contributing to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, the SADC biodiversity strategy is also motivated by the need to build capacity at regional level to respond to the provisions of the CBD. Thus, in the Southern Africa region, linkages between national, regional and international ideas of biodiversity conservation is provided through the CBD, directly linked to national programmes of work by NBSAPs and regional strategies that do not digress from the international targets.

As well as policy linkages at different levels from national to global, attention needs to be paid to the individuals in charge of policy-making at national and regional levels. Thus, ideas from international science meetings and contained in conventions relies on individuals who act as drivers of the policy formulation and implementation at national levels. Other scholars have warned that new forms of structural analysis, ranging from taking account of globalisation and the declining coherence of “national economies and national regulatory states,” “fail to give significant attention to the multiplicity of other social actors, such as local resource dependent people, trans-national institutions, and interests involved in such restructuring processes” (Long, 2001: 12).



5.3.2 Actors and networks as drivers of policy change

Policy directions in natural resource management, such as the adoption of community-based approaches in the 1980s, the move towards transboundary approaches in the 1990s, are a result of ‘epistemic communities’ or networks of individuals sharing certain beliefs on specific environmental problems (see Haas, 1992). National and international actors are part of a network in which they individually and collectively enrol others to impact on the direction and outcomes of policy processes. Enrolment can happen in the form of providing resources for projects that advance the attainment of biodiversity conservation goals.

The impact of networks can also be illustrated by looking at the operations of one of the leading proponents for TFCAs, the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF). Six presidents from the southern African region, as well as King Letsie from Lesotho and King Mswati from Swaziland, are honorary patrons of

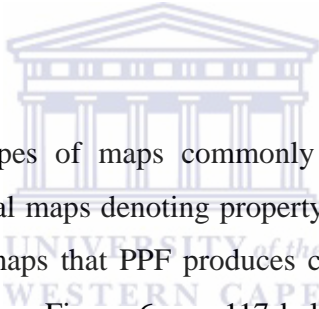
the PPF, which presents an opportunity for lobbying and pushing the organisation's agenda (see Whande, 2007; Simon, 2003). Even if the presidents are not directly involved in the conceptualisation of TFCAs, they may shape how practice evolves. For instance, Büscher (2009) notes how access to former President Thabo Mbeki unlocked logjams for the PPF in dealing with the SADC secretariat in Gaborone, simply by PPF phoning the South African president. Admittedly, this is a procedural matter than a substantive one, but it is also that initial access to policy makers that make debates on substantive issues all the more difficult. As a result, networks present opportunities for accessing formal and informal authority, both within NGOs such as PPF that are not part of the state, but also for bureaucrats within state institutions. Apart from canvassing senior politicians such as presidents, the actual translation of ideas into operations relies on drawing in bureaucrats at multiple levels. As a result, organisations such as PPF deploy high-level diplomatic tactics and persons to handle issues of political support at presidential levels at the same time mobilising resources to have direct relationships with bureaucrats and implementing agencies. The involvement of presidents as patrons of the PPF is a kind of mutual patronage system. By actively supporting TFCAs, presidents can be directly linked to supposed poverty alleviation through tourism driven job creation as well as commitment to meeting global biodiversity conservation targets. For the PPF, having presidents as patrons opens doors with donors and is therefore about access to resources. These resources are then used to consolidate networks between the PPF, national and regional bureaucrats. For instance, a German donor, KfW Bank Group, provided funding for the implementation of the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique but the funds are channelled through the PPF (Interview, Karsten Sandhof, Maputo 21 February 2006).

At an operational level, PPF supports the posts of TFCA coordinators by paying their salaries³. While this does not immediately imply that PPF can influence policy decisions, it nevertheless further eases their access to policy makers. Local actors do not have the same level of resources to lobby and influence, but are most directly affected by TFCA policies. As noted in the cross national PAs in the humid tropics, coalitions for perceived environmental problems can be very influential in determining whether a PA is established or not (Bates and Rudel, 2000). Pressure on international lending groups and the use of the "power of the purse" act as proximate causes for creation of PAs, which results in the inclusion of political agendas of environmental groups. The availability of resources, therefore,

³ At the time of the research, PPF was paying salaries for the TFCA coordinators in the countries involved in the GLTFCA.

increases the chances of contributing to policy processes. PPF contributes to salaries for government officials, but also in the development of management plans for both the GLTP and GLTFCA (PPF and Landscape Architects, 2006).

In 2006, the PPF produced the Pafuri Integrated Tourism Plan with proposals for future tourism developments in the three countries. The plan, in spite of the intense land use conflicts along the Madimbo corridor in South Africa (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2a, pp. 95), hardly looks at the conflicts around land uses in the area or considers other potential and viable forms of land use (see PPF, 2006). To the contrary, the plan maps some of the contested land as part of a network of PAs (see Figure 6, pp. 117 below). Mapping is one of the tools deployed by the PPF “to create ecological and social information systems for the various TFCAs under development” (PPF, 2004). However, the provision of mapping and planning services is not objective and reflects the positions of the actors offering such services.



Rocheleau (2005:332) notes four types of maps commonly used: “topographical (terrain) maps, thematic (special topic) maps, cadastral maps denoting property boundaries, and political maps with a focus on administrative units.” The maps that PPF produces can generally fulfil aspects of all three functions. Firstly, they are thematic (see Figure 6, pp. 117 below) in that they are used for showing conservation areas within the GLTFCA. They, however, do not indicate the contesting land use types such as livestock and crop agriculture, in these areas. Secondly, they are cadastral maps; they denote property boundaries between state land (in this case land allocated for conservation purposes) and other forms of land tenure, specifically communal land. While Figure 6 below does not immediately make the cadastral nature of this map clear, the proposal to have the Madimbo corridor as part of a network of PAs has implications for property boundaries and relations. PAs are usually on state land or can be contractual national parks in the case of South Africa. Related to the cadastral maps are the political and administrative aspects, especially where boundaries of municipalities, wards and chiefly territories coincide and overlap. What is significant about the maps, however, is not so much what they show, but what they do not show. In clearly marking the property boundaries, the maps do not show how some of these boundaries are contested and constantly negotiated by local demands for land and natural resources based on historical claims. As a result, the maps are deployed in a way that gives prominence

to certain land uses in the GLTFCA while remaining silent on competing and conflicting land use, in particular those that provide alternatives to tourism and PAs. The result is the exclusion of local demands for land and natural resources. Tools such as land use planning and mapping are, therefore, deployed (in the same way as financial resources) by transnational technical experts in consolidating networks that eventually influence policy direction (whether in terms of what is implemented or the overall guiding principles for implementation).

These factors mean that the process of instituting TFCAs and the implementation of policies is inherently political with various actors vying to influence and control the process. For instance, it was pointed out that in 2001, the time allocated to project implementation was reduced from about four to two years (Leo Braack, Cape Town, February 2006). Much of the effort to move the planned activities forward was from the then South African Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. In the same interview, Braack pointed out that NGOs derived authority to influence the pace of operations largely through the availability of funds. For instance, the release of elephants from the KNP to Mozambique in present-day Limpopo National Park was done prematurely before local communities in Mozambique were warned and any feasibility studies completed. The fact that the elephants quickly returned to South Africa has become a somewhat legendary story among KNP officials who see in it the inadequacy of wildlife protection in Mozambique, and therefore continue to justify the involvement of transnational experts through channelling of funds to NGOs for conservation activities in Mozambique. However, the broader political meaning of the release of elephants is now linked to its coincidental date with the birthday of Anthony Rupert, the then chair and patron of the PPF (Spierenburg *et al*, 2006). What this event signals is the role of non-state actors in shifting the direction of policy and their influence on determining the pace of implementation processes.

Availability of financial resources, access to political leaders and policy makers creates power imbalances among the different actors affected or with an interest in the evolution of TFCAs. The increasing involvement of transnational technical experts implies these experts group into networks that best represent their interests. For instance, along the Madimbo corridor, there is a clear division between actors in favour of restoration of land and resource rights (see Section 5.5 below; pp. 114) on the one hand, and those in support of using the area for conservation purposes on the other hand. What

is critical to note here is the increased involvement of transnational experts, who are increasingly influencing the state while local communities are not represented or involved. Discussions at international and specialist meetings, where the states and transnational experts are represented, almost always lead to policy initiatives (Keeley and Scoones, 2003). In the case of TFCAs, such meetings often happen without the involvement of local actors. The meetings, however, often result in land use planning and mapping of ecological zones predominantly from a biodiversity perspective rather than a livelihood perspective. For instance, throughout the research period, local actors along the Madimbo corridor continuously mentioned that they had heard about plans for the GLTFCA on the radio, but they were not consulted once. This was also confirmed by the South African coordinator for the GLTFCA who indicated in February 2006 that DEAT had allocated a budget for consultations (Motete, March 2006), but at the time of writing in 2007/8 these consultations had not yet happened. So despite the awareness of the need to involve local actors on paper, in practice the existing networks and policy actors still exclude local actors and their interests from policy-making processes.



5.3.3 TFCAs Policy evolution - experimenting with sovereignty and involvement of local people?

In various interviews, the evolution of the GLTFCA has been portrayed as an experiment or a learning process.⁴ An analysis of the process of establishing the GLTFCA further highlights the experimental nature of TFCAs, particularly in relation to national sovereignty and security (Duffy, 1997; Van Ameron, 2002), and the role of local actors in planning and implementing TFCAs (Dzingirai, 2004; Spierenburg *et al*, 2006). Initial negotiations for the GLTFCA did not include representatives from the security units (Braack 2006, personal communication) and concerns for their exclusion were raised by Zimbabwe, which was concerned about negotiations that would impact on national sovereignty (Duffy, 1997). While local actors were represented initially, this was discontinued, leading to the continued marginalisation of local actors.

Thus far, local actors have remained on the periphery of decision making within the GLTFCA, while

⁴ Interviews with Jorge Ferrao, February 2006, Maputo Mozambique; Edson Chidziya and Fannie Mutepfa, June 2006, Harare Zimbabwe.

their involvement is regarded as important for the success of TFCAs⁵. Government officials pointed out that the implementation lessons from the GLTFCA will be useful in structuring future agreements, specifically on issues relating to local actors. In Zimbabwe, Edson Chidziya noted that, at the moment, the involvement of local actors is not the first step. First, the core PA is established and only then does the follow up with the communities take place.

Because local actors have not been fully involved in TFCAs, the contradictions between local and other levels will present major challenges to the implementation of the GLTFCA. Apart from the local to national and regional level contradictions, Buzzard (2001) notes nuanced policy differences among the countries involved in the implementation of TFCAs as presenting challenges. While regional strategies point to a shared framework for conserving biodiversity (SADC, 1995, 1999, 2006), the practical operations remain largely guided by national processes (see also Whande, 2007; Van Ameron, 2002).

Contradictions in policy do not only arise at the disjuncture between what is implemented and what is written, they also reflect the political nature of policy formulation and implementation, specifically in the context of TFCAs. For instance, one of the main objectives of TFCAs is to promote regional integration. Yet, issues of national sovereignty remain of paramount importance and influence the pace and direction of regional integration (see Van Ameron, 2002; Duffy, 1997; Whande, 2007). As a result, parties to a TFCA agreement do not have a mandate to impose some form of penalty if one of them violates the objectives of the treaty. Article 5 of the GLTP treaty (2002) notes that “the sovereign rights of each party shall be respected, and no party shall impose decisions on another.” While claiming to respect this principle, non-governmental organisations involved in the implementation of TFCAs indicate that they cannot comment on national issues in relation to land and resource rights (see Whande, 2007), despite the fact that some of them are directly involved in the implementation of certain components of transboundary initiatives that impact on land rights, such as PA extension. This example shows the collusion between conservation and political interests. By narrating conservation as a transboundary issue while claiming land rights to be a national issue, TFCA proponents achieve the objective of increased conservation profile while relegating the issue of land and resource rights. In

⁵ Interviews with Jorge Ferrao, Bartolomew Soto, Edision Chidziya, Fannie Mutepa and Ntabiseng Motete, February, June 2006.

instances where land rights are compromised to the extent of removals, conservation stands to benefit, NGO proponents invoke national sovereignty in avoiding questions about their own involvement.

Policy-making, however, does not result in states' absolute commitment to conservation, often diluting them with contradictory and competing concerns for land and resource rights, and advocating benefit flows from conservation activities to local actors. Various decision makers⁶ in government indicated that the initial focus of transboundary approaches was on promoting infrastructural development through spatial development initiatives (SDIs). Braack (2006, personal communication) noted that the GLTFCA has as its roots in exploration of economic and infrastructure linkages between the Limpopo Province in South Africa and Gaza Province in Mozambique. The premier and governor, respectively, met to explore economic ties between the two provinces. The focus, however, has shifted drastically to issues of conservation. Conservation, while on paper including the idea of benefits to local actors who live in the boundary regions, is increasingly portrayed as the only measure that will promote regional integration. Meanwhile, such emphasis is creating tensions and incoherences even among institutions charged with the implementation of certain policy decisions and their constituencies. In the context of the GLTFCA, various interviewees noted that there was a lack of integrated planning, which often means opportunistic interventions are taken by individuals and organisations other than those linked to the state. One officer in Mozambique noted that the planned removals of local actors from Limpopo National Park (LNP) is partly a result of interventions by organisations such as PPF and their ability to draw on donor funds⁷. He further noted that the funding for the LNP came with a condition that the funds are dispersed through an NGO. He reflected that the PPF is doing more than just administering the funds; it actively implements the establishment of the LNP. In spite of the action and enthusiasm in implementation matters, PPF was not willing to discuss the problematic elements of the initiative, such as the resettlement of people, and left this to government employees to explain on the pretext that these were national issues. He refuted the claim that local actors from the LNP are resettling voluntarily, noting 'that does not happen with people, where have you heard of people just moving?'⁸ These events are indicative of the conflicts when desired policy prescriptions do not reflect local realities. Instead,

⁶ I distinguish policy maker from decision maker in that the latter can be tasked with duties that require taking decisive positions on issues of conservation implementation while the former influences policy direction, can do so formally or informally.

⁷ The development of the Limpopo National Park is coordinated by a Project Implementation Unit whose Manager is a PPF official and the funds for the project are channelled through PPF and not necessarily the Mozambique government.

⁸ Interview, Maputo, March 2007.

national actors and transnational experts involved in policy formulation engage in strategies to consolidate their ideas and institute social control on local processes.

From the above it can be noted that policy processes that rely on international frameworks, influential actors and networks result in the exclusion of local actors in practice. However, exclusion from natural resources is contested by local actors, in particular through claims to restoration of land and resource rights.

5.4. Contesting policy prescriptions: land rights along the Madimbo corridor

The political dynamics along the Madimbo corridor are between efforts to restore land and resource rights, on the one hand, and realise a mega-conservation project, on the other hand. The area is of strategic importance both for local livelihoods and regional conservation processes, which brings me to a discussion of the current contestations between the respective proponents of land uses along the corridor.

Following the Vhembe CPA claim for the Madimbo corridor (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5.1, pp. 93), an agreement was supposedly reached in 2004. However, as noted in Chapter Four, the agreement was conditional on the continued stay of the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF), a situation creating problems for the full realisation of local land rights (Limpopo Regional Land Claims Commission (LRLCC) 2004). This has resulted in some confusion and local conflicts. Firstly, local actors involved in the land claim believed that the military would leave once land uses are agreed to, but the agreement is conditional on the military staying and using part of the land. The lack of clarity has led to delays in the finalisation of the land restitution application for the Madimbo corridor. The military clearly has no intention of leaving the area judging by the arguments military officials use.

The SANDF notes the unique conditions for military training along the Madimbo corridor. In particular, this argument is used in relation to peacekeeping operations on the African continent. In one negotiation meeting between the Vhembe CPA and government departments, the SANDF officials

argued that the climatic conditions, the terrain and vegetation were similar to environmental conditions they encounter on peacekeeping missions in other African countries (SANDF presentation, 20 April 2006). The SANDF also argued that they need half of the corridor for military training purposes, owing to medium range missiles they train with. Rather ironically, the SANDF also claimed its continued presence was safer for local residents as part of the corridor is infested with unexploded missiles. Returning the land to the local residents, as a result, would present a threat to their lives. Despite the SANDF's concern for local safety, the officials indicated the military could not pay for the demining exercise. While negotiations with the SANDF are on-going, other external actors, such as PPF, conservation agencies and private sector, are vying to influence the future of land uses in the area. The continued stalemate, however, is negatively impacting on local collective processes and leadership, with the CPA and the chief now in conflicts over how such a decision was reached in the first place (see Section 4.5.2a, pp. 95).

In the ongoing uncertainties, the Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board has proposed using the Madimbo corridor as a hunting concession. While this is suggested as a temporary measure, the CPA has refused to apply for a concession, arguing that this will further delay their land claim and the chief has voiced support for it. Two of this proposal's issues are unclear. The first is exactly who among the local actors stands to benefit from the hunting concession, especially in light of conflicts of authority between the chief and the CPA. The second uncertainty is who, between the chief and the CPA, is meant to negotiate the concession with the SANDF as the current occupiers of the land. However, it's clear that the Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board is scripting its own involvement in the future management of the Madimbo corridor. The hunting concession allows the involvement of the Parks and Tourism Board through approval of the concession and for monitoring wildlife populations. In a discussion with an official from the Parks and Tourism Board, he noted that 'what the communities should be looking for are co-management arrangements, as the military is not going to leave the area.'⁹

The possible involvement of the Parks and Tourism Board is important as currently a number of government departments are responsible for various aspects of the corridor. The Madimbo corridor and

⁹ Interview 17 October 2006, Polokwane.

Matshakatini Nature Reserve are contiguous after the SANDF demarcated the reserve in 1992¹⁰ as part of the Madimbo corridor (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2b, pp. 90). On the other hand, the SANDF facilities within the corridor are under the management of the Department of Public Works. The result is that there are multiple authorities over the Madimbo corridor, namely the Departments of Defence, Public Works and the Parks and Tourism Board. The proposal by the Parks and Tourism Board is to consolidate its position as responsible for the area before negotiations are completed. In April 2006, the CPA requested that the Matshakatini Nature reserve be de-proclaimed and local residents allowed making land use decisions. The concession status can also be viewed from this perspective, of staying relevant in the area in the face of increasing local agitation for authority.

Local actors can only proceed with land use planning if the area is de-proclaimed as a nature reserve. Officials from the Parks and Tourism Board indicated de-proclamation of the Matshakatini Nature Reserve can only be requested by the SANDF, as they are the ones who established the reserve in the first place¹¹. As a result, the proposal by the military to use part of the Madimbo corridor for training purposes does not necessarily mean a release of the rest of the area that forms the Matshakatini Nature Reserve, and hence is under the authority of the Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board. Lack of clarity on who is exactly the authority to negotiate with in order to finalise the land claim has the effect of delaying the negotiations, resulting in the continued exclusion of local actors from the Madimbo corridor. As I have noted elsewhere (Whande, 2007), the situation along the Madimbo corridor is designed to benefit the military by prolonging their stay and it suits conservation agencies by creating a situation where the only form of land use is conservation related. Thus, both the military and conservation agencies seek to maintain the status quo.

Another attempt to maintain the status quo along the corridor is through a politicisation of the land claim. Politicisation specifically targets local leaders who are also members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party. The provincial conservation agency lobbies the provincial and local This, however, should be seen as a two-way process, as the CPA leadership has also resorted to party

¹⁰ Administrator's Notice 4 (Provincial Gazette 4799, 1 January 1992).

¹¹ Interview, Polokwane 17 October 2007.

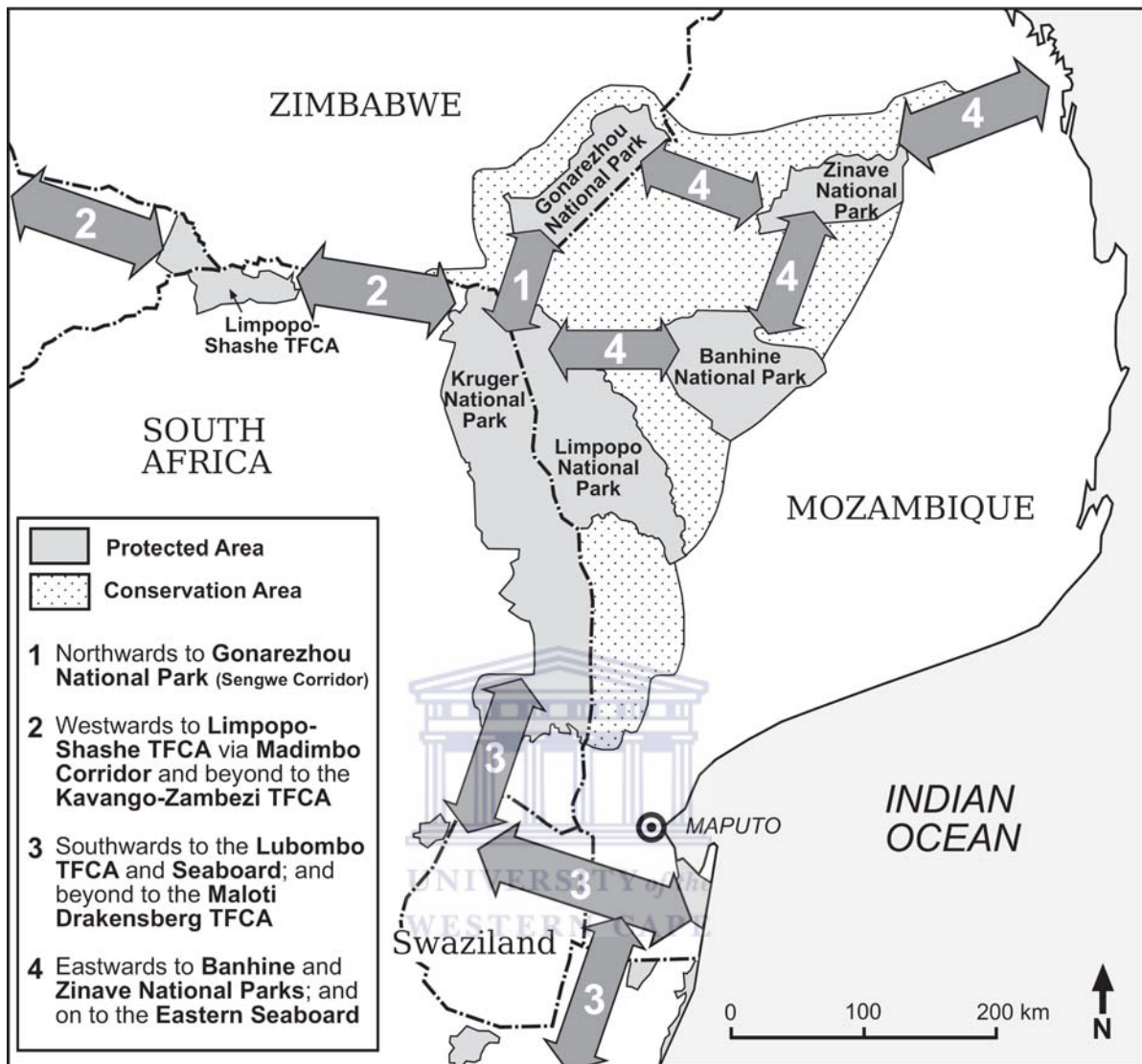
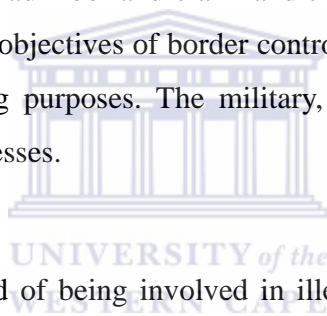


Figure 6: Map of the GLTFCA showing the role of the Madimbo corridor connecting different TFCAs

Source: PPF, 2006

political structures to push certain decisions especially in relation to disputes with local chiefs. There were allegations that the vice-chair of the CPA uses his position at the Mutale Local Municipality to influence the direction of land use strategies in the area.

It is also important to appreciate the role of historical dimensions associated with the creation of the Madimbo corridor in supporting the continued presence of the military. As discussed in chapter four (Section 4.4.2b, pp. 90), the forced removals of local residents along the Madimbo corridor was partly facilitated by security fears on the part of the apartheid South African government (Poonan, 1996; Steenkamp, 2001; Whande, 2007). The continued presence of the military is directly linked to issues of security, specifically to the influx of Zimbabwean economic refugees¹² (see Hofstater, 2005). While acknowledging wide ranging changes in international relations in the post Cold War and post-apartheid era, the South African government still regards certain intra-state activities and conditions as a threat to the South African state. In particular, such threats include underdevelopment, illiteracy and unemployment in neighbouring states, which can result in a flood of refugees seen as a threat to South Africa (Government of South Africa, 1995). Criminal activities within the corridor are controlled by the military and not the police¹³. The SANDF often apprehends illegal immigrants and hands them over to the police. The delay in settling the Madimbo land claim and the continued military control of human transboundary movement achieve the objectives of border control, even though the official argument is to retain the use of land for training purposes. The military, as a result, is in a position to exert bureaucratic authority over local processes.



However, the military is also accused of being involved in illegal activities within the corridor. For instance, junior soldiers pointed out that some senior commanders from Polokwane often come to the area to hunt. These allegations are neither new nor limited to the Madimbo corridor. For instance, findings of the Kumleben Commission (1996) and other researchers (Ellis, 1994) noted the involvement of the then SADF in illegal hunting during apartheid. The revenues were then supposedly used for supplying arms to rebel movements in Angola and Mozambique.

The manoeuvring by different state departments and NGOs to influence the outcome and nature of land uses along the Madimbo corridor is indicative of the relationships between local bureaucratic structures and local actors. The relations are often characterised by contestations of policy implementation that do not reflect the needs and aspirations of local actors. In practice, implementation becomes an area of

¹² Interview, Jack Greefe, Pafuri Gate 21 March 2006.

¹³ Interview, Thohoyandou, 27 March 2006.

dispute between local or street-level bureaucrats and local actors, often resulting in compromises that are not captured in policy documents. The following section discusses some of the issues and how local policy implementers along the Madimbo corridor ‘negotiate’ their mandate with local resource dependent people.

5.5 At the interface of local realities and policy implementation along the Madimbo corridor

As noted elsewhere (Peluso, 1992; Kepe, 1997; Carruthers, 1995), conflicts characterise the relationships between local actors and conservation officials. Game rangers, implementing PA policies based on excluding people from certain environments, have often borne the brunt of the local actors’ resistance. Problematic interactions between local residents and conservation officials are also characteristic along the Madimbo corridor. However, relations here also show that game rangers in the area make an effort to avoid confrontation with local actors.

Makhuya Park is equally despised by local actors as it is by private concession holders running high value tourism lodges¹⁴ within the Makuleke CNP. Local actors despise it for cutting off access to natural resources such as thatching grass, fish and fuel wood. Private concession holders and the KNP view the park as poorly resourced by the Limpopo provincial government and a source of lawless activities by villagers to the west, predominantly from the village of Bennde Mutale. One of the concession holders raised concerns about white people now staying in some villages to illegally hunt for commercial purposes within Makhuya Park.¹⁵ Despite private concession holders’ resentment of the way Makhuya Park is resourced, it represents and acts as a buffer zone for the Kruger/Makuleke CNP and private concession holders. The buffer status of the Makhuya Park means that the game rangers are often in greater contact with the local actors than the Kruger/Makuleke CNP. As a means of concretising the buffer zone status of the Makhuya Park, the concession holders within Kruger/Makuleke CNP once proposed erecting a fence between the KNP and Makhuya Park. My observations along the Madimbo corridor are that the Makhuya Park rangers, due to the park’s

¹⁴ The Wilderness Safaris and Outpost are two high value tourism companies with camps within the Makuleke Contractual Park neighbouring Makhuya Park.

¹⁵ Interview, David Goethe, April 2006. In actual fact, there is only one white person who stays in one of the villages bordering Makhuya Park and is suspected of involvement in illegal hunting even though this has never been confirmed.

proximity to local actors and their poor funding situation, are forced to interact with local actors more than their counterparts within the Kruger/Makuleke CNP.

The success of the Makhuya Park rangers in carrying out their duties depends on building successful relationships with local actors, and not on command and control tactics. The Makhuya Park rangers, as opposed to those from Kruger/Makuleke CNP, are the poorest funded in the area. For instance, game rangers at Kruger/Makuleke CNP have guns, vehicles and radios. The Makhuya Park rangers, however, do not have these resources, and their housing facilities are vastly different from the others. Their patrols were, until very recently, on foot. Despite the poor conditions under which they work, the Makhuya Park rangers are tasked with a similar mandate, to ensure the conservation of biodiversity, as the Kruger/Makuleke CNP rangers. Like the Kruger/Makuleke CNP, the Makhuya Park rangers resort to bureaucratic authority and the use of force to establish control over local processes and contribute to biodiversity conservation. However, they also use other means, such as social relations within the villages, to gain an understanding of and establish control over local processes.

Relations between Makhuya Park and local residents are strained. Specifically, this relates to the continued breaking of the fence and people getting into the park to hunt. When animals get out of the park and destroy people's crops, the rangers also have problems with demands for compensation. Their characterisation of park/local relations is not unique, especially where local livelihoods have been threatened (Neumann, 1998). These relations portray the complexity of conservation practice requiring effective control measures that are both coercive and persuasive. The actions of local resource dependent people are an indication of what the 'street level bureaucrats' have to navigate in implementing conservation policy at a local level.

In spite of the illegal activities carried out by the villagers, the Makhuya Park rangers do not appear specifically poised towards enforcing strict fines. Instead, I observed the rangers building social relationships with local actors. The social relations, such as having girlfriends or drinking beer in the villages, appear to produce a mixture of results for the rangers. On the one hand, it ensures that they know who the local hunters are thereby narrowing their focus in terms of investigations. Additionally, due to their presence in the village, they are quickly able to get information on who is selling game

meat. On the other hand, social relations in the village make the job of the rangers more difficult to execute. Located in a remote area, their only source of entertainment is the village. To then pursue criminals from the village with vigour becomes difficult for them. However, their relationships with people in the village make it easier to observe people from other areas who come to the village with the main purpose of getting into the park. It is also easier for them to obtain information on these supposed 'outsiders' in the case of illegal hunting.

The rangers' proposals for dealing with the situation are twofold. Firstly, they argue that local actors need to be educated on the value of PAs. Secondly, they subscribe to the view that benefits accruing from PAs to local actors can change negative local sentiments towards PAs. The proposals for education, however, are made without reflecting on the underlying historical causes for resistance and on the current needs for survival that make individuals choose risky strategies to sustain livelihoods. This call for educating people on the value of the environment is ironic since not only local actors are involved in illegal activities. Along the Madimbo corridor, reports of military personnel hunting in the area are prevalent. There are also unconfirmed reports that private game ranches use helicopters to drive wildlife onto their farms where commercial hunting takes place. The game rangers did not speak of educating the private game ranch owners and the military even though such acts are clearly illegal. Instead, a senior game ranger at Makuleke/Kruger CNP defended hunting with guns, noting that it was not as destructive to the wildlife and biodiversity as setting snares and hunting with dogs.

The rangers also spoke of employment creation as a means of getting local support for conservation. Specifically, they noted that park/local relations could be improved through the creation of employment for local actors to work within the park or conservation driven tourism. Their ideas for employment creation include that "those involved in illegal activities should be given jobs, so they don't have time to resort to entering the park to hunt." This message resonated with some local actors who indicated that they hunted in the park to make a living. This is also practised at Makuleke/Kruger CNP where the youths from the Makuleke clan occupy game ranger positions and work at the tourist lodges. Game rangers who come from the village also have the advantage that they can easily obtain information on the movement of other villagers, thus making control of resource use more effective.

The education and benefits proposals are neither new nor unique to Makhuya Park. They are reminiscent of the park outreach programmes that characterised the early approaches to community conservation (see Hulme and Murphree, 2001). Benefits from conservation, variously regarded as incentives for the involvement of local actors, form a central premise for most community based conservation initiatives. In southern Africa, this approach started on commercial farms in the late 1960s when governments in the then Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South West Africa (Namibia) adopted management strategies meant to create value in wildlife as a conservation measure (Jones, 2001). Similar strategies were adopted in these countries after independence in communal areas. The proposals at Makhuya Park, therefore, mirror this acceptance of local communities as partner in conservation but also the local context means this is largely as surveillance of local people's activities.

Current strategies of local actors involved in hunting in the Makhuya Park highlight the challenges faced by rangers who are not entirely from the local village. For instance, Makhuya Park rangers noted that local actors involved in hunting in the park are always on the look out for any form of routine on the part of the game rangers. For instance, on the southern end of the park, villagers wait for rangers to knock off at 4pm and then move into the park to hunt or collect other natural resources. The rangers indicated that they were trying to avoid predictable and regular routines in undertaking their job. Apart from having irregular working routines, the rangers have also tried working with local leadership structures to reduce illegal off take of resources.

In the past, when they caught someone in the Makhuya Park, they took them to the headman. The headman then set up disciplinary procedures and penalties. This was meant to cultivate relationships with local actors in the villages and not “rush to the police”. Working through the headman was, according to the rangers, a way of assuring “the local people that we, personally, have nothing against them and don’t wish them any jail but rather seek ways of working together.”¹⁶ This act, however, should not be seen as entirely altruistic. Lipsky (1980), for instance, notes that bureaucrats involved in relationships with local actors engage in different strategies to control local actors. Working with the headman was one way of strengthening conservation officials’ control over local resource dependent people.

¹⁶ Focus group discussion with a Makhuya Park rangers, March 2007.

The game rangers indicated, however, that this approach was not effective. Offenders were often not punished or they ignored the fines set by the headman. The rangers noted that the headman's social relations in the village contributed to the failure of the cooperation. He was constantly under pressure from local actors found inside the park and so could not act effectively. Others, such as the manager¹⁷ at Pafuri River Camp attributed the failure of agreements with the headman to a lack of leadership and unwillingness to take responsibility. Local actors in the village questioned if the headman was ever part of or committed to this pact at all. They noted that he is equally affected by the restrictions on resource use through the Makhuya Park, so he is not obliged to comply with efforts that curb the illegal off take of resources. In a similar pact with the privately run Pafuri River Camp, the headman was supposed to deal with the issues of cattle with bells straying onto the property. This at times happened in the middle of the night when guests were sleeping. In an apparent agreement between Chief Mutele and the lodge owners on how to deal with the livestock, the headman was supposed to put in place measures to control the livestock movement through disincentives such as fining the owners for straying livestock. The headman was not cooperative and instead told the lodge manager to fence off the establishment. While the chief is senior in hierarchy to the headman, some village elders regarded the lack of cooperation to be part of the tensions between the two leaders. They indicated that the agreements with the lodge owners were first approved by the chief who then conveyed to the headman what had to be done. As a result, it was bound to fail because the headman resisted certain decisions from the chief.

With the failure of the persuasive form of control, the Makhuya Park rangers have decided to take offenders to the police, a move they claim they were trying to avoid in the first place. Their own assessment is that more radical and harsh treatment of offenders was needed, a move likely to increase tensions with local actors. They reasoned that no one wants to spend a night in jail, so this should reduce the incidences of poaching within the park. However, indications from the neighbouring and better resourced Makuleke/KNP CNP are that coercive or violent means are not necessarily more effective. Even violent controls, such as *sjamboking*¹⁸, do not necessarily stop local people from entering the PA (see opening to Chapter Six, pp. 126). In the past, working with the police did not produce the required results. For instance, after repeatedly catching a hunter within the Makuleke/KNP

¹⁷ Dave, the manager who started working at the camp in 2006.

¹⁸ To hit or beat with a sjambok or whip made of animal skin.

CNP, the rangers kept taking him to the police. Nevertheless, on two occasions he was released without being taken to the courts. On a third occasion, the senior ranger at Makuleke filed a complaint with the police, which resulted in investigations of the detective in question. He has since been found to have been involved in a ring of hunters who took animals to him in exchange for criminal dockets that then disappeared.

Another way the Makhuya Park management proposes to work with local actors is through the formulation of a so-called Makhuya Forum (see also Chapter Seven, Section 7.3, pp. 180). The forum provides a joint conflict resolution mechanism between local actors and the PAs management. However, as discussed in Chapter Seven, the forum is beset with problems and it is currently dysfunctional, therefore unable to provide any meaningful contribution towards the resolution of park/local relations. The dysfunctional forum is cited by the Makhuya management as a source of misunderstanding between villagers and the park.

The cases discussed above have one thing in common. They relied on the authority of traditional leadership structures, especially the chief. However, the authority of the chiefs was compromised through perceptions that they were involved in the consolidation of apartheid and colonialism (see Chapter Four, pp. 72). While they are still present in rural settings such as along the Madimbo corridor, their authority is not absolute and remains questioned. The land for the Makhuya Park was donated to the Venda homeland by the three chiefs of Makhuya, Mphaphuli and Mutele, yet local actors still contest the presence of this park and demand access to the natural resources within. The Pafuri River camp remains the biggest employer of people from the village of Bennde Mutale¹⁹, and resistance to its presence is structured along class lines: rich cattle farmers voice their disapproval based on efforts to exclude their livestock from accessing the riverine vegetation around the lodge. Their challenge, while directed at the lodge management, is indirectly against Chief Mutele who indicates that the lodge was built on a permission to occupy (PTO) arrangement²⁰.

¹⁹ It employs ten people from the village of Bennde Mutale whilst the other tourist youth project employs six people.

²⁰ During the apartheid years, tribal authorities acted as the local government and could issue permits to occupy to people who requested land for various developments. While the Pafuri River Camp was built in 1996, two years after apartheid, it was facilitated through a PTO issued by the chief.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed changing political influences on policy-making in southern Africa in relation to biodiversity conservation. I have argued that the political changes in the region after the official end of apartheid have created new opportunities for cooperation that have been operationalised in favour of conservation in the case of TFCAs. At the same time, national and regional policy-making is subject to global processes directed through international agreements, treaties and conventions. The actual outcome of a policy remains subject to the influence of networks and actors involved in policy-making. The result, as discussed in this chapter, is the collusion of national, regional and international actors and networks for further curbing local actors' interests and exclusion from political processes. This enhances the peripheral status of local actors who are already located in economically marginal border regions but politically significant boundary areas. Along the Madimbo corridor where a TFCA is being implemented, new forms of restrictions on human movement are emphasised while strategies for promoting greater movement of wildlife are being adopted. In the case of conservation where processes are contested, I argue that policy makers and implementers make use of existing ambiguities of land and resource rights as a form of maintaining control and seeking to achieve the goals of policies. This is often contested by resource dependent people through various strategies, including the illegal use of resources and the use of law to contest historical injustices. As a result of these disputes, policy implementers and enforcers adopt new measures in dealing with local actors. However, because policy-making is removed from local processes and hence exclusionary of local actors' needs and aspirations, the outcome is resented by local actors. Policy-making processes are exclusionary and affect how people view conservation. Local livelihood strategies affect the way local actors see and speak about conservation.

CHAPTER SIX: Livelihoods at Bennde Mutale village

A porcupine, a field of groundnuts and a diviner

After the February dry spell, most fields have either survived the onslaught of heat or people are aware that their crops have failed, and they have to look for other means of living that year. In 2006, there were abundant rains. The fields were brimming with maize, groundnuts, sorghum, pumpkins and watermelons. On the easternmost side of the village of Bennde Mutale on the edge of the Kruger National Park, Muhlavha Munzhelele looked forward to her harvest. She woke up at dawn every day to tend her fields, to clear grasses or just to sit and admire the crop as it grew. However, on most occasions, she would be running after pigs and goats that could not resist the sweet temptation of the crop. That, she could deal with. On numerous occasions, she drove the goats and pigs to their owners and reprimanded them to keep their animals in the kraals or have their children look after them. She also threatened that she would charge them for the damage to the crop if it ever happened again. That seemed to solve the problem. What she could not deal with in this way though, was a little nocturnal rodent with such feeding ferocity that in one night it almost finished off the entire groundnut crop. Muhlavha Munzhelele immediately returned home fuming. She had come to get her son's help in setting traps for the porcupine. Her son, himself one of the few bird hunters in the village who have pellet guns, immediately set to task preparing snares for the rodent. His concentration on preparing the snare was punctuated with descriptions of porcupine meat, 'juicy and so soft that even a toothless person will have no problems.' In the past, "this was meat for the kings, anyone who caught it would surrender, without prompting, the entire porcupine," he added as if he had already caught the animal. There was no doubt that he was looking forward to a meal with porcupine meat. By the evening, the snares were in strategic places around the groundnut crop in the middle of a maize field. As we walked back to Muhlavha's house, I pointed out to her that the porcupine was a protected animal, and, as a result not supposed to be killed or hunted. She looked at me, smiled and then said "I am also a protector. I protect my crop, so my children and grandchildren have something to eat. As a former diviner, I also protect animals because animal bones have coded messages we use to communicate with ancestors in times of disease and family problems. So, I am a protector of all forms of life."

The next morning I thought I would awake to witness the snaring of a porcupine, but all we encountered at dawn were footprints and even more damage to the crop. The snare indicated that the porcupine had been caught though, a few quills lay around as signs of a struggle. It was not a bitter struggle though, as the porcupine managed to go on and dig up some more groundnuts. Nevertheless, Muhlavha did not give up; she was determined to protect her crop from further damage. The second attempt did not catch the porcupine either. Again, there were signs of a struggle, but it managed to get away. It should have never returned for the third time because the next day at dinner, we could attest to the description of porcupine meat. The next morning, Muhlavha, a diviner, was delicately laying out the porcupine bones on a corrugated iron sheeting to dry them. It is a constant occurrence here, the raiding of crops by domestic animals and the visits by rodents such as mice and porcupines.

At times, the problem is much bigger when, sensing the fields are not guarded, baboons jump over and help themselves to mealies. Startled, they stand there with their loot, mocking as they eat entire mealie cobs. Only the sound of gunfire moves them, escaping

deep into the mopane woodland, over the electric fence into the Makhuya Park where they spend the day barking. Everyone here is most afraid of elephants breaking out of the Makhuya, Makuleke and Kruger Parks to the east. Admiring her maturing sorghum crop, Mukegulu says that in the space of a few minutes, elephants can wipe out the entire crop and move on. When that happens, there is no immediate action possible on her part to get rid of the elephant; the whole process is bureaucratic, relying on the government to deal with what is now commonly referred to as ‘problem animal control.’ However, even when the bureaucrats come to solve the problem, which usually involves killing the elephant, it might have moved long distances. The meat from the animal killed is then usually distributed among local people. However, who gets the meat (usually regarded as a form of compensation) depends on how far the animal has moved by then. Because it’s served on a first come first served basis.

Such is the precarious nature of livelihoods here that nothing is assured or can be guaranteed from one day to the next. There may be signs of a bumper harvest today, and the next all hopes are eradicated. Villagers may have had their crop destroyed and seek immediate compensation by snaring an animal such as a porcupine, or they may look at the destroyed crop and realise that they have worked for nothing. People have learnt to move on in search of other ways of making a living if elephants have raided their fields. Yet the people in Bennde Mutale and along the Madimbo corridor continue to live from one day to the next, in spite of the hardships and uncertainties.



6.1 Introduction

A central premise of TFCAs is that local livelihoods can be enhanced through conservation related tourism. However, as discussed in this chapter, conservation and tourism simultaneously enhance and threaten local livelihood security. It follows, therefore, that any focus on single livelihood strategies overlooks other, equally important and complex ways of making a living. This chapter is concerned with understanding the variety of ways in which local actors along the Madimbo corridor sustain a living. It has, as its basis, the assumption that livelihood strategies, including those supported by natural resources, can be used to evaluate how local actors see the world around them, and the impact of external interventions on local livelihoods can provide insight into local framing of such interventions.

Livelihood comprises “the capabilities, assets (including both material and social sources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base” (Farrington, Carney, Ashley and Turton, 1999: 1). In this chapter I focus on livelihood strategies of local residents along the Madimbo corridor.

The role of socio-economic differentiation in natural resource use has been debated extensively and interpreted in many ways. One interpretation of differentiae is as a process of growing social division of labour as capitalist relations in the economy expand (Bernstein, 1977). According to this interpretation, differentiation is premised on class positions, with poor peasants being unable to reproduce themselves through household production, middle peasants being able to reproduce themselves through family labour, and the rich accumulate to invest in production (Bernstein, 1977). However, this classification disregards the combination of several economic activities or livelihood strategies. For instance, socially differentiated actors rely on various differentiated aspects, such as seasons, intensity of use and purpose of natural resources (Leach, Mearns and Scoones, 1999). Poorer households may depend more on the direct use of natural resources for the provision of basic food requirements than wealthier ones (Brocklesby and Hinshelwood, 2001), and may be more flexible than wealthier households in pursuing emerging opportunities such as commoditisation of natural resources (Shackleton and Shackleton, 2003). The flexibility exhibited by poorer households, while an indication of their vulnerability, reflects continuously shifting strategies according to emerging opportunities or

threats.

A recent analysis of differentiation is through vulnerabilities, which result from “poverty, exclusion, marginalisation [...] in material consumption” (Barnett, 2001: 132-133 quoted in Brauch, 2005: 31). Using the ‘entitlement perspective’, Sen (1981) contends that famine is a result of a breakdown in food entitlement and distribution as opposed to being a result of production failure. The entitlement perspective has since been extended to natural resources, in particular to evaluate institutions used by differentiated local actors to gain access to and control over natural resources (Leach, Mearns and Scoones, 1999). Entitlements are important for household vulnerability assessment as they provide an understanding of households’ risks according to their socio-economic status. They are “determined by the units’ endowments, especially what they have to sell, their ability to sell” and “help to explain why certain social units are differentially at risk” (Turner *et al*, 2003:8075).

Endowments can be converted into food and so are referred to as exchange-entitlements. Individuals and households with this capability have an entitlement to available food (Kepe, 1997). Endowments, in terms of what people are able to sell and thus generate an income, determine local actors’ entitlements (Turner *et al*, 2003). While useful in understanding vulnerabilities at household levels, it is important to note that many of the entitlements are couched in “social, economic, institutional, and political structures” (Turner *et al*, 2003: 8075). In spite of the constraints imposed as a result of these different locations of entitlements, vulnerability should not be taken to imply a lack of agency on the part of poor resource dependent people. Livelihood diversification is an “overarching strategy aimed at reducing risks and increasing options in the face of hazards used worldwide and across economic classes and political economies, in some cases at the cost of reduced material well being” (Turner *et al*, 2003:8075).

The next section discusses the livelihood strategies pursued by different household types in Bennde Mutale village. Because households’ socio-economic status shifts according to changing threats and possibilities for sustaining or enhancing a livelihood, dynamics across socio-economic categories are also discussed. This is followed by a section on specific livelihood cases, which further highlight the diverse approaches taken to sustain livelihoods in an increasingly changing social, political and

economic situation in South Africa and specifically along the Madimbo corridor. The final section of this chapter is a conclusion of these points.

6.2. Livelihoods according to household socio-economic status

Five household categories emerged from wealth ranking exercises conducted with different focus groups in the village of Bennde Mutale (see Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3a, pp. 54). Each group noted that a household should have a head, either a man or a woman. The head of the household is responsible for taking care of and providing food and shelter for the family. Secondly, a household has a physical location on a specific site or a homestead (*muta*). Thus, a homestead occupies a clearly defined geographical space that has boundaries and the presence of buildings. While this was widely agreed as useful in delineating a household, other situations indicated the problems of defining a household, for instance, when one head had multiple homesteads or a single homestead but multiple wives (no woman has multiple husbands in the village). There was no consensus on whether a man with two wives and two homesteads heads two households or a man with two wives and one homestead heads one household. As a result of these different understandings, the social mapping exercise produced 120 homesteads while the households were defined as 139. This was explained as men with more than one wife, even as they stay on one homestead, would rather be treated as multiple households in case government support such as building of houses, is based on the number of households. In situations where women provide for their families, they become heads of a household if their husbands pass away or go away for a long time¹. In these cases women often take over the role of providing their families with food and shelter. While the social definition of a household was difficult, the physical or spatial definition was often associated with a homestead. Local understandings of households were thus linked to having a head and maintaining a homestead, yet the social map produced emphasises the physical/spatial dimensions of a household. Based on local understandings of a household, 120 homesteads were mapped out (see Figure 7, pp. 131 below).

According to local understandings of wealth, the majority of households are concentrated in the poorest and poor categories (see Table 1, pp. 133). The rich and wealthy households constitute the smallest in

¹ In this area, it is unusual that husbands leave to work in the city and hardly ever send cash or come to visit on major holidays. A couple of incidents in the village were cited where the husbands neither came to visit nor sent money.

numbers, a significant issue when viewed in relation to the disproportionate role members from each of the categories play in the leadership of local organisations that make decisions on land and natural resource uses.

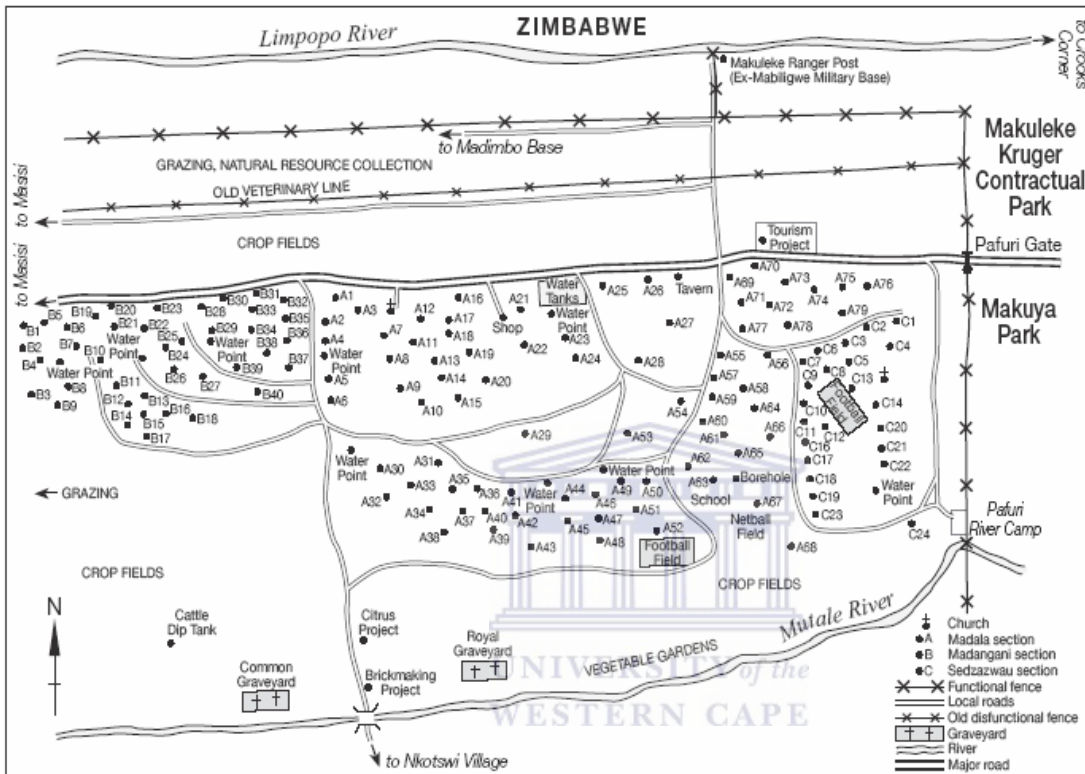


Figure 7: Social map of Bennde Mutale village showing the location of households in relation to specific natural resources and PAs

Assets determine the socio-economic status of a household. In particular, ownership of livestock was used to explain the wealth status of a household. Thus, livestock ownership increases as one progresses from poorer to wealthier households, as shown in Figure 8 below. Cattle is totally absent among the totally poor and poor household groups. From the middle to the wealthy groups, the percentage of households with cattle steadily increases from slightly less than 10% for the middle group to just over 90%, which is almost all the households among the wealthy. Additionally, there is a progression from ownership of small livestock such as chickens, pigs and goats to cattle as one moves from poor to wealthy categories (see Figure 8, pp. 132 below). A similar projection is observed for diversity of

livestock. Thus the chart below shows huge disparities in ownership of livestock, with the totally poor not possessing any forms of livestock except chickens. The next group is characterised with ownership of goats and chickens. The ownership of livestock, particularly cattle, increases with movement from the poorer to the wealthy groups, while a bell shaped pattern emerges for the other livestock. Wealthy households have a regular supply of meat from small livestock while maintaining their wealth status through cattle, which are rarely killed but rather sold (see Section 6.3.1, pp. 148).

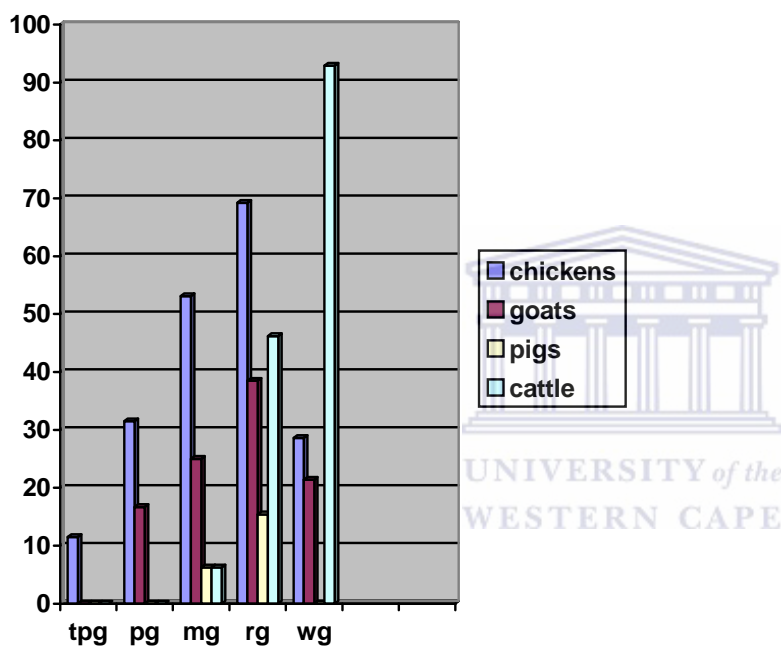


Figure 8:
Percentages of livestock ownership among households in the different socio-economic groups (tpg – totally poor group; pg – poor; mg -middle group; rh – rich group; wg – wealthy group).

Viewed from an exchange-entitlement perspective, there is a general progression in terms of endowments that households have, specifically access to resources and ownership of assets, which can be converted to food. For instance, draught power provides increased capacity to work the land and thus to produce more food (see Table 1, pp. 133 below).

Table 1: Livelihoods according to socio-economic differentiation along the Madimbo corridor.

Household categories	Number of households	Livelihood sources	Impacts of losing access to natural resources	Coping strategies
Totally poor (<i>tshishayi tshote</i>)	26 (18.7%)	Livelihood sources are insecure as there are no regular and dependable sources of income, sometimes without any food, reliant on others in the village in dire circumstances. The majority of the households do not possess any assets such as livestock, except for three households with chickens. They mostly rely on a variety of natural resources for the provision of basic food through fishing, the collection of mopane worms, which are dried to last over the year, and brewing ilala palm wine and marula beer, government grants such as pensions and child support grants. Eleven households chopped firewood, and some had small pieces of land for summer crop cultivation.	Impacts on provision of food as they rely on natural resources to sustain a living. Because they have only small pieces of land for crop production, they have often little food in storage, so are the least prepared for recovery after shocks.	Coping with uncertainties include dried natural resource products such as mopane worms, marula nuts, nyii fruit (<i>Berchemia zeyheri</i>)
Poor (<i>tshishayi</i>)	54 (39%)	Self-employed, skilled in activities such as thatching, income not regular and/or secure. Thirty-three households depended on old-age pensions and disability or child support grants; some had gardens for vegetables in winter and fields for crop farming after the summer rains. Natural resources act as a safety net against slipping into the poorest category.	Access to natural resources for sustaining self-employment (such as thatching grass) cut off, therefore reduced opportunities for income generation, reduced diversification activities for food procurement such as gathering wild foods	A combination of strategies including crop farming, collecting natural resources, government grants
Middle group	32 (23%)	Thirty households in this category had jobs either in Johannesburg or locally at the KNP, the Working for Water Programme or at	Increased dependence on formal employment to secure basic necessities such as	Their capacity to cope with environmental shocks is determined by

		the Pafuri River Camp and Veterinary Department. Eleven households were involved in crop farming in summer and growing vegetables in winter. Some of the households also received grants, especially child support grants.	food.	remittances from migrant labour and the receipt of grants from the government. They also rely on a variety of natural resources in the area.
Rich	13 (9%)	Secure jobs, usually two salaries, as both husband and wife were employed, and possessing a variety of livestock including chicken, pigs and cattle. They also farmed in the rainy season, and collected natural resources such as mopane worms for personal consumption.	Possible impacts on livestock diversity, with particular vulnerabilities to losing cattle as they compete for grazing pastures and provision of water with wealthier households. They might be forced to turn to increased crop production to protect their formal incomes from being used for purchasing of food ²	Increased diversification in livelihood strategies, which offers more coping capacity in times of stresses to environmental resources. Involved in crop and livestock farming.
Wealthy	14 (10%)	Diverse sources of income, but predominantly cattle farmers. Nine households in this category settled in the area during the 1980s even though they continue to live in the city. Their cattle can also be used for draught power in the cropping season. They therefore generally have the most options for sustaining livelihoods in the area.	Some of the areas they used as grazing pastures for their livestock have been closed off, resulting in increased competition for grazing locally. Confining livestock to limited areas might lead to resource degradation. They also have reduced access to water resources, as access to the Limpopo River is closed off by a military fence ³ .	Agro-pastoralism offering multiple opportunities for food storage after harvest times, the majority with jobs in the city, so able to keep livelihood sources diverse, some can afford fodder for livestock in times of drought, so have several coping strategies

The same endowments can also be converted to cash by selling, which provides an income for obtaining food. Because households have different exchange-entitlements, their strategies to sustain a

² The local school headmaster, whose wife also teaches at the local school, told me once that he had, for the first time in the area, requested a piece of land for crop production to make sure that the family also produced its own food and did not need to purchase it all the time (Interview, Bennde Mutale village 20 April 2006).

³ The Vhembe CPA proposed that the fence be moved closer to the river and access points be designated to allow livestock to reach the Limpopo River to drink water.

living are equally different and affected by the amount and type of endowments that can be converted into food. For instance, wealthier households accessed rangelands predominantly for livestock pastures and for supplementary purposes through collection of resources such as mopane worms and marula fruits for direct household consumption. On the other hand, poorer households accessed rangelands predominantly for household consumption and not for livestock fodder. In spite of the differences according to socio-economic status, evidence from the Madimbo corridor also reflected the nuances involved, in particular in relation to the use of natural resources.

Table 1 above shows the different livelihood strategies pursued by the households in each of the wealth categories. While specific approaches are characteristic of each of the categories, it is also important to note that some approaches are pursued across the categories, suggesting a dynamic and fluid process to livelihoods. In the following pages, I discuss the specific approaches pursued by households in each of the categories.



6.2.1a Struggling to survive – livelihood strategies for the poorest

The first wealth category, composed of 26 households, is regarded as totally poor and constitutes approximately 19% of the households in the village. They have limited assets, such as rondavels for providing basic shelter, basic farming implements such as hoes and natural resource collection materials such as axes. Social capital is also an integral aspect of the poor's assets as they use their connections, such as participation in brick making groups. Comparatively with the richer households, the limited assets available to the poor constrain livelihood strategies and possibilities. The endowments that can contribute to their entitlements are limited.

Other options available to the poorest households include the brewing and selling of marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*) beer (*mukumbi*) as well as ilala palm (*Hyphaene petersiana*) wine (*mutshema*). Thus entitlements are secured through the market, either sold locally within the villages (see Figure 12, pp. 152, Section 6.3.2, pp. 150) or transported to the city. According to Cousins *et al* (1992), this group constitutes petty commodity producers and they improve themselves through agriculture and non-agricultural production. However, the dynamics within the socio-economic categories are more complex and fluid, not least because approaches such as agriculture and specialised activities such as

beer brewing are only partially pursued on a seasonal basis and in varying intensities (see Section 6.2.2, pp. 143 below). The poorest households, therefore, engage in a variety of activities to cope with external interventions.

Table 2: Sustaining livelihoods for the poorest in Bennde Mutale.

One local woman grew up in a family that depended on making ilala palm wine for a living. She learnt the trade from her grandfather and father (making ilala palm wine had previously been the domain of men). She is now one of three recognised ilala palm wine makers in the village, the other two are men who also learnt the trade from their parents and ‘inherited’ the grounds on which the ilala palms grow. The woman notes that, once a family has access to a certain piece of land with ilala palms, and the family is known to the headman and chief as making wine in that area, then this land can be passed down through the generations, as in her case. Thus, while no formal land ownership documents exist, an area that has traditionally been worked on by one family can be passed down through the generations.

However, through a series of changes in the village the woman saw part of ‘her land’ incorporated into nature reserves. She has had to move around in search of other pieces of land with ilala palms from which she can make the wine. In the late 1980s, the demarcation of the Makhuya Park incorporated some of the land that the woman’s family had used for making ilala palm wine. They were left with a piece of land adjacent to the KNP. With the settlement of the Makuleke land claim, however, this piece of land was incorporated into the Kruger/Makuleke CNP, leaving her without access to any land with ilala palms that her family had been using for at least three generations. She says that, even outside the Kruger/Makuleke CNP, game rangers have harassed her, at times accusing her of using resources on land that is supposed to be part of the park. She argues that the accusations that ilala palm wine makers destroy the environment have contributed to diminishing the role they have played previously in facilitating the regeneration of the ilala palms.

The woman is worried that the current transboundary conservation approaches will lead to further exclusion from productive land. She is part of a group of people who are unsettled by the prospect of conservation going trans-boundary. She sees the TFCA as a front for increasing control of local resource use and expanding PAs. She notes that her own experience with the establishment of Makhuya Park was that people were employed, ironically, only to erect the fence separating the village from the park. Conservation, she notes, ‘comes with promise of jobs and other benefits, but we have not seen that here except that people are employed from other far-away places right here on our doorstep’.

The example above (Table 2) highlights the difficulties that local actors face when interventions are planned without much regard for local livelihoods. With increased control over the resources she requires for making ilala palm wine, it is clear how easily people here can slip into poverty as a result

of state intervention. From this perspective, state interventions can be a source of vulnerabilities, can reduce the endowments contained within natural resources through limiting access. This example also highlights the central role natural resources play in supporting households in the poorest category. Most, at some point, have depended on natural resources, such as chopping firewood for sale. Some depend on seasonal fishing in both the Mutale and Limpopo rivers.

6.2.1b The poor – jobs, technical skills and grants as sources of livelihood security

As shown in Table 1 above, 39% of the households in Bennde Mutale are regarded as poor. Households in this category do not have a regular and secure income but get ‘piece meal’ jobs⁴. Less than 10% of the households have some form of formal employment (see also Figure 10, pp. 141 below, Section 6.2.1d, pp. 140). This is a very low percentage considering that some of the biggest households of Bennde Mutale are in this category. Some of the household members in this category possess technical skills, such as bricklaying and roof thatching, which ensure the generation of some form of income. This income, however, is not secure and cannot be guaranteed on a daily basis.

Besides income generated from self-employment activities, some of the households in this category depend on grants such as child grants. Of the five household categories within Bennde Mutale village, 26% of the poor households receive some form of grant (see Figure 9 below); almost double the second highest percentage of households receiving some form of grant.

⁴ Locally, jobs such as thatching houses, digging someone’s pit toilet are regarded as ‘piece meal’ jobs.

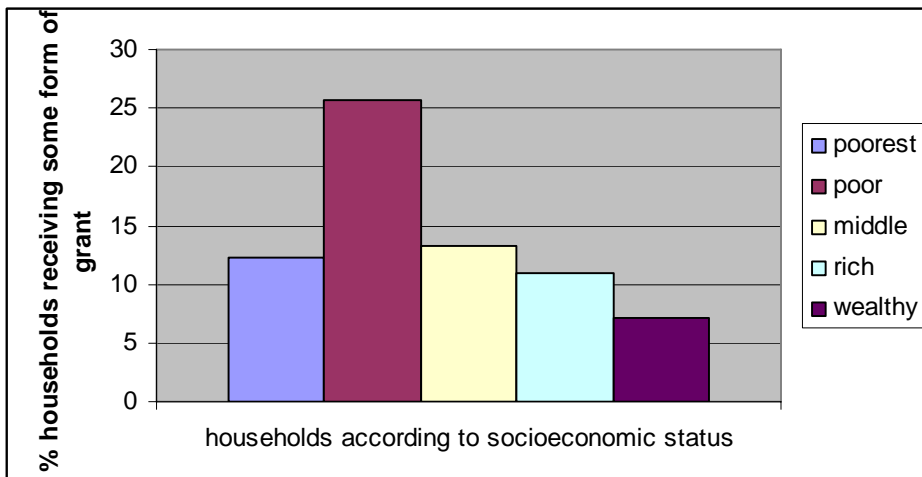


Figure 9: Households receiving some form of grant and their distribution across socio-economic groups.

This is the highest percentage of households receiving some form of grant, and is proportional to the number of households in the category. Due to the large families in this category, the income remains inadequate to support their livelihoods (see Table 1, pp. 133 above), resulting in households in the category pursuing other means of gaining access to and control over resources within the poor group as opposed to the poorest. These range from market mechanisms through skilled and specialised work such as the ability to thatch other people’s houses, the ability to use pellet guns for hunting birds and the ability to brew ilala palm wine. The skills, highly dependent on natural resources, further bear testimony to the centrality of natural resources in securing local livelihoods.

With increased external controls over access to natural resources, it is likely that some of these families will fall into the poorest categories once their grants cease. For instance, one unmarried woman in the village with six children lives with her mother who supports them with her pension grant. In this situation, the woman has turned to chopping and selling firewood as a means of supplementing the family’s income. Losing access to this natural resource would mean the loss of the most important source of her income. Another potential threat observed in this respect was the exclusion of local actors from natural resources needed for specialised trades such as thatching houses. Any changes of external

conditions affecting how the people in the poor category sustain their livelihoods can result in them shifting to the poorest category.

6.2.1c Livelihood strategies for the middle group

The third category is the middle group located between the rich/wealthy and the poor/poorest. They form about 23% of the households. Households in this category have the means to generate an income. The most prominent form of income generation for households in this category was formal employment, either as teachers, nurses, and working for government programmes such as the Working for Water programme (see Figure 10, pp. 141 below), a government programme aimed at addressing the problem of alien invasive plants, which functions by creating employment to support ecosystem services (van Wilgen, 2004). Some individuals in this category generated income through specialised activities such as thatching houses and erecting fences around households and fields.

The members of the middle group also have livestock such as goats, pigs and chickens, which they use for household consumption. There is an increased diversification in livestock ownership, with certain individuals possessing a variety of livestock. Diversification of livestock is as much a reflection of the livestock they can afford as it is of local coping strategies by investing in easy to maintain livestock.

The diversity of livestock represents endowments that can be converted into cash thereby creating exchange entitlements. The middle households, therefore, have the ability to generate an income for the procurement of food over and above having income from employment and self-employment. Perhaps as a reflection of local priorities, local people spoke of households in this category as being able to pay school fees for their children, especially to attend secondary school. The ability to educate children is highly regarded in the village of Bennde Mutale. It is often seen as ensuring a bright future. Thus, local actors are not only looking at current strategies to gain access to resources, they also plan to maintain this control into the future.

In spite of this positive outlook, households in this category usually have only one source of formal and

regular income. To supplement their income, households in this category also rely on a range of natural resources obtainable in the area. For example, the local headmaster owns a pellet gun and goes hunting for birds on weekends. Some of the residents in this category also resort to other means of accessing resources, further highlighting the difficulty of assigning single livelihood approaches to socio-economic categories (see Section 6.2.2, pp. 143).

Table 3: Innovation and options in sustaining livelihoods along the Madimbo corridor.

A local man had been employed by the Pafuri River Camp since it was opened in 1996. His wife had never been employed, but they enjoyed a comparatively better lifestyle than the majority of people in the village. With their earnings from the Pafuri River Camp, the family managed to buy a gas refrigerator and a 20kg gas tank. Now they go to the town of Musina once a month to buy frozen chicken heads, necks and feet. For the entire month, the chicken supplements their sources of income as they sell them to the other locals. It also provides relish for the family in an area where people usually rely on dried mopane and vegetables in the dry winter months. When the Pafuri River Camp employed a new manager and the man lost his job, the family was able to continue selling chickens thus generating an income to sustain their livelihoods.

The example above (Table 3) indicates how local actors innovate to, firstly, sustain a livelihood, and secondly, to maintain or improve their socio-economic status. The insecurity of wage labour, in this case at the Pafuri River camp, means socio-economic categories can be dynamic and fluid, with households entering and exiting specific groups based on their current status. Local actors, however, also build in safety mechanisms for the eventuality that one source of livelihood is threatened, as seen in the example of the gas fridge and the sale of chickens (Table 3, pp. 139).

6.2.1d Becoming rich in Bennde Mutale – household double income and livestock ownership

Those with at least two sources of income were regarded as rich. They constitute about 9.5% of the households in Bennde Mutale. They also had the highest percentage of households with some form of cash employment -as opposed to employment paid in kind-, even at a low 20% (see Figure 10 below).

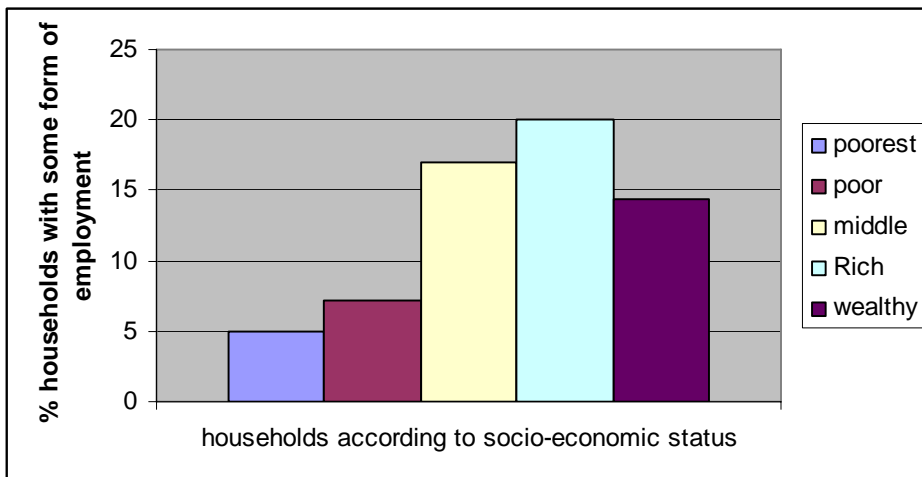


Figure 10: Percentages of households in the five socio-economic categories with some form of employment.

The households in this category own livestock, including some cattle, which they, at times, sell to supplement their income. The cattle are, however, mostly used for draught power, either in their own fields or on those of other residents' for a small fee or payment in kind. Milk is also an important product, which the rich sell to other villagers. Respondents in a group discussion noted that this group could not be merged with or considered the same as the wealthy one since:

'People who work are not wealthy; they have to wait for the end of the month to display their money so working doesn't mean anything. To be wealthy comes from the earth, from the soil⁵.

Despite this perception, the number of people seeking formal employment in Bennde Mutale indicates the important role of wage labour in sustaining livelihoods. With the exception of the wealthy, employment assumes a central role in livelihoods as one moves from the poorest households to the rich. Formal employment then becomes one of the ways through which residents can become rich and buy the symbols of wealth such as cattle.

6.2.1e 'To be wealthy comes from the soil'

The final category is considered to be wealthy and forms about 10% of the households in the village.

⁵ Focus Group discussion on wealth ranking, Bennde Mutale village, 23 July 2005.

They own livestock, mostly cattle, which they use as draught power or charge others for this service during the ploughing season, and, according to Cousins *et al* (1992), they constitute a *petit bourgeoisie* group, characterised by investments in agricultural means of production. They also have water pumps or boreholes for their personal water supply. Most of their wealth is in the form of livestock, especially cattle. The wealthy can afford to hire workers to work their fields and look after their livestock. They have multiple sources of income including selling milk in the summer, employment in the city, livestock sales, crop and vegetable sales. They can also afford to send their children to secondary school and university, an indication that they not only want to stagnate as producers, but aspire to other forms of creating wealth and making a living for their children. Investment in education can be an outcome of many factors, which include the increasing restrictions over grazing pastures central to livestock, and hence, the sustenance of their wealth. The wealthy greatly depend on the grazing pastures to maintain their wealth. Conceptually, investments by the wealthy in alternative livelihood options for their children can be assessed from a social protection perspective, which is “concerned with the ways in which individuals' or households' resilience to adverse events can be strengthened” (Farrington; Slater and Holmes, 2004: v). Whereas literature (see Farrington et al, 2004) suggests that social protection can promote growth through stimulation of credit schemes, creation of physical assets, in this case personal household investments in education can be analysed as promoting personal and household insurance.



Table 4: Retirement plans in Bennde Mutale village.

<p>A man born in Nzhelele, Kwakwani to the west of the Madimbo corridor moved to Bennde Mutale village in the early 1990s. As a young man he worked close to Tshipise before moving to Masisi in 1975 to work for the Department of Health and Welfare. In the early 1990s, he approached the village headman to request a piece of land where he could farm. He was specifically attracted to the village because of its proximity to the Mutale River, which he hoped to use for irrigation purposes. The total land he received was 28 hectares, but at the moment he is only using 6 hectares for crop cultivation. The promise of irrigation along the Mutale River has not yielded any positive outcomes for him. Firstly, he has to contend with baboons that destroy his crops all the time. Secondly, he indicated that he does not have enough financial resources to buy all the equipment needed for irrigation. However, he is still regarded locally as better off than most of the households. He receives a pension and owns some livestock. He also possesses a car, which is seen as a sign of wealth in the village.</p>

Migration into the area has often been used by rich cattle farmers resident in the cities looking for

retirement places. In recent years, however, this trend is facing problems as a result of PAs in the vicinity of the villages along the Madimbo corridor. Those who moved into the area do not seem to have done so well after all. A case in point is a man, now resident in Bennde Mutale, who moved to the area upon his retirement, with plans to invest in irrigated agriculture (see Table 4 above). Problem animals as well as a lack of start up capital for the irrigation have impacted negatively on the man's agricultural strategy to promote and reduce risk, which points to the need of social protection that is driven by appropriate research and extension services and a stimulation of credit schemes. He indicated that the location of his irrigation land, next to a tourist camp, had been planned to “fresh vegetables to the camp for their visitors” (Interview, July 2007). Yet a former camp manager indicated that the irrigation would be an eye sore for their visitors and the camp could not support it. Such inadequate planning could have been avoided with targeted research on establishing viability for the initiative (to identify the risks and opportunities).

While there are specific characteristics to each of the groups identified above, it is also clear that households in different categories aspire to improve their situation. As a result of personal endeavours, some households are able to move between categories from poorer to richer groups. At the same time, others can also be affected negatively in times of bereavement or loss of a source of income. As observed by Masst (1994), there is fluidity among the groups.

6.2.2 Livelihood dynamics across socio-economic categories

The foregoing discussion has given a broad overview of the livelihood strategies pursued by the different household categories in Bennde Mutale. These livelihood strategies are by no means limited to the household categories discussed above. Some strategies are undertaken across the household typologies. Households in certain categories also combine strategies as safety nets and methods of maintaining their wealth status and guarding it against uncertainties. This inherently challenges the basis of these household classifications, as household categories are constantly shifting as some villagers at times lose critical resources (through death of an employed member, loss of employment) or some gain (as educated or grown up children get jobs) or as a result of droughts and floods and of shifts in conservation territory.

A prominent cross-category approach to sustaining livelihoods is the use of social and kin networks. As has been observed elsewhere, assistance is given among the poorest households as well as between wealthier and poorer households (see also Wilkinson-Maposa *et al*, 2005). Support includes provision of food to poorer households and formation of money lending associations. Assistance is also based on reciprocity. For instance, during funerals, everyone in the village makes a contribution to the deceased in the form of food for mourners or money to cover funeral costs. The level of giving is dependent on what the person can afford, but it is largely determined by individuals' need to receive the same treatment in their time of need. Besides special occasions such as funerals, there are also general acts of reciprocity in the village. For instance, single mothers rely on their mothers or fathers who receive pension grants for their livelihood needs. The single mothers also often continue to stay within their parents' homestead, thereby providing support to their parents in the form of cooking, collection of resources such as firewood and doing other household chores. Masst (1994: 27) observes similar dynamics in Zimbabwe, noting that "young households are unable to establish themselves as a separate unit, they depend upon sustenance from [...] parents, and in return they work as unpaid household labourers". In rare cases, parents on pension grants move from their homesteads to join their married children. For instance, one elderly woman stayed with her son and his family of five. Since the son was unemployed, the entire family relied on her single pension grant.



An important issue emerging from this research is that socio-economic categories might be more fluid and dynamic than suggested by the actual groups assigned by local actors and by authors such as Bernstein (1977) and Cousins *et al* (1992). This fluidity is also affected by the location of Bennde Mutale village along an international boundary. For instance, not everyone in the village disclosed the actual assets they have, which makes the socio-economic categorisations difficult to undertake. Living close to an international boundary, some residents have assets in neighbouring countries. A local diviner or traditional healer (*sangoma*) who has lived in Mozambique and Zimbabwe before moving to Bennde Mutale in the early 1990s illustrates this difficulty. During the social mapping exercise, she was categorised as heading a poor household because she did not have cattle and other forms of livestock. However, while conducting my research and after building trust (through going to her house to ask questions each time I was in the field), she pointed out that she had almost 200 head of cattle in Zimbabwe. This all of a sudden elevated her from the poor category that the focus groups had allotted her. Besides strategic distribution of assets across geo-political boundaries, others in Bennde Mutale

also resorted to activities meant to improve their situation, through combining livelihood activities such investment of grants, employment, selling of chicken and collection of natural resources.

The grants income is meagre and is usually used to buy food and pay school fees. Table 5 (pp. 144) shows the monthly income from various grants and the numbers of individuals receiving the grants. While this amount is relatively meagre compared to the number of households and people in the village, it is used to generate more income, such as through the purchase of beer brewing ingredients. An elderly woman in the village once told me she tries to buy goats whenever possible so that her son will have some goats when she dies.

Table 5: Income generated from various grants in the village of Bennde Mutale.

Type of grant	Amount per grant (South Africa Rands ⁶)	Number of people in Bennde Mutale receiving the grant (across socio-economic categories)	Total amount in Bennde Mutale per grant (South Africa Rands)
Pension grant	R880	27	R23760.00
Child support grant	R200	82	R16400.00
Disability grant	R880	7	R6160.00
Total monthly village grant income			R46320.00

Table 6 (pp. 146) below shows different livelihood clusters and the main livelihood activities that characterise each cluster. Livelihood clusters are a grouping of livelihood activities that rely on similar resources and approaches but are not necessarily confined to household socio-economic groups. The livelihood activities indicated in the table below are, therefore, cross-cutting among different socio-economic groups in Bennde Mutale and are indicative of the fluidity of livelihood strategies across socio-economic categories.

⁶ Exchange rates at the time of writing were 1US\$= 7SAR

Table 6: Livelihood clusters along the Madimbo corridor.

Livelihood clusters	Specific approaches	Resources	Constraints and threats to livelihood security
Land and natural resource based livelihoods	Livestock, crop agriculture, collection and use of natural resources, marketing of resources, herbalists and sangomas, illegal hunting, fishing, chopping and selling of firewood, employment at tourist camps	Rangelands, wild fruits, land, water, fuel wood, mopane worms, marula fruit and fish	Military presence limits grazing ranges and areas for resource collection, instituting human movement controls. PAs are fenced off and prevent access to grazing pastures and resources such as ilala palms. Informal resource control along the Limpopo and Mutale Rivers by conservation officials. Crop raiding by wild animals. Seasonality of resource use such as mopane worms. Uncertain weather patterns impact on crop and livestock approaches. Increased demands for rural resources, such as mopane worms, from the cities
Urban and migrant labour	Remittances from the city and farms to the west of the Madimbo corridor and in Tzaneen	Employment in the city, in the mines, on farms	Low levels of education, hence only low income jobs ⁷ , general unemployment, estimated between 30-40%, in the country contributing to job insecurity
Non-agricultural income generation	Beer brewing, sex work, petty trading in the villages ⁸ (mostly during pension pay outs, soccer matches), <i>stokvels</i> ⁹	Start up cash	Not all people buy beer for cash, some take on credit. This impacts on immediate livelihoods returns of the brewer. High number of local traders therefore diminished incomes, Risk of loss of income for income generation strategies such as sex work.
State pensions and grants	Old age pensions, child support and disabled grants	Government grants	State grants are discontinued in different ways, old age pensions when recipients pass away, child grants when the children are fourteen - so grants do not guarantee a constant source of income

⁷ Many people are employed as security guards and during a long industrial action in 2006, it was reported that their families were sending them food instead of them sending money to the village.

⁸ The main products being sold in the village of Bennde Mutale now include chicken heads, necks and feet but others such as cool drinks and sweets.

⁹ These are women's savings clubs where contributions are pooled and distributed on a rotational basis. The women also brew beer to raise funds.

For instance, livelihood strategies of the poor in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces of South Africa highlight how different wealth categories are linked to various strategies, including association with urban relatives (remittances), natural resources and local social networks (Du Toit and Neves, 2006). These livelihood relationships across socio-economic groups can be highlighted through livelihood clusters. Two of these are the main forms of rural livelihoods found in southern Africa:

- land and natural resources based livelihoods, relying on crops and livestock and ‘everyday use’ of land and natural resources
- urban and migrant labour derived livelihoods.

The table above also shows two clusters, which, despite being minor sources of rural livelihoods, form an important option for the poor:

- non-agricultural income sources such as beer brewing and petty trading
- state pensions and grants even though the number of countries providing these in the southern Africa region is low.

An important characteristic of the livelihood clusters is that they cut across socio-economic categories. Observations in Bennde Mutale indicated that the rich and wealthy also relied on remittances as well as on land and natural resources for their livelihood security. These livelihood clusters therefore cut across different categories.

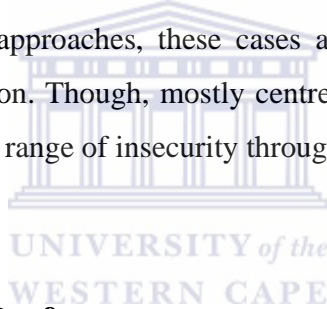
External interventions have had a profound effect on the livelihood strategies of residents along the Madimbo corridor. Specifically, exclusion from accessing natural resources and from the policy-making process has resulted in negative impacts on local livelihoods. The village of Bennde Mutale provides insight into constraints faced by local actors as a result of external conservation and national security interventions. These interventions, over time, have resulted in local insecurities over livelihood, in particular through denied access to land and natural resources.

A complementary way to understanding livelihoods in the area is through an assessment of specific

livelihood approaches. In the following section I discuss livelihood diversification in terms of sectoral changes adopted by local residents along the Madimbo corridor to make a living.

6.3 Livelihoods diversification – specific cases

In the earlier sections, I discussed livelihoods according to household socio-economic status and livelihood clusters. I now sketch specific livelihood case studies to show the variety of rural livelihood strategies. My use of diversification here refers more to the shifts from rural sectors such as agriculture to formal sectors, including employment and marketing rural natural resources, both within the rural and urban areas (Start and Johnson, 2004). I therefore write about diversification in terms of sectoral changes rather than multiplicity -even though this is also a characteristic of households in Bennde Mutale- of approaches at household level. I also note the impacts of external interventions on local processes and understandings of the role of natural resources in sustaining livelihoods. As well as showing the diversity of livelihood approaches, these cases also indicate the constraints that local actors face in attempting diversification. Though, mostly centred on land and natural resources, other approaches also evolve as a result of a range of insecurity through restrictions on natural resource use.



6.3.1 The return of Gaza Beef

Gaza Beef returned to the Madimbo corridor in June 2006 to buy cattle from the local residents. The return of Gaza Beef, after what locals described as a 3-5 year absence, might be linked to a general increase in beef consumption in South Africa, which rose by an estimated 14% between 2005 and 2006 (Bloomberg and Khumalo, 4 May 2007). Gaza Beef allocated days for buying cattle in each of the villages along the Madimbo corridor.



Figure 11: Gaza Beef advertising cattle sales along the Madimbo corridor.

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Attending the cattle market was one of the most illustrative events during my research. It clarified the local idea of livestock as a symbol of wealth. In an area where an entire village of about 900 people receives about R47 000 per month in grants (see Table 5, pp. 145, Section 6.2.2, pp. 143), one cattle farmer sold twenty-five head of cattle for about R100 000. Cattle act as a source of income therefore an endowment. Earnings from cattle can be converted into food, giving those who convert them entitlement or access to food.

However, focusing on the value of livestock alone masks other uses of rangelands that define local relations. These relations are affected and determined by institutional issues, specifically how initial endowments are obtained and various forms of access to resources gained (Kepe, 1997). While cattle are an important aspect of local endowments, those in possession of cattle also use natural resources for

a range of purposes, which help maintain the integrity of their livestock. Maintaining cattle is possible if the individuals are able to access other forms of generating income and sustaining a livelihood.

While cattle are viewed as a symbol of wealth, there are other equally important uses of rangelands whose economic value is often underestimated. Rangelands are used for purposes such as the collection of building materials like thatch grass and construction poles. They provide *veldt* products, such as ilala palm, fruits, animals (rodents, locusts, birds) that are important for people's everyday sustenance. Rangelands represent a 'hidden harvest' of rural areas in the sense that their actual value in sustaining rural livelihoods is not often taken into account (Arntzen, 1998). Their undervaluation is partly a result of sectoral approaches to development (Shackleton and Shackleton, 2003), such as only seeing the value in terms of livestock or calculating value according to revenue generation and not everyday uses, to valuing rangelands and partly a result of how they are used. For instance, they provide fruit for youths herding cattle, school children on their way to and from school and elders working in their fields. These uses are often not obvious when calculating resource values. Rangelands should be viewed as productive or working landscapes from which a variety of resources are accessed for livelihood purposes, among which livestock is but one (Taylor, 2006).

Different values characterise rangelands. It is also the use value of the resource that determines how local actors talk about approaches that limit access to resources (see Chapter Seven, pp. 169). The wealthy cattle owners are therefore motivated by the need to maintain access to grazing pastures, while a poorer household would be motivated by the need to obtain food from the rangelands. The view of the value of rangelands in monetary terms therefore tends to ignore other uses that are as equally important to poorer households. Other resources, such as marula, are also increasingly viewed in monetary terms; in the process, other intrinsic use values are being ignored.

6.3.2 The commodification of marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*)

Sclerocarya birrea or marula is a deciduous and dioecious fruit, which means that the male and female reproductive organs of the tree are carried on different trees (Emanuel *et al*, 2005). Traditionally, marula is important for rural communities in the southern Africa region for livelihood, medicinal,

spiritual and cultural purposes (Emanuel *et al*, 2005). The drought resistant characteristics of the tree makes it more suited to semi-arid areas, including along the Madimbo corridor.

Marula belongs to a group of natural resources now commonly referred to as non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The role of marula as a NFTP in South Africa has been well documented (Shackleton and Shackleton, 2003; Wynberg and Laird, 2007). Marula plays an important role as a safety net in reducing vulnerabilities of rural livelihoods. Increasingly, the safety net role of the marula fruit is seen in commodification processes. The commodification of the fruit has resulted in its marketing, both at a local level as well as for the international market (Emanuel *et al*, 2005). I have observed two processes of commodification. Firstly, marula beer is sold locally at social functions or taken to the nearby towns for sale. In another process, marula is used to create a variety of products from liqueur¹⁰ to cosmetics in response to shifting global preferences for natural products. Thus, increased efforts are being made to tap into local knowledge of the plant in developing natural products with medicinal and cosmetic qualities. Additionally, external interest in the plant is also accompanied by scientific (specifically biotechnology) research aimed at increasing the productivity of the marula (Goyvaerts, 2003). Scientific interest in the fruit is geared towards enhancing the exchange value of the marula fruit through genetic modification. However, it is not clear how such scientific research and potential modification for future uses will impact on the local dynamics of access to and use of natural resource. Commodification, therefore, becomes a frame of reference for external actors to generate monetary benefits to local resource users, such as the residents along the Madimbo corridor, while at a local level the increased commodification of marula generates both interest and anxiety.

Locally along the Madimbo corridor, not everyone agreed on selling marula beer, and especially the older people maintained that '*mukumbi aurengiswi*' (marula beer is not for sale). One man noted that "selling *mukumbi* is like selling one's wife." During the group discussion, it became clear that the elders regarded selling *mukumbi* as an offence to the ancestors, noting that this will affect the following season's fruit. Older residents maintained that marula beer is sacred beer, which, if sold, will bring misfortune to the area. When in November 2005 a hailstorm destroyed the fruit, one elderly man told me this was because the ancestors were angry at villagers who were now selling marula beer.

¹⁰ The commercially produced alcoholic beverage is Amarula Cream, which is different from the local fermented beer.



Figure 12: Marula beer drinking party at Tshikuyu village.

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The younger people noted that marula was a good source of income. In the case of one elderly man, however, the others maintained that he was one of the elder men in the village who wanted to obtain marula liqueur for free. They therefore dismissed his arguments, saying that they have to make a living. They specifically stressed that they were not aware of any ancestral rituals associated with marula fruit, maintaining there was no option but to sell the fruit in light of their poverty. Both groups agreed though that marula beer has effects on social cohesion. A well-known hunter, who now moves around in a wheelchair due to old age, explained the social value of marula fruit in historical times:

“When I was a young man, I used to go hunting on the confluences of the Pafuri and Mutale Rivers. On returning back with an impala or any other animal, I would stop at a family where people would be drinking marula beer. No one used to buy the beer. I would take the impala off the back of my donkey and two/three young men would soon be busy skinning it as women prepared to make food. Everyone would eat, sing and drink mukumbi. No one ever sold mukumbi” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, July 2005).

This discussion raises some questions on the impact of the increased commodification of marula on local social cohesion. For instance, there is little understanding of how commodification will impact on the natural resource tenure systems around marula trees. Currently, there are two observable systems of tenure for marula trees. Firstly, they are held as common property resources if they occur in common areas such as grazing fields. However, when the trees occur in someone's crop field, they are regarded as private and anyone who wants to collect the fruit needs to seek permission from the field's owner.

6.3.3 Conflicts over authority – the case of mopane worms

Mopane worms (*Imbrisia belina*) or *mashonzha* (in Tshivenda) are widely distributed in southern Africa, extending from northern South Africa into Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia. They are mostly associated with the mopane trees (*Colophospermum mopane*) where they eat the leaves but are also known to eat other tree leaves such as marula. The worms also play an important part in people's lives, predominantly as a source of protein and, lately as a source of income providing a livelihood source to harvesters, traders and their families (Toms, Thagwana and Lithole, 2003).

However, a combination of factors identified in other contexts is causing a decline in the mopane worms. Firstly, over-harvesting is contributing to the decline (Roberts, 1998). A decrease in selective harvesting (Hobane, 1995), even resulting in the cutting down of some mopane trees to reach the worms is also a factor contributing to the depletion. Pressure through deforestation of the main host plants, the mopane woodlands, also has a negative impact on the availability of mopane worms. Climatic and environmental factors, such as droughts, also affect the regularity of the worm (Toms *et al.*, 2003). Along the Madimbo corridor, leadership conflicts over authority to decide on the collection and use of mopane worms seem to be creating a situation of open access to mopane worms.

The Vhembe Communal Property Association (CPA) spearheaded the land claim along the Madimbo corridor. Legally, the CPA will be the custodian of claimed lands and makes decisions, on behalf and in consultation with the rest of the local actors, on how such land should be used. However, the role of CPAs is controversial, especially where traditional leaders who historically held administrative powers

for land, contest the new institutional structures. In other cases, these conflicts have been avoided because the chief was an integral part of the CPA¹¹. However, along the Madimbo corridor, Chief Mutele and the CPA are locked in contest over who has the authority over the claimed corridor itself (see Section 4.5.2a, pp. 95).

The Madimbo corridor forms a separate piece of land from the one currently under occupation by local actors. The settled lands along the Madimbo corridor are locally understood to be under the authority of the chief. In other words, the chief controls who has access to what resources on these lands. Thus, there is a separation of authority over land and natural resources, with the chief claiming to be in charge of lands currently settled upon while the CPA claims authority over the corridor that is currently not settled and is occupied by the military. This has resulted in interesting convergences and divergences between the authority of the chief and that of the CPA. Yet authority over land is inherently governing people's access and use. In the case of the Madimbo corridor, the example of the mopane worms paints a confusing and conflicting situation. The disputes between the chief and the CPA generate confusion as to who between the two, is in charge of controlling the use of natural resources in the area.

Chief Mutele asserts that he is in charge of the land and governs the people who seek to access and use natural resources within the Madimbo corridor. To support his point, he asks,

“How can one be a chief without a territory? I am the chief here, and the land the CPA has claimed from the military is part of my territory. When they wanted to claim the land, they came to me for permission, and I have always supported them under the understanding that the land is under my authority. If they needed my permission in the beginning, why are they now claiming they can go ahead without my saying so?” (Chief Mutele, at Ha-Mutele, June 2006).

In March and April 2006, the conflicting claims to authority between the chief and the CPA came to a head. Both authorities deployed natural resource guards¹² to control people collecting mopane worms. They were specifically aimed at stopping collectors coming from other areas, outside of the Mutele

¹¹ For instance, the Makuleke CPA which led the land claim for Pafuri triangle is chaired by Chief Maluleke and it appears conflicts between the CPA and the chief have not happened as a result.

¹² Locally referred to as natural resources police. They are constituted of local people, usually men, who patrol the mopane tree ranges asking for or issuing permits from people collecting mopane worms.

chieftainship. While the CPA has led the claim for the Madimbo corridor, the criteria its members use to stop resource use are based on territorial residence in the chieftainship. This is probably because, historically, the chief had authority over the Madimbo corridor and its residents. The formation of the CPA was based on residents signing up for the land claim. The land claimants are not the only resource users, and in the past resource use has involved other people who lived within the chief's territory. The new ward and council boundaries are not applicable in this case, as they extend over chieftainships and would include people from other areas. As a result, the criteria used for regulating resource use along the Madimbo corridor depend on residence in the chief's territory, independent of who signed up for the land claim. Those who are identified as coming from outside are required to purchase permits, and the chief and the CPA are claiming to be the authority that receives the permit fees (See Table 8, pp. 197 for a list of permits). Because of the ensuing conflict over authority between the chief and the CPA, some people had to pay twice, to the CPA 'police' as well as to the 'police' convened by the traditional leadership. It is not clear how the permit money is used, but the chief claimed that fees contribute to paying the 'police' as well as being deposited into a trust fund for local development. However, it does not seem to be put to any visible use in the area. The CPA at some point wanted to distribute the money among the villagers, but this proposal was not pursued and the matter has not been raised again. While the gesture received support locally, it is doubtful whether the money would have been significant enough to share among the households involved in the land claim.

The real losers in this tussle for power are the local resource users who now compete with people from other places who are flocking to the area to collect mopane worms. By charging for common property resources without sharing the benefits with the rest, both the chief and the CPA are appropriating and treating the commons as privatised resources. While the control of the resources should contribute to better management and access by local actors, in this incident the opposite is the case. This creates an uncertain situation as to who is actually in charge of resources and if they are able to protect local resource rights in face of increased exchange values. Some examples indicate that those who come to collect mopane do not always recognise these control mechanisms, resulting in conditions, despite the double control mechanisms, akin to open access.

The people who come from the city to collect mopane worms do so to sell them. At the markets in

Thohoyandou, one finds women selling mopane worms throughout the year. The prices of mopane worms shot up in March 2006 after some women were interviewed on radio (Phala Phala FM) while collecting mopane worms. They indicated they were collecting mopane worms because the worm could cure Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This example illustrates that resource based livelihoods are fast becoming of interest not only to rural dwellers who are most dependent on them as safety nets, but to the urban people as well. Turner (2004) notes that the rural/urban dichotomy of livelihoods is artificial and emphasises the fact that most rural people also rely on urban sourced livelihood strategies, in the form of remittances. The situation along the Madimbo corridor also indicates a flow of resources in the opposite direction, from the rural to urban areas. Thus, while much has been written about remittances, the maintenance of two homes, one rural and the other urban, means that families incur increased costs, to be financed with income from employment as well as from harvesting and selling of natural resources. Household members who emigrate continue to draw on rural resources that are sent as dried vegetables, maize meal, and natural resources such as mopane worms. A growing, and increasingly threatening situation for rural livelihoods is the continued supplement of urban livelihood strategies with rural resources.

Yet the conflict between the CPA and the chief is not an indication of a complete breakdown of controls into open access. It shows the changing face of rural common property resources as cities continue to attract a multitude of poor rural people who then return to use rural resources to sustain their lives in the city. Nor should the actual assigning of monetary value on resources be viewed in entirely negative terms. Shackleton and Shackleton (2003), for instance, indicate that resources can generate significant income streams for poorer households if they are marketed further afield.

6.3.4 Mis-adventures of South African soldiers – sex work on a frontier

When I first went to Bennde Mutale, the shop owner asked me to buy bread for a young woman who had walked into the shop at the same time as I did. Even after she left, he went on trying to convince me to buy bread for her and that he would organise someone to take it to her house. Eventually he asked if I was married and when I confirmed, he noted it did not matter. He indicated

“Here you are alone, alone from your wife, and you need someone to keep you company. This will cost in buying groceries and even clothing’ (Discussion, Bennde Mutale village, November 2004).

As I returned to the village on numerous occasions, I learnt that the girl is from Zimbabwe but comes to visit her sister who is married in Bennde Mutale, and when she is visiting, she hangs out at the tavern where soldiers from the SANDF also go to drink beer. Sexual relations are one of the ways one can understand the frontier dynamics between state institutions and local people along the Madimbo corridor. They also reflect the frontiers of livelihoods which are pursued across state boundaries (see also Chapter Eight, pp. 200), and are interpreted locally by the older generation as frontiers of morality.

Interacting with soldiers in the village of Bennde Mutale draws moral discourses from the older people in the village. The breakdown of families, the storyline goes, is due to increased ‘prostitution’ or sex work by the young women in the village. However, it is important to note that local women did not always engage in sexual relations in exchange for money, they also did this just to get food, or to be part of a group of people drinking beer. In a supposedly close-knit ‘community’, this reflects the hardships experienced by the women, as opposed to the morality arguments alone. Village elders in Bennde Mutale spoke of engaging in sex for money or food as moral decay, but also emphasised that

‘The worship of money over values is sending our children into prostitution, so much that even a 15-year old would come from school to have lunch at her parents’ house but in the evening she will be in one of the military tents as a prostitute (*tshipfevhe*) to be paid in alcohol, cash, tins of rationed beef and fish. (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, April 2006).

Other scholars have written on how poor rural women slip into sex work with increased economic hardships and a general decay of the social fabric of former ‘bounded communities’ (Zachrisson, 2004). Along the Madimbo corridor, young women who engage in sex work are attracted to service centres where they can get government housing as well as being close to good secondary schools. At Masisi Service Centre, the site of an extensive Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), young women still of school going age staying in the new government houses engage in sex work to make a living. Masisi was also started as a development node where various developments and job creation would be encouraged. The movement of women to Masisi, as a result, is also in expectation of potential

work. Faced with difficulties of getting work, women end up engaging in sex work to survive. Away from their homesteads, where they would usually be supported by the family for food and shelter, the women are particularly vulnerable and engage in sexual activities just to put food on the table. In the past it would have been

“Unheard of that a school girl would leave home to stay alone. This is contributing to the further fragmentation of families, discarding certain values people might have held as a girl living alone at Masisi and prostituting herself becomes an accepted norm. The older generation, despite their poverty, of course find this hard to deal with” (Interview, Thohoyandou, June 2006).

The older people in Bennde Mutale shared his views and noted that the government’s RDP, aimed at providing homes for the majority of the people and improving the quality of lives, is unfortunately furthering the disintegration of families. This is likely to lead into more cycles of poverty given the impacts of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. The implications of sex work, however, are more directly linked to shifting notions of a household. While historical and current conceptions of a household treat the conjugal unit as a core (see also Masst, 1994), sex work is leading to a challenge of this conception, with young women searching for livelihood opportunities outside the household. In a way, this shift of a conjugal core is testimony to the growing food insecurities within the household, the inability of the core to hold in terms of sustaining a livelihood. It is a frontier along which local women are challenging traditional roles in family. As a result, the opportunities for a different form of livelihood, through the presence of soldiers, is only accelerating the shift from conjugal activities as a core of a household, in response to wider social and political issues of poverty, differentiation and the inability of the core to provide a livelihood.

The situation is also exacerbated by local men’s conceptions of women. At a party I attended once, the men who I sat with kept mentioning that some of the schoolgirls who were serving food were “*vhaibva*”, in reference to the girls being ‘ripe’ for sex. A local sangoma criticised this, saying middle-aged men and women are supposed to provide advice to the younger people, as

“Conveyors of the meaning of life, passing on messages of morality, emphasising the value of family. So now if a middle-

aged man craves to have sex with a teenage girl, how is he going to discipline and advise young men when they go for initiation ceremonies? He is competing with the same boys to have sex with a young woman” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005).

The young women, however, indicated that they have no option without any employment or other possibilities to make a living. They also disputed that their behaviour was negligent of their roles as mothers and role models, noting instead that even local men are clients for their services. Increasingly, their challenge to the elders is also contesting long held views of the role of a woman in marriage;

“I would not want to be married to even the richest cattle farmer here in the village. Once you are married to a rich cattle farmer, they also go off looking for another young wife, leaving you to do the work in the house. And if the marriage ends, don’t expect to receive part of the cattle, no, you are just sent back to your home” (Group discussion, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2006).

Sex work, therefore, is one of the fault lines along which ‘community’ is fractured; pitting old traditional understandings and values with ‘modern’ pressures and responses to livelihood challenges (Zachrisson, 2004). Sex work is just one of the examples whereby local actors have responded to insecure livelihoods and where money is the common currency. Unfortunately, it also highlights the precarious nature of local livelihoods as those affected by sexually transmitted diseases are sucked into more cycles of poverty. One woman noted that she worries about “getting sick¹³” as at times her clients do not want to use condoms.

However, not all livelihood strategies adopted by local women elicit heated morality debates. Not all local women resorted to sex work as a means of making a living. Other forms of making a living include long held traditions of establishing informal money saving support networks called *stokvels*¹⁴.

¹³ Until recently, people in Bennde Mutale always said someone is sick or ‘*unamalwadzi*’ when referring to HIV/AIDS.

¹⁴ These are rotating savings and credit associations with voluntary membership.

6.3.5 Savings clubs: Income generation through stokvels

Stokvels emerged in the consolidating black townships at the turn of the 19th/20th century as a response by Africans to their exclusion from receiving social welfare (Brown and Neku, 2005). For African women, *stokvels* provided a means to independence from patriarchal kin relations where they did not have access to property and cash income (Verhoef, 2001). As money saving schemes, *stokvels* highlighted Africans' innovativeness at augmenting their meagre salaries. These savings clubs are now widespread in the city and in rural areas. Lately, they have become associated with African ways of philanthropy (Wilkinson-Maposa *et al*, 2005). They are an important way of managing money for the residents of Bennde Mutale and other villages along the Madimbo corridor.

The *stokvels* consist of a voluntary grouping of women ranging in numbers from five to ten. In the village of Bennde Mutale, however, one woman notes that things are changing and some men are opting to join *stokvels* with women. The character of *stokvels* in Bennde Mutale is similar to other areas, including those in the cities. Each of the members contributes a pre-set amount of money to a common fund either weekly or monthly, which is then distributed on a rotational basis to one member. At the moment the *stokvel* schemes are estimated to be worth about R1.3 billion a year throughout South Africa (Molele, 21 November 2006¹⁵). This is considerably more when other informal money saving schemes are concerned, such as burial societies, where membership is for the purpose of saving money for funeral costs of members and their relatives.

Through *stokvels*, women are able to manage their cash and generate more cash through fundraising activities related to the *stokvels*. Apart from their stipulated contributions, which they receive back after some time and as a lump sum amount on a rotational basis, Bennde Mutale women often use their money for more income generation. For instance, one woman said that members of a *stokvel* could use their cash to

“Brew beer and cook some food where other people from the village are invited. They will join in the celebrations, but also pay for beer and food” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, 30 December 2006).

¹⁵ The Sunday Times, South Africa

The money saved through *stokvels* is usually earmarked for buying larger items such as furniture, or to prepare for functions such as weddings and funerals. This forms a critical form of financial management for the residents of Bennde Mutale.

In Bennde Mutale, three types of *stokvels* are described. The first type, called *Tshisevhe sevhe*, does not involve cash contributions. Members buy goods such as blankets, plates, cooking utensils and even beds for the individual whose turn it is that month. However, residents of Bennde Mutale noted that *tshisevhe sevhe* was rarely practised, as it requires more money than the other forms of *stokvels*. The second type of *stokvel* involves a combination of cash contributions and members supporting others in their ventures. This usually involves one member of the group brewing beer and preparing food at the end of the month. Members of the group then buy the food and drinks thereby generating some income for the host. The money they use for this support is not part of their monthly contributions to the rotating savings. Usually this type of *stokvel* is open to other members of the village who also contribute by buying food and drinks. At one of the events I attended, people from neighbouring villages also came to buy food and drinks as well as dance to the music.



The third and most common type of *stokvel* in Bennde Mutale village involves cash payments. Groups ranged in numbers from about three to six people. Two issues determine membership. The first is affordability of monthly contributions. Groups have different requirements of how much members should contribute every month. The second issue is of trust. One woman who is in charge of a group indicated that there are certain individuals who, even if they expressed interest, would not be allowed to join the group due to lack of trust that they would maintain their contributions. A commonly expressed concern with defaulting members was that they cannot be reported to the police as *stokvels* are not authorised. *Stokvels* have legal status in South Africa if they operate as a common bond among the members and with the objectives of pledging mutual assistance to other members through a formal or informal rotating credit scheme (South Africa Ministry of Finance, 15 January 1996). The concerns of local Bennde Mutale women about seeking police authorisation reflect their historical experiences and some women indicated that the police could also abuse their authority even if legally the practice is accepted.

6.3.6 Re-tracing footprints: ‘black birding’ and intercepting illegal migrants

During the late nineteenth century Pafuri corner and the Madimbo corridor saw increased activities, such as the recruitment of migrant labour from the north of the Limpopo River (see Chapter Four, pp. 72; Bulpin, 1954; Murray, 1995). Migrants today still use these routes along the Mozambique-South Africa-Zimbabwe boundary (Hennop, 2001), even though there are risks such as being arrested, killed by wild animals, deported or shot at by the military.¹⁶ The Madimbo corridor is increasingly used by Zimbabweans looking for better economic opportunities.

In October 2006, four police vehicles drove into Bennde Mutale village, closely followed by soldiers. Both vehicles were loaded with Zimbabweans who had crossed the boundary illegally. The police had come to Bennde Mutale to collect one local person who usually travels to Zimbabwe to ‘recruit’ people who want to work in South Africa. The assistance to Zimbabweans in crossing into South Africa plays an important role in local livelihoods.

The Zimbabweans pay fifty Rands (R50) per person to their guides for successfully crossing into South Africa. Once in South Africa, the local ‘guides’ hand the Zimbabweans over to taxi drivers. A trip to Johannesburg costs another three hundred and fifty Rands (R350) which is paid to the taxi drivers. This has become such an organised way of making money that, in order to have goods taken across the river; one has to pay twenty Rands (R20) for a bucket. The amount doubles for sugar and other products. The drivers who take people to Johannesburg also pay some money to the Bennde Mutale guides for bringing Zimbabweans to them.

In many ways, this is the same as the old system of ‘black-birding’, where job seekers from as far as Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe would walk to The Employment Bureau for Africa (TEBA) camps, owned by the Chamber of Mines, within the Limpopo valley (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.1b, pp. 86). Black-birding was the term used to describe the process of identifying and bringing Africans from other countries to work in South African mines. These opportunities attracted fugitives from the law who sought to make money through hunting wildlife and ‘black-birding.’ The current system has

¹⁶ One evening we awoke in the middle of the night to sounds of gun fire. The next morning it emerged that the soldiers had been firing at Zimbabweans who had crossed the border illegally (Bennde Mutale Village, April 2006).

similar traits to the old one. It is in violation of immigration laws. At the same time, 'black-birding' is fuelled by people searching for a better life across the boundary and depends on individuals who are willing to take a risk.

To evade arrest, the transportation of illegal immigrants now relies on various strategies. The transport vehicles to Johannesburg are predominantly small trucks. Public transport in the form of buses is rarely used once Zimbabweans have made it to the South African side. Where buses are used, they usually stop before reaching police stations such as at Makhuya village where often road-blocks are mounted. This stretch is usually covered on foot until the immigrants have bypassed the police road-block, after which they return to the road for transport. At times, some of the trucks travel through the Kruger National Park (KNP), where it is apparently easier to evade police. Once they have crossed through the KNP, the immigrants get on public transport to travel to Johannesburg.

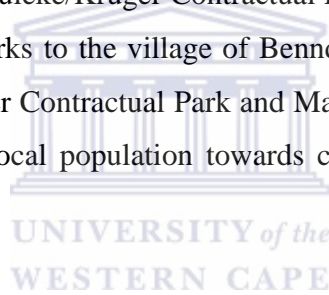
But making a living in this way comes with a lot of risks. In Bennde Mutale village, those who are engaged in this business noted that they know the soldiers and police work with some villagers to expose them after they have gone across the river. In response, they have devised means of sending messages across the boundary if it appears that the police and military have been tipped off. One of these ways is to use cellular phone technology. For a few kilometres into Zimbabwe, one can still access South African cellular providers, and wives usually send messages to their husbands as a warning.

The 'black-birding' operations along the Madimbo corridor offer insights for understanding how local actors frame external interventions, which offer both a constraint and an opportunity. While illegal, the movement of people across the boundary from Zimbabwe is an opportunity for local residents to sustain a livelihood. Ironically, state attempts to control local human movement create conditions for illegal activity and a livelihood opportunity.

6.3.7 Tourism as a livelihood source in the time of the GLTFCA

Tourism is one of the main objectives for the development of the GLTFCA. Yet the examples from the Madimbo corridor indicate that tourism should not be regarded as the only solution to rural livelihood insecurities. In fact, local actors are sceptical that tourism will address their poverty situation. They argue, instead, that tourism is associated with the exclusion of local actors from areas earmarked for conservation.

Three tourism projects exist in Bennde Mutale village. The first is the Pafuri River Camp, owned by a hardware shop operator in Thohoyandou. The second is the Pafuri Lodge, owned by a lawyer in Polokwane. The third one is the Pafuri Youth Cultural Camp, run by a group of youths in the village and dependent on donor funding and a potential fourth, which remains an enigma, was proposed in March 2007 by a government official based in Polokwane. In addition to these three camps/lodges, there are additional camps in the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park and in Makhuya Park. Despite the proximity of the camps inside the parks to the village of Bennde Mutale, there are no local residents employed within the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park and Makhuya Park lodges. This fuels some of the negative sentiments among the local population towards conservation and tourism (see Chapter Seven, pp. 169).



The Pafuri River Camp employs eleven people from the village, while the Pafuri Lodge has stopped employing locals altogether. Pafuri River Camp predominantly gets late arrivals to the KNP. These visitors are usually in search of a place to sleep before they take off early in the morning. Tourists that specifically book to stay there are usually small groups, except on certain busy holidays such as Easter. While the low volumes of tourists make it impossible for those who work there to be paid high salaries (as they rotate working days and are paid on a daily basis, receiving R45 per day). However, those who have worked at Pafuri River Camp said that it was important for local livelihoods. One man who worked at the camp reflected that

“There is no contradiction as long it reduces unemployment. The few people employed make a big difference.” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, 6 October 2006).

This quote is interesting as local people always portrayed tourism as insufficient for meeting local livelihoods. It reflects the complexity of local livelihoods, as at one and the same time tourism represents foregone livelihood opportunities, such as use of natural resources, and makes a difference in local people's lives, even through low income generation.

However, the Pafuri River Camp has remained a symbol of conflict between cattle owners who want to access grazing pastures in the Makhuya Park and tourism investors and park management. The Makhuya Park is fenced off, but the grounds of the Pafuri River Camp, which is just on the outside of the Makhuya Park, are not fenced. The camp has lost some customers due to the noise from livestock; a reputation the camp is trying to avoid in order to attract more visitors. Yet livestock forms an important source of livelihoods for local actors and grazing land is increasingly confined outside fences (see Section 6.3.1, pp. 149). While this conflict is between cattle owners and the camp management, it is also inherently between the villagers who make a living through employment at the camp and those who own cattle. In discussing whether they consider working at the camp important, one woman indicated that she would rather have her son work for the camp than be a herd boy for the wealthy cattle owners. This situation raises questions of how the GLTFCA, through which supposedly multiple land uses should be promoted, will cope with these competing and conflicting local livelihood strategies. Local tour operators indicate that tourism and agriculture cannot go hand in hand, as tourists come to enjoy the wilderness.

To make matters worse, in June 2006, the owners of the camp hired a new manager who introduced wide-ranging changes to relations with the village. While the former manager had agreed to allow people from the village come to the camp for drinks (which they hardly did anyways due to the high cost of alcohol), the new manager declared that anyone who wanted to come to the camp had to be a guest. The staff at the Pafuri Gate to the KNP was told the same, as were other people who work at the Tshikondeni Mine. In the past, the workers at the camp had borrowed money from the manager in times of bereavement or to attend to urgent matters. This was also discontinued. This shift in relations, however, was clearly counter-productive to managing a campsite in the middle of the village. People started sending messages to Chief Mutele, complaining about the attitude of the new manager. Chief Mutele, who is supposedly 'renting' the land for the tourism enterprise, appeared unable to take action.

Local residents guessed that the chief might have entered into a deal with the camp owner that constrains his independence.

The Pafuri Youth Cultural Project has already fenced off the area where their camp is being built, presumably in anticipation of potential conflicts with cattle farmers. However, before they finished fencing the area, they already had complaints from some of the women in the village who pointed out that the area they had fenced in is one where local women usually collect mopane worms and marula fruit (see opening piece, Chapter Two, pp. 31). In fact, the mother of the village headman tried to have her son stop the project on the pretext that it was closing off valuable resources and the elderly could not walk long distances for mopane worms and marula. Other residents protested, noting that the village had high unemployment rates and the youth project had started employing some people. The youth project is aimed at late KNP clients, the same as the Pafuri River Camp, as well as those interested in local traditions and ways of making a living. Given the fate of the Pafuri Lodge, it is not clear if this objective will ever be met.

At the other end of the village, the Pafuri Lodge was built in anticipation of a tourist flood during the 2004 eclipse. It had not been completed by the time of the eclipse and, in any case, the flood of tourists did not materialise. When it was completed in 2005, some locals were employed. However, after months of running without any clients, some of the workers left to seek employment elsewhere. Those who stayed on complained that they were not being paid and eventually, they all left. The lodge has been standing there empty, providing ammunition for those in the village who are opposed to tourism, specifically where it is linked to biodiversity conservation and involves restrictions on natural resource use.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter raises a number of issues in relation to TFCAs as an external intervention and local based livelihoods, in particular those dependent on land and natural resources. The first issue relates to the diverse livelihood strategies observed in Bennde Mutale and their relation to the proposed GLTFCA. While tourism plays a role in sustaining local livelihoods as discussed in section 6.3.7, it is not the only

preferred option locally. The focus of TFCAs, on tourism development, is therefore problematic for local livelihood strategies and forms an area of conflict among local actors reliant on different livelihood strategies.

This chapter also highlights the fact that livelihood strategies are constantly shifting. It further indicates that while socio-economic status limits the livelihood options available to a household, in most cases a combination of activities is undertaken across categories. The constant shifts in livelihoods are also a result of local actors' aspirations to improve their situation. As a result, household typologies are important in understanding livelihood strategies, but they are also an oversimplification of the local livelihood dynamics that are necessarily cross categories. Livelihood strategies across household typologies also bear testimony to the fluidity of categories as households slip into and out of poverty and at times become affluent. The chapter highlights that livelihood or economic clusters best capture the fluidity of strategies across socio-economic groups.

An analysis of livelihoods also indicates two processes: that livelihoods best reflect areas along which local community cohesion is fracturing, and, that livelihoods involve political exercises among local and external leadership and among resource users themselves. In particular, it has been indicated above that the increased commoditisation of natural resources is a source of conflicts between the older traditionalist generation and the younger people who are willing to explore new forms of exchange values for natural resources. It has also been shown that the younger generation take on more livelihood strategies regarded as morally unacceptable. Thus sex work is causing local divisions along moral lines, even though it can be interpreted as an indication of the failure of the household as a unit to cater for its members.

These observations have implications for the implementation of TFCAs. Firstly, the emphasis of TFCAs on tourism as a means of making a living is an oversimplification of the diversity and contestedness of livelihood strategies along the Madimbo corridor.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Local views of conservation

The story of a ranger and the villagers along the Madimbo corridor

Herbal medicine and divination form an important aspect of people's lives in the villages along the Madimbo corridor. Many villagers here tell stories on how, in the past, life and local livelihoods were intricately linked to the free movement of people across the political boundaries of today. They speak of the astuteness of Zimbabwean diviners who, it is said, can read one's life and beyond and cleanse one of all troubles. When conventional medicine struggles to diagnose an illness, the turn to spiritual explanations and the search for counselling by the *n'angas*¹ assumes an even bigger role in people's lives on this frontier zone.

This search for spiritual explanations illustrates the nature of transboundary relations in this area. Additionally, the stories revolve around the use of natural resources, either as medicines or tools, in reading into people's lives. It therefore came as no surprise when Jack Greefe, the Ranger at Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park, told a story about a group of traditional healers who came to him requesting permission to go into the park to collect herbs and plant medicines. He explained that he was taken aback by the request of the diviners. However, he explained he tried to accommodate their request. Instead of giving them permission to come and collect herbs and plant medicines, he would allow them to collect the shoots, buds and seeds of the specific plants they wanted for these purposes. The traditional healers, in telling me their own version of the story, explained that what was being proposed by Jack wouldn't work. They cannot take the plants out of their environments to grow for medicines. These plants, they told me, are not vegetables to be grown and harvested every now and then; they are a gift from God. This way, they stop functioning. The functioning of some plants is in the mystery of how they grow. Some can be grown in the gardens but others can't. It also depends on the specific person recommending the use of such plants. In the end, Jack Greefe denied the healers access to the park to collect the plants on a regular basis, instead offering them to come and collect the seeds and shoots, so they can grow their own medicines.

Jack Greefe justified his actions, pointing out his shock when he was in Maputo and saw the thriving market of animal and plant materials, which he claimed came from the Limpopo Region. The way he told the story, however, was in the tone of someone convinced that by not allowing the sangomas to come and collect medicinal plants, he was contributing to efforts to control the illegal collection and sale of medicinal plants on the urban markets. He further argued that by allowing the use of any products, one would contribute to the loss of biodiversity. To illustrate his point, he pointed out that even the collection of mopane worms leads to a disruption of the natural cycles that are important for maintaining biodiversity. Similarly, if people were allowed to collect firewood in the Makuleke/Kruger CNP, this would lead to a loss of biodiversity. His arguments were hotly disputed by Thomas Takadzani from Bennde Mutale village who argued that, in the past, they used to collect thatching grass and firewood from where the park now stands with no effects on the environment. He told the

¹ Traditional healers or diviners.

story, often punctuated with exclamations on how his four huts were falling apart, with no thatch to stop the effects of rains. Thomas Takadzani further noted that while his huts were falling apart, the KNP was burning grasses in the area on a yearly basis, instead of allowing the villagers to collect them for thatching purposes. He used this example to dismiss Jack Greefe's claim that any use of resources leads to biodiversity loss. This issue would arise again in October 2006, when people saw certain grass areas being burnt within the Madimbo corridor. Mahwasane Muzweda, the vice-chairperson of the CPA argued that, instead of burning, local actors should be allowed to drive their livestock into the area and set up grazing camps, so they can rotate and mitigate the impacts of grazing on the environment.

Both Thomas Takadzani and Mahwasane Muzweda argue that the use of the grass has the same effect on the regenerative growth of plants as the burning. Jack Greefe, however, pointed out that the reason the vegetation in the villages is so scant is because of overuse, and local actors should be asking themselves why this is so before they try to gain access to resources in the protected areas. The two positions between the ranger and the villagers form part of a much wider set of stories that either support allowing local resource dependent people access to resources or justify the exclusion of people from such use. A much wider set of conflicting stories exists, often pitting rangers such as Jack Greefe and villagers such as Thomas Takadzani and Mahwasane Muzweda against each other. At times, the stories speak of physical violence meted out to local actors wanting to gain access to resources by those tasked with the protection of the same.

In practice, the interaction between Jack Greefe and local people is often more combative. Gideon Siphuga, for instance, told me that Jack Greefe had beaten him with a *sjambok*² in the face as he prepared to throw his fishing nets into the Limpopo River. Blinded by the startling encounter, he ran into the bushes without an inkling of where exactly he was. He only stopped to look back when he regained his sight close to the village, regretting that he had left his nets by the river. When he told me of this encounter, he was busy fixing new nets, but he didn't want to confirm whether he was going to cast them into the Limpopo River or nearby along the Mutale River. Many stories are told in the villages along the Madimbo corridor of encounters between local actors and Jack Greefe or Makuleke Rangers or "the police", as Greefe's team is often called. Stories like the ones of the *sangomas or n'angas*, Thomas Takadzani and Gideon Siphuga follow a certain line. They speak of struggles over accessing and using resources. Importantly, they note the controls by Jack Greefe and his rangers are not limited to the protected area, the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park, which they have been hired to monitor. Their patrols 'spill' over into lands, which have been officially returned to local actors to decide on how they should be used. A group of women collecting mopane worms along the Madimbo corridor was once stopped by the Makuleke rangers and told to choose between being taken to the police or just leaving their collection on site and going back home. They told this story, furious and cursing, saying that the rangers just wanted to take the mopane worms for their own use. The story highlights some of the contradictions the Makuleke rangers have to live with, for most of them were young when they were forcibly moved from the Pafuri triangle and know the critical importance of mopane worms in local actors' diets and survival.

² A traditional leather whip of South Africa made from hippopotamus or rhinoceros skin.

These interactions raise a number of pertinent issues for my research, specifically around the conflicting interpretations of biodiversity conservation in relation to resource use. Natural resources are critical to local resource dependent people's survival, while protected areas officials are mainly concerned with the conservation of biodiversity. These different values are often expressed in the way people speak about the environment. However, at times the competing and conflicting meanings of the environment also result in violence. Yet, as I will show in this chapter, the images of local actors as only a negative force of environmental change is highly simplistic. This perception lacks an understanding of the complex interactions between local people, their livelihoods and the environment. This interface results in nuanced local views on the environment. In this chapter I address these issues through an analysis of how local actors speak about their environment, specifically in relation to protected areas.



7.1 Introduction

This chapter has three main components. I discuss local experiences with conservation, and then explore how local actors frame these experiences and, finally, I trace the responses and strategies they adopt to deal with their experiences. Historically, the basis of conservation was a process of subject-formation in that it aimed to change the behaviour of local actors in relation to natural resources (see Chapter Two, Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37 and Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2a, pp. 88), yet its implementation relied on the subjection of local actors through the use of force to achieve conservation objectives. I start from the perspective that local actors' views of conservation, in particular of protected areas (PAs), are influenced by the temporal scale of political ecology, in particular historical experiences of subject formation and subjection of local actors. Additionally, I place emphasis on the political dimensions of political ecology by analysing interactions between local resource dependent actors and other actors at multiple levels. Historically, local actors' behaviour was conditioned through the creation of PAs, enclosures around species and habitats targeted for conservation, where rules of non-use of natural resources were enforced. Additionally, coercive conservation, through the use of force, was meant to 'subject', or control, local actors according to state based actors' understandings of conservation.

The chapter explores what local actors see in PAs and what PAs mean to them. I give weight to local views, but it should be noted that local discourses, articulations or accounts of the environment are also shaped in relation to processes generated at other levels (Agrawal, 2005). As Nygren (2000:808) puts it, "it is through a process of struggle, negotiation and resistance at different levels from the local to global, that the multiple environmental discourses and nature-society relations are created." Thus, the local accounts discussed here need to be placed as responses, shaped through historical experiences, and to interventions from state based actors, such as conservation, veterinary and military agencies. I discuss how fences, such as those for PAs, define local production relations but also shape ideas of inclusion or exclusion through exploring, at a metaphorical level, the continuous negotiation of what is considered inside and outside of certain approaches.

Local residents' historical experiences of the Makhuya, Kruger National Park, Matshakatini Nature

Reserve and, lately, the Makuleke/Kruger CNP shaped their views of PAs (see also Whande, 2007). This network of PAs was often the entry point for local actors' responses to questions of what conservation means to them. Through countless stories about the loss of access to certain critical resources, it became clear that local experiences of conservation were framed primarily in terms of exclusion and various forms of control. In framing this exclusion, local actors often invoked their collective historical experiences as a means to lay claim to the resources that they are now excluded from. Historical experience shapes contemporary engagements with a phenomenon as, for instance, Anstey (2000) notes that the outcomes of natural resource management institutional changes in Mozambique are shaped by the past, while Chabal and Daloz (1999) warn that explaining Africa in an ahistorical way is risible. The official land reform policy in South Africa is based on historical experiences of land alienation during colonial and apartheid years (see Section 4.5, pp. 91).

As indicated by Fortmann (1995), stories give meaning to historical experiences and they are used to lay claims to resources. Along the Madimbo corridor, contestations over land and natural resources were conveyed through stories told, but also through people's actions. Stories were thus an embodiment of conflicts at various levels: among local actors using different aspects of the environment, between local and external actors, between local notions of natural resources and their use and prominent discourses of biodiversity conservation through exclusionary means. Stories, as an embodiment of conflict situations, play an important role in defining the nature and extent of rights claims (Fortmann, 1995). Stories can be a "manifestation of a local discourse seeking to define and claim local resources" (Fortmann, 1995:1054).

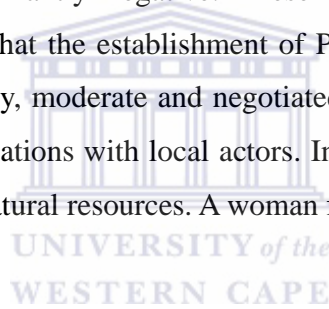
7.2 Protected areas: narratives of exclusion and control?

The accounts from Gideon Siphuga and Thomas Takadzani above locate the historical experiences of local actors with PAs and give an indication of the main storyline that local actors have adopted in relation to conservation. The stories are told to substantiate claims over natural resources through the recounting and naming of places that are of historical relevance to local actors' lives. Two main clusters emerge in local stories about their experiences with PAs both in the past and now. The first one is of forced removals and exclusion from protected environment; it forms the basis for the way local actors speak about ongoing conflicts with conservation agencies. The second cluster relates to the impacts of

exclusion on local livelihoods.

The storyline of exclusion portrays local actors along the Madimbo corridor as victims of an unjust system, suffering at the hands of imposed external interventions. In the context of this past, local actors continue to struggle over access to land and natural resources. While the rhetoric of conservation has shifted from strict PAs to involving local actors and social justice issues (see Brechin *et al*, 2003), little has changed for residents along the Madimbo corridor. The schism created by PAs as exclusive zones for conservation still feeds local mistrust of conservation approaches.

The exclusion of local actors and the control measures adopted when the PAs were established fed into the development of problematic local relationships with conservation management. Images of conservation locally remain predominantly negative. These images are underlined by two main arguments. Firstly, local actors note that the establishment of PAs was largely an external imposition and they were not consulted. Secondly, moderate and negotiated resource use was never considered a long term strategy for maintaining relations with local actors. Instead, PAs resulted in extreme control measures to stop people from using natural resources. A woman from Bennde Mutale recalls,



“It’s not right for game rangers to deny us access to the PA, especially for collecting medicinal plants. They should give people free access to the area (*ujena husina uthivhelwa*). When Makhuya Park was established, no one in the village was clear what was happening, but we all now think the chief was being given money, we think he sold that land” (Bennde Mutale Village, 9 October 2005).

The establishment of PAs was accompanied by an institutionalisation of rules of non-use of natural resources and restricted access. Access to natural resources such as fish, thatching grass and fencing poles could only be realised through the payment of entrance and permit fees or by illegal means. The paradox of permits is that local residents along the Madimbo corridor viewed them negatively, not as means to facilitate better access to resources but as reinforcing mechanisms of the exclusion and entrenching the effects of fences.

Local stories also painted the picture of social fragmentation as a result of the implementation of PAs; hence control over local actors is also achieved through tactics of ‘dividing and ruling’. Social fragmentation was predominantly along the axis of working land and using natural resources versus new opportunities of employment in PA management. Firstly, the forced removals from along the Limpopo River for betterment planning saw local people being grouped into planned villages (see Section 4.4.2, pp. 86). Instead of promoting social cohesion, as homesteads were moved closer together, the opposite happened, akin to what de Wet (1995) terms “moving together, drifting apart.” An elderly man, who has since passed away, indicated that local people were opposed to planned villages as they feared households clustered together could increase acts of witchcraft. Secondly, forced removals meant foregoing uses of land and natural resources in the designated areas. Instead of showing interest in working the land and using natural resources, the youth increasingly drifted towards formal employment as game rangers, a condition that persists today. A local leader with the CPA identifies the dichotomies between the need to work the land and to be formally employed as one of the fissures along which fragmentation was experienced and continues to manifest itself:

“Issues of land and natural resources are political. But our children are not interested in politics anymore, they don’t see the political nature of the issues we are grappling with in terms of land claims and fighting with conservation that wants to keep taking more land and stopping us from using resources. Instead they just want to get into employment and not question why they are dependent on wage labour. Our hope is that young people can start looking at various land use options in the area in political terms and not just as options for employment” (CPA leader, Madimbo Base, October 2006).

Local actors often speak of their experiences of conservation, emphasising that PAs cannot contribute to local livelihoods. For instance, an elderly woman in Bennde Mutale was adamant that their experiences of conservation were only of exclusion and promises of jobs that were never fulfilled (see opening piece, Chapter Two, pp. 31). The role of PAs in employment creation is a contested issue locally. Local actors along the Madimbo corridor differ in their assessment of whether PAs can generate viable and sustainable employment. Specifically, they note that what they lost through historical dispossessions, the disruption of certain ways of making a living that relied on land and natural resources, cannot be recovered through employment creation. They also challenge the current practices of PAs that continue to alienate people from certain environments. These local concerns, however, are contrary to plans by prominent NGOs such as PPF who continue to tout tourism and job creation as the

centre piece of conservation (see PPF and Landscape Architects, 2006), often basing their plans on an ahistorical understanding of the dynamics between conservation and local people.

Portraying themselves as victims of exclusion, local actors also compared and contrasted livelihood strategies before and after the designation of PAs. Contrasting different periods in history through conflicting stories, such as a resource abundance before controls over resources and increased impoverishment with PAs, also gave significance, and support, to current local resource claims. One elderly woman narrated that villages were far apart, noting that

“Even if one shouted, people in the next village would not hear. And even if you carried a burning piece of firewood, by the time you reached the next nearest village it would be out. It all changed when they started *kutseleledza zvipuka zvamudaka* (protecting wild animals), putting us all in one place.” (Bennde Mutale village, 14 October 2005).

Such stories, giving references to historical and current situations, represent the vehicle through which a “framework of meanings or a discourse” (Fortmann, 1995:1054) is made accessible and comprehensible to a wide range of actors. In this case, for instance, the widespread distances between households and villages is used to portray a time of abundant resources and lack of restrictions on human movement. Such ‘scripts’ presented an idealised picture of natural resource abundance in a pre-PA phase where access to land and natural resources was unrestricted and livelihood sources uninterrupted. Carruthers (1995) notes that low human populations contributed to the nature of human-environment relations, and Murombedzi (2003) notes livelihood strategies such as slash and burn are a reflection of this contention. However, the stories also highlight the process by which the colonial and apartheid governments consolidated control over and hence subjection of, local actors and deployed conservation knowledge to condition the behaviour of local actors. By moving people into designated villages (see Section 4.4.2, pp. 86) and stopping natural resource use in PAs, the apartheid government achieved not only an easier way of controlling local actors but also of implementing conservation ideas. These controls are, however, often broken through non-confrontational access to natural resources. Kepe, Cousins and Turner (2001: 916) note of the notion of *ukujola*, a local term used by residents neighbouring the Mkambati Nature Reserve in the eastern Cape of South Africa to refer to “locally legitimate “stealing” of a resource, based on a historical claim that predates existing legislation”. In the

case of Bennde Mutale, justification for 'stealing' from the PAs was also legitimated from a livelihood perspective, often noting the effect of PAs on deteriorating local livelihoods.

Others also noted the continued effects of PAs on local livelihoods. A man in Bennde Mutale once told me that game rangers from Makhuya Park had arrested him at his house on suspicions that he had been in the park setting traps. He was taken to the Makhuya Police station and fined five hundred Rands (R500), even though he maintained his innocence. Such stories are told to highlight what local actors perceive as the continued unfairness of PAs and how they compromise local livelihoods, in this instance through fines. R500 is a significant amount of money for local residents along the Madimbo corridor. Thus, through a combination of strict enforcement of non-use and trespassing, on the one hand, and penalties with further negative livelihoods impacts, on the other hand, conservation officials are able to maintain control over local actors.

Drawing contradictions in the way policy is implemented is also a way of giving effect to stories told locally. For instance, some local youth in Bennde Mutale noted that the only way to sustain their livelihoods was through selling firewood to tourist lodges within the Makhuya Park and Makuleke/Kruger CNP. The irony is that local people are not allowed in the PAs to collect these resources, yet the high value tourist lodges within these PAs rely on natural resources, such as firewood, obtained within the villages such as Bennde Mutale (see Figure 13, pp. 178 below). Hughes (2002) has observed that TFCAs are creating zones where tourists can cross boundaries but peasants are increasingly restricted. The use of natural resources at high value tourist lodges in this case provides an example of how the crossing of boundaries is skewed in favour of tourists.

Another issue to emerge from local stories in relation to exclusion and livelihoods is the varied costs of the PAs. Depending on the natural resource base that they depend on, local people are able to shift and identify resources elsewhere. For instance, those who cut firewood in the village, while they have been impacted on by PAs, are not in the same predicament as those who make ilala palm wine (*mutshema*). Wood cutters have been able to move into new areas for firewood, partly because they do not depend on setting up some form of permanent presence in the area in which they are collecting resources, and partly because the process of cutting wood is quicker than making *mutshema*. Ilala palm wine makers

are confined to the areas where the ilala plants grow. As some of the areas where ilala palm grows are now within PAs, there is increased competition for plants on the outside. Another illustrative issue for the varied costs is employment at the Makhuya Park.



Figure 13: A vehicle from the Wilderness Safaris of the Makuleke/KNP CNP loads firewood obtained from Bennde Mutale and Tshikuyu villages.

Employment opportunities for local people at Makhuya Park invariably led to further controls. For instance, the Makhuya Park involved the employment of local actors in undertaking various tasks such as *fence making*. As a result, stories of the effects of PAs in the beginning varied and reflected the position of the speakers who either foregrounded having benefited through jobs in the beginning, or emphasised the loss of access to resources:

“When the park was started, some local people were employed there. But the park was the beginning of restrictions for our cattle to graze there. We could not argue against the park, as some people now had jobs. (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005)

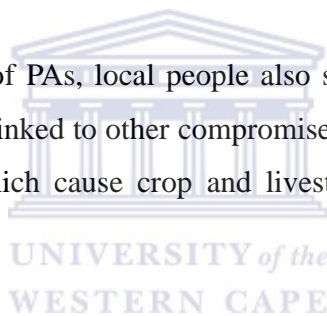
Nygren (2000:808) notes that local actors are always “positioned and that there are many voices with different intonations speaking.” For one cattle farmer, the Makhuya Park means restricted access to grazing pastures. For others in Bennde Mutale, the Makhuya Park, during its establishment, had positive spin-offs for their livelihoods through jobs. The prevalent negative stories about PAs and jobs seem to have emerged as a result of lack of permanent employment and the fact that other livelihood strategies are now worse off as a result of exclusion. This appears to have influenced how those employed viewed and engaged the evolving PAs, often painted the positive interaction depending on whether people were employed at the beginning. Thus, it often happened that, in one interview, a person would bemoan the effects of PAs on the sustainability of local livelihoods while at the same time emphasising that “the beginning was good, the relations were OK and we had jobs.” While the PAs were viewed as negative in terms of livelihoods in the long run, their association with job creation won them some supporters. Immediately after the fence was in place, the Makhuya Park stopped recruiting local people from the nearby village of Bennde Mutale. The irony is that the short-term employment was in setting up the very same physical structures that would serve exclusion later. Local actors explained these contradictions in terms of the politics between themselves and PAs, noting that the

“Park people promised us long-term jobs, but, immediately after the fence was done they fired us” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, 28 March 2007).

Exclusionary approaches and resource use controls are often resisted and challenged by local resource dependent people (see Peluso, 1992; Walker and Peters, 2001). When portraying themselves as victims of exclusion, local residents along the Madimbo corridor also noted how they resisted the authorities. Such resistance did not always mean openly challenging the PA management. Such strategies are similar to what Scott (1985) describes as “everyday forms of resistance” from local actors who fear that open rebellion might unleash the might of the state and lead to violence and further loss of livelihood

resources. Stories that couple exclusion and illegal use assume an important justification for local resistance. Local residents along the Madimbo corridor resist and challenge the non-negotiability of PA boundaries through illegal entrance into designated conservation areas. An observation of the national political importance of conservation sheds some light on why direct confrontation with the PAs is not in the best interests of the local actors. Unlike in Malawi, where Walker and Peters (2001) observe that local actors targeted PAs for claiming natural resources, as opposed to land ‘belonging’ to political elites, in South Africa the conservation lobby is strong and can coordinate campaigns globally if the integrity of PAs is challenged. Additionally, the location of the Madimbo corridor along a geo-political boundary, and the political significance of the area for transfrontier conservation, mean any challenge from local actors is likely to be met with outrage meant to kick-start conservation officials into enforcing laws. These political realities determine the nature of local contestations of the presence of the PAs, which is through isolated incidences of ‘illegal’ entry into the PAs.

Apart from the exclusionary effects of PAs, local people also spoke of the problems associated with wildlife. The presence of PAs is also linked to other compromises of local livelihood strategies, such as the so-called “problem animals,” which cause crop and livestock damage or threaten human lives (Hoare, 2000; Lindsay *et al*, 2006).

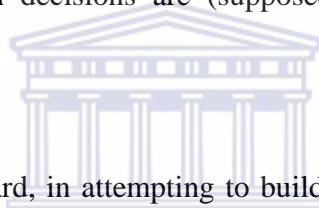


7.3 Problem animal controls (PAC): Narratives of ownership and responsibility

Coupled with the storyline of exclusion was one of ownership and responsibility, especially in relation to problem animal control. The storyline here is that since PA managers have chosen to be the custodians (and hence are seen as the owners) of wildlife, they need to take responsibility for the damage these animals cause to local people. These stories were told to emphasise the fact that PAs not only act as zones of exclusion but also present a source of livelihood insecurity beyond the actual geographical space that is taken away. In reality, the stories of problem animal control, or lack of it, and exclusion through PAs, are about the loss of local livelihoods. Problems with wild animals that come out of PAs and destroy people’s crops or kill livestock were regarded and spoken of in terms of a loss of livelihoods. For instance, one woman said that local people

“Have difficulties with the presence of the park due to wild animals that destroy crops and livestock” (Interview, October 2005, Bennde Mutale village).

It was also indicated that, by protecting wild animals against local people, the PA management acted as the “rightful owners” of such wildlife. As a result, they were expected to respond timely to deal with problem animals. These stories were told to portray Makhuya Park as negligent in dealing with wildlife that ventures into people’s fields. By according ownership status to conservation officials, people demand the same responsibilities as in cases of dealing with livestock that destroys someone’s crop. This usually involves negotiation and payment of compensation as well as an apology. In the case of the PAs, there is usually no direct process and effort to address problem animals coming into the villages. PA management does not acknowledge any kind of ownership of wildlife. Instead, as in other parts of the country, they seek consensus with local actors through formation of various co-management structures within which decisions are (supposedly) made collectively (Magome and Murombedzi, 2003).



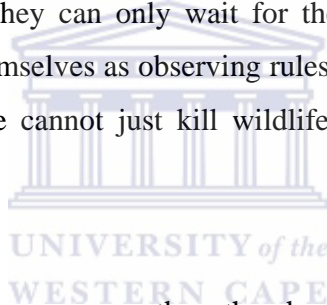
The Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board, in attempting to build good relationships with communities, has established park forums in all provincial parks (Maimele, 2004). In relation to Makhuya Park, the local forum is meant to deal with issues such as problem animals. However, it does not seem to be moving in the direction of resolving these contentious issues. The forum is constantly plagued by a lack of resources for people to attend forum meetings and report back to their villages. For instance, a former member of the forum from Bennde Mutale village noted that he was unable to attend all the meetings as he was required to pay for his own transport and food to attend. Chief Mutele, who is also a member of the forum, does not always attend the meetings. Neither does he release the vehicle allocated to his office for others to attend forum meetings. The Makhuya Park manager noted that the Makhuya Forum should be the avenue to deal with issues of problem animals³ while admitting that this was not happening at the moment. A variety of forums⁴ along the Kruger National Park have been formed to represent local people’s interests and liaise with conservation agencies on issues of local concern (see Tapela, Maluleke and Mavhunga, 2007). Elsewhere in southern Africa, problem animals, specifically elephants, continue to elicit debates among conservation organisations with some

³ Interview with William Mathegu, Makhuya Park, October 2006.

⁴ These include the Hlanganani, Ntirhiswano, Lubambisano and Nkomazi Forums.

advocating sustainable use as a way forward, while others point to the need for protectionist approaches and hence advocate the strict separation of people from wildlife (see Hoare, 2000). In Kenya, the Wildlife Services abrogate responsibilities over problem animals by claiming that wildlife is a national public good, that it belongs to all Kenyans (Kabiri, 2008).

PAs have often been associated with the welfare of wildlife through strategies “both to protect wildlife and to keep it separated from the people outside” (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006: 297). However, local residents along the Madimbo corridor rarely take matters into their own hands and kill wildlife that has wandered beyond PAs and destroyed their sources of livelihoods, a result of their conditioned behaviour in relation to wildlife. Historically, PAs relied on coercion for their establishment and maintenance. In part, this supposed lack of initiative or agency to deal with problem animals was explained in terms of fear of possible arrest for illegal activities. When narrating the impacts of problem animals, local people said they can only wait for the problems to be resolved by the PA personnel. Local people portrayed themselves as observing rules of no-go areas such as PAs and illegal activities such as hunting, and hence cannot just kill wildlife even when it is detrimental to their livelihoods.



The delayed responses from PAs managers, on the other hand, are a function of the bureaucratic constraints they face in the province. The Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board is responsible for the management of the Makhuya Park, and hence one would assume should deal with animals that break out of the fence. Cases of problem animals are, however, reported to the Department of Environment in Tshilamba, which deals with environmental issues outside PAs. By the time they respond, an elephant would already have moved long distances to other areas, making the resolution of the complaint a long, complicated and most likely, unsuccessful process. The officer in charge of the Mutale Municipality indicated that they track the animal and either shoot it or scare it to go back into the PAs (Interview, Tshilamba, April 2006). When the animal is shot, meat is given out on a first come first serve basis. The further away one is, the less likely one will receive anything.

Problem animals are a great concern locally, especially during harvest time when animals may come out and destroy an entire crop in a few minutes:

“If elephants come out of the park, they can finish my entire sorghum crop here in a few minutes. A crop that has taken about four months to be where it is now will be gone” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, April 2006).

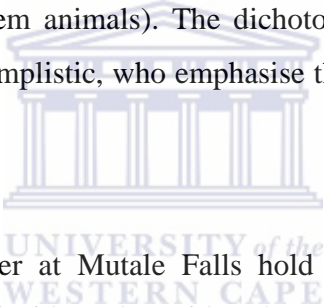
There are also different categories of wildlife, for instance baboons. Local people would not hesitate to kill baboons that are raiding their crops. For example, a local farmer with a maize field woke up one day to the noise of baboons stripping his maize plants. He shot at the baboons and, on numerous occasions, would patrol his field with a gun. The problem with baboons is so extensive that some people leave their dogs tied to trees within their fields so they can bark when the baboons are approaching. However, other animals such as elephants, lions and even small buck do not elicit the same kind of response due to their protection status and the fear of game rangers. Few are prepared to risk being arrested, even when their field is destroyed. However, game meat is sometimes sold on grants payment day (see dissertation opening piece, pp. 1), which suggests that some hunting does happen.

The older generation of people expressed great disappointment with the slow process of dealing with animals that destroy crops and kill livestock. They noted that conflicts between people and wildlife is nothing new, adding that lions in the past also killed their livestock. There was no compensation for this but then people had access to other resources too, that are restricted today. Thus, local people presented problem animals in the past as having less severe effects due to the accessibility of a variety of other natural resources that ensured food security. The dynamics between local people and wildlife has changed with the designation of PAs.

Instead of dealing with problem animals, local people see the delays by the Makhuya Park as evidence of implementation of the policy of “*nyama haidiywi*.” Game rangers are locally referred to as *vananyama haidiywi*, which translates to “those who claim meat is not for consumption.” Local interpretations of the delays in dealing with problem animals, as a result, are seen as informed by this “policy.” Apart from rules of non-use and their impacts on local livelihoods, PAs are largely spoken of in terms of being a barrier beyond which one has to obtain permits or resort to illegal means.

7.4 Negotiating boundaries separating biodiversity on the “inside” and people “outside”

There are different dimensions to conflicts over land and natural resources (see opening piece to this chapter, pp. 169). Conflicts can be in terms of ideas and “of language governing access to” certain areas and they can involve “discursive and narrative device, or process, construction of misunderstandings, shocks and disjunctions” between different actors, all deploying rights claims to certain resources (Oyono, 2005:116). Conservation is part of the global efforts to protect biodiversity and, for much of the twentieth century, has been based on enclosures in which the “inside” signifies protection of biodiversity. The classification of an inside and outside is reminiscent of boundaries, in particular in relation to territorial claims (Newman and Paasi, 1998). The “outside” signifies exclusion; to be on the outside is to be excluded from the biodiversity enclosed inside. A storyline emerges that challenges, although not openly, this dichotomy between an inside and outside. Arguing that biodiversity components on the “inside” have an impact on livelihood processes on the outside (see Section 7.3, pp. 180 above on problem animals). The dichotomy between an inside and outside is challenged by local people as being simplistic, who emphasise the continuity of processes across these divisions.



Fishing pools along the Mutale River at Mutale Falls hold a significant place in local people’s challenges to the idea of an ahistoric inside and outside. The pools are a significant source of protein for local residents, who view current requirements for permits to go to the pools as enforcing an artificial inside and outside. Local people resent the idea of obtaining fishing permits, which they say are more to stop resource use than facilitate it. When the Makhuya Park was designated, park management negotiated natural resource use with local residents, especially for thatching grass. However, local people apparently also collected resources for which they did not have permits; leading to the discontinuation of the arrangement. Makhuya Park management claimed that the permit system was stopped to deal with the unauthorised collection of certain resources, a claim disputed by one elderly woman who indicated that park management just wanted to charge people for going inside.

The permits are symbolic of the imaginary and real boundary that confines resources to the inside and users to the outside. They further act as a filter to control and limit the flow of resources to an artificial

and constructed outside. Van Houtum and van Naerssen (2002: 126) see territorial boundaries as part of social practices of differentiation that “continuously fixate and regulate mobility of flows and thereby construct or reproduce places in space.” For example, the fence to the park is constructed (both technically and discursively) as a permanent structure, meant to control the movement of wild animals from the park (resources from inside to the outside) but also the movement of people (threats to resources) from outside to inside into the park. Permits then become an additional control mechanism, even as evidence from Makhuya Park suggest these controls are defied by local people who cut fences or simply climb over them to access natural resources.

The fence symbolises the boundary beyond which people, especially local resource dependent people, are not allowed to enter or can only do so at risk to their well-being. Transgression comes with personal costs. The fence is not only meant to be a physical barrier, but also symbolises the beginning of a set of rules in relation to natural resources and human movement. For animals that ‘stray’ outside PAs, however, the rules of non-use from the inside are still applicable, with local residents required to call for problem animal controls instead of taking immediate measures to limit damage to their livelihoods and threats to their lives (see Section 7.3, pp. 180 above). Thus, a storyline in this respect is that efforts to restrict the flow of resources and perceived threats to resources are skewed:

“The fence is more effective against people moving into the reserve. The reserve is just like a farm, you can’t trespass – they are farming wild animals (*zvipuka zvamudaka*), which they are not even selling. Their main goal is to protect the animals (*kutseredza zvipuka*), and if the animal is out here, you can’t touch it either” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

On the inside, one set of rules is in place, while on the outside another set of rules operates. On the inside, you cannot enter without permission (*ujena husina tendero*) and cannot use resources. On the outside, permits are required and obtainable for certain resources such as fresh trees for poles to build houses (see Section 7.7, pp. 195 for a detailed discussion). They are also required for collecting mopane worms if one is from an area outside the jurisdiction of the local chief (see Table 8, pp. 197). Thus, we observe that the strict rules of non-use of natural resources designed for the inside are also applicable, albeit more flexibly, on the outside.

Apart from physical separation of people from resources, the fence is also symbolic of other forms of controls. The quote above, deploying the image of a farm where trespassing is not allowed, invokes the nature of relations between commercial farmers and local African people given the history of conquest and subjugation (see Chapter Four, pp. 72). Commercial farms are renowned for administering certain levels of brutalities on local actors, including those who work on the farms (see Wegerif, Russell and Grundling, 2005). Combined with these images of and parallels to a farm, the fence around the protected area forms a potent barrier to any movement of people and draws strong contrasts of an “inside” and “outside” and sends a storyline that one can transgress the inside-outside divisions but this comes at a cost in terms of possible physical violence. The fear of possible violence from conservation officials is a source of local differences on how to deal with the creation of insiders and outsiders.

Another dimension of who is in and out of PAs raises the question of individual versus collective needs. Specifically, some villagers pointed out that individuals who went inside the Makhuya Park were jeopardising relations with local game rangers. Thus, in these situations it is not always easy to understand the moment and the extent to which an individual’s resistance to authority becomes a collective process of struggle over access to natural resources. Illegal entry into the Makhuya Park was not welcomed by everyone in the village, as some feared too overt acts of resistance would attract undue attention of conservation to local people’s livelihood strategies. Despite these differences, a unanimous image of PAs as unfair on local people was presented to me as an outsider, with differences only in strategies of dealing with this unfairness. As explained by one Bennde Mutale resident:

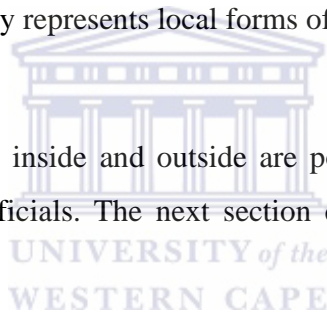
“There are people here in the village that go into the park to hunt at times. But the police know them, and in the past they used to come here early in the morning, at about 4am, to wake them up and search their houses for wild animal meat or fish” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

While imploring local hunters to stop acts that attract attention, the interviewee indicated that she is “totally against these parks.” Those who hunt illegally reject the claims that they attract the attention of conservation officials, pointing out that their actions are prompted by exclusion from resources they rely on for livelihoods. They noted that whether one hunts or not, in the end all local farmers are

exposed to risks of crop raiding, which PA officials take a long time to resolve. I observed a small group of people representing themselves in a Robin Hood like manner saying their actions are for the betterment of everyone in the village. However, they did not share the game meat from the park, instead selling it at grants payments day. In an area where animal protein is costly, the selling of game meat can be regarded as a collective benefit as the prices are often lower than beef at the butchers. Still, entry into the PAs is an individual act and risk.

The PAs thus come to have different frames for local people, which in turn informs local actions. For some, they are an area out of bounds whose status of non-use of natural resources should be observed. For others, the illegitimacy of PAs justifies actions of sabotage. Illegal entry into the Makhuya Park becomes central to understanding frames of making sense of external interventions. On the one hand, it represents a means to sustain a livelihood through accessing resources that are fenced off. As well as being a livelihood strategy, illegal entry represents local forms of resistance and sabotage.

At the core of the dynamics over an inside and outside are power relations between local resource dependent users and conservation officials. The next section discusses power relations through the prism of fences.



7.5 Fences: symbols of power and political maneuvering?

To explain the political power play around the fence, it is important to restate that state interventions, in the past, were almost always carried out through coercive means. This was the case during the establishment of PAs such as the Kruger National Park (KNP), when fences were put up for veterinary disease controls and immigration or as ‘terrorist⁵’ movement controls (see Chapter Four, Sections 4.4.1, pp. 81 And 4.4.2, pp. 86). The discussion above has shown the nature of relations between PAs and local people predominantly from a livelihoods perspective, that specific livelihood strategies and access to natural resources are criminalised, resulting in local compliance or isolated acts of resistance. A second perspective I explore further in this section, is that of the power relations among the various actors, predominantly between different sectors of the state and local actors. I do so by exploring the

⁵ The apartheid government classified liberation movements and their armed wings as terrorist.

use of fences and whose and what interests they serve. I also look at what images or metaphors emerge when people speak about fences.

The use of fences in South Africa has a long history, ranging from warfare during the *Anglo-Boer*⁶ war of 1899-1902, in hunting by the Boers in the late 19th century (see Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). Veterinary disease controls were also used in excluding Africans from accessing resources along the Limpopo River and instituting cross-border controls (see Chapter Four, pp. 72). Fences in South Africa have thus historically been a means to achieve conquest over territory and people, but for conservation, they served both control purposes and to signal the institutionalisation of rules.

Within the Madimbo corridor, fences have been a result of expert knowledge of veterinary science and conservation. They define local behaviour in relation to PAs and livestock production systems. Fence technology has gradually changed over the years (see Table 7, pp. 189 below). The fences technology to mark areas out of bounds for local actors was not always effective. For instance, early veterinary divisions were made of sisals that were planted along the Limpopo River to stop the movement of animals (see also Figure 4, pp. 67). However, sisals were not as effective in this role, leading to improved fence technologies of barbed wire. However, the improved technology for conservation areas and the military now include electrified fences. The impact of the improved technologies is a more effective exclusion of people from fenced off environments. The end result of the fences, presented as meeting the objectives of veterinary control, conservation and security, is the increased control and marginalisation of local people.

However, the fences, and by implication the expert knowledge on which they are based, are deeply contested and resisted by various means. Fences, therefore, highlight the troubled relations between conservation, veterinary policy and military officials, on the one side, and local people on the other. This relationship is characterised by much political manoeuvring and efforts to influence how various actors interact and how resources are accessed and used.

⁶ The Anglo-Boer war, while between settlers of British descent and Boers, drew soldiers from different groups including Africans.

Table 7: The various uses of fences along the Madimbo corridor.

Fence type	Fence technology	Broader objective	Purpose of controls	Actors involved in power and political relations	Local perceptions
Fences around PAs	Electrified mesh fences	Biodiversity conservation	Human movement into PAs, wildlife movement outside of PAs	PAs managers, local officials and local people	Illegitimate control Restriction on local Resource use
Veterinary fences referred to as red lines	Early sisals planted, currently: barbed wire	Protecting the beef industry in South Africa, prevent spread of animal diseases between wildlife and livestock	Livestock movement, avoiding wildlife/livestock mixing, transportation of meat products	Local cattle farmers, Zimbabwean immigrants, department of agriculture	Limits access to grazing, places constraint on local livelihoods, is not 'observed' all the time as people still 'smuggle' meat and livestock across
Military fences	A combination of electrified mesh fence and barbed wire	National security, even though the military now claims the fence is to protect local people against land mines in the area	Human movement across boundaries	Zimbabwean immigrants, local resource dependent people, military personnel	Limits access to rich grazing pastures along the Limpopo, negative effects on local livelihoods, illegitimate as it cuts across 'restituted' ⁷ land, negative effects on cross border

⁷ The official land restitution for the Madimbo corridor was signed in 2004 but to date the military has not moved and is negotiating with the new land owners for a lease.

					relations
Proposed fence along the Limpopo River ⁸	Currently unspecified	Protecting grazing pastures against use by Zimbabweans	Livestock movement from Zimbabwe	Communal property association, chiefs, Zimbabwean cattle farmers and other resource users, veterinary department	To access grazing lands within the Madimbo corridor, protecting resources from being used by Zimbabweans
Fences around gardens, fields and homesteads	Thorn trees around gardens and fields; barbed wire, bricks or stones around homesteads	Security of livelihoods	Livestock in fields during crop planting season, human movement across homesteads	Among local people	Status symbol, defines ownership or private property (symbolically as communal lands are state land with occupiers having use rights)

The power relations between local people and sectors of the state at local, provincial and national levels are necessarily skewed. Wilshusen (2003: 47) argues that such relations are characterised by the occupation of “a position of advantage, disadvantage or equality” among the actors involved. Along the Madimbo corridor, the colonial state held a position of advantage by using force to designate PAs, which in turn relied on expert knowledge, and hence relied on both subjection and subject formation. Their success, however, relied on the ‘politics of the day.’ Thus from the consolidation of the Northern Transvaal boundary through veterinary controls (see Chapter Four, pp. 72), to conservation in the 1960s and security concerns in the 1970s, the state is responding through the deployment of expert knowledge in what is clearly political manoeuvring.

⁸ This fence has been proposed by the Communal Property Association, the new land owners.

Table 7 above shows that fences are used to determine relationships, such as in resource use, flow of goods and services and social interaction, among local people, between local people and state representatives such as military, conservation and veterinary authorities, and between local people across political boundaries. Fences, therefore, are not just limited to defining the relationship to the state and its interventions but also signify the claiming of territories, such as homesteads, gardens and fields, for individual use in otherwise communal tenure settings. However, fences by themselves do not explain the nature of political and power relations involved in how they are interpreted and how their purposes are obeyed or disobeyed.

Fences are political symbols; their widespread use is rooted in the politics of dispossession and they signify who gets accepted and denied entry. For instance, urban-based anglers who travel for sport fishing portray this area as a haven for this purpose. They do not have problems paying for the permits to fish along the Levhuvhu and Mutale Rivers. At times, they even display acts of vigilantism. One time, I overheard a group of fishermen who were preparing for a national sport fishing event in the Orange Free State reporting the locals to the park officials:

“Two people with nets have been fishing along the Levhuvhu. Now we wondered why it is difficult to catch fish here, but this explains these developments” (unknown, Makhuya Park Gate, April 2006). To which the official responded: “You can’t teach these people anything, or make them see that the controls are in their best interests” (Makhuya Park Official, Makhuya Park Gate, April 2006).

The response from the conservation official is a common conservation refrain that, with no hint of irony, excluding someone from a livelihood source is good for them. The apparent rapport between the conservation official and sport fishers is characteristic of conservation discourses, that the affluent members of society from the cities, with more diverse sources of livelihoods, are more inclined not to see the immediate detriment, to local people’ livelihoods, of separating people from their environment. The poor subsistence-seeking local people, fishing with nets in a permit area that is supposedly out of bounds for them represent the on-going struggles over resources in the area. Additionally, the incident represents how local people challenge certain boundaries that are regarded as rigid, immovable and supposedly impenetrable (see also Walker and Peters, 2001).

The establishment of the Makhuya Park was not just a matter for conservation officials alone, but also relied on local leadership support. Specifically, the metaphor of an umbilical cord was used to advance the PAs using the institution of the Chief while silencing voices advocating for more diverse land uses. The umbilical cord metaphor was used to exclude local people, such as cattle farmers and others opposed to the establishment of PAs, from decision making in relation to the Makhuya Park.

7.6 Where is your umbilical cord buried? Local metaphors of exclusion

In spite of local resentment towards PAs, the Makhuya Park was established without any overt local resistance. Many people interviewed argued that there was some form of resistance through complaints, predominantly from wealthy cattle owners. Most of these wealthy cattle owners had more recently settled in the area, mostly in the 1980s. They mainly originated from other villages within the former Venda homeland or from towns such as Thohoyandou where they had been previously employed. Cattle farmers still continue to move into the area. Some do not even settle here, but bring their livestock to be looked after by others. Their more recent settlement in the area was supposedly used strategically by Chief Mutele to exclude them from the decision making process on the establishment of the Makhuya Park in 1988. Even if the cattle owners had wanted to complain, potential channels for this were closed through the role of the chief. For instance, a cattle farmer explained that:

“They never consulted us, they just set it up. The chief also didn’t help us as he said those who don’t like his decisions can move out of my country. We were all silenced through threats of ‘*trek passes*’⁹. And we were not united in this purpose, some were working for the park and potential leaders were being told by the chief that ‘your umbilical cord is not cut and buried in this land’” (Interview, cattle owner in Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

There is a strong association between one’s umbilical cord not being buried in the area (*mukombo awo ngo thukhulwa fhanu*¹⁰) and the practical right to participate in decisions on land and natural resources. For instance, some villagers said that those not born in the area, whose umbilical cords are buried

⁹ A ‘trek pass’ is ‘issued’ when the chief decides to expel someone from his territory with no option of ever returning. It is not clear if this is still being practised after 1994 and there were no examples of this other than the chief making verbal comments of issuing a ‘trek pass.’

¹⁰ Translates to ‘your umbilical cord is not buried here.’

elsewhere, are discounted from participating in political issues. This was also often cited as a reason why no leadership emerged opposing the park. Those potential local leaders whose umbilical cords were buried in the area would also not oppose the park because most of them were working in the park. They put up the fence with the results that cattle owners lost grazing pastures and all others lost access to thatching grass, fish and medicinal plants in the park. For the park officials, the fence presented a most effective barrier against illegal use or poaching (*kuzvima usitenderwa*) by local villagers. Irrespective of their place of birth and socio-economic status, local residents are affected the same by the fence. They are all excluded from accessing resource rich areas to sustain livelihoods. For instance, one elderly woman in the village narrated the impact of the fence:

“We used to just wake up and walk down to the Mutale River Falls at Mavhilani where we would spend the whole day fishing. When this fence was put up, we were told that we needed to travel to the entrance gate and pay to get in. But to get to the entrance gate one needs to pay for transport and then once inside the park, you also need to travel for a long distance to get to the fishing pools” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005).

This story is confirmed by an official at the Makhuya Park and by the former manager at the Pafuri River Camp. They both indicated that it does not make any sense for rural people, who are struggling as it is, to pay the fifteen Rands (R15) entrance fee to the park and twenty five Rands (R25) for a fishing permit, over and above the 40km it takes to travel to the gate and the yet another 40km to the fishing pools. The irony of all this is that the pools are a mere 4km from the village. The former manager at Pafuri River Camp indicated that the park was increasingly in a difficult position:

“What has Makhuya Park ever contributed to the local people except excluding them from accessing resources? We used to go to the fishing pools with some of the old women in the village and the strict controls over the fence are really not necessary. They should allow people here to enter with permits to fish” (Interview, Former Manager Pafuri River Camp, July 2005)

The park official further indicated that, considering the poverty situation in the area, no one would spend R40 in total for a resource that is not guaranteed;

“No one makes an appointment with fish.... to say I am coming on such a day and time to catch you. You might get there and find that the fish is difficult to catch and that you still have to travel back to the village. Even if you were to catch the fish, it’s difficult to see how one can get their R40 back even if they are selling the fish. Best to use the money to buy meat and other things” (Interview, Makhuya Park Official, March 2007).

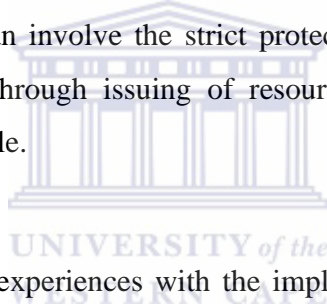
Most of these accounts were told by people who originally come from the area, hence their umbilical cords are buried in the village. However, the metaphor of the umbilical cord predominantly appeals to the local leadership, especially to traditional leaders. It has also benefited Makhuya Park management. For instance, Makhuya Park officials have benefited from a lack of organisation in those opposing the park, while the chief has benefited through a lack of accountability for decisions to donate land for the park. However, the real winners of the exclusionary approach that the leadership employs by invoking birthrights are the planners of the park who have managed to set up a park without any resistance from the local people it excludes. In fact, the birthright argument of the umbilical cord divided the community and facilitated the establishment of the protected area.

These divisions continue to manifest themselves in other forms. For instance, the on-going conflicts with the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF) and the Makuleke clan over a 5,000 hectare piece (see Figure 4, pp. 67 for map of disputed land) of land are now generally regarded as the problem of the rich cattle farmers as they are leading the efforts to resolve this land dispute. At the same time, the richer cattle farmers rarely participate in village functions, a move which only sets them further apart from the long-time residents of the village. They are, however, very involved in questions of land and natural resources, when it comes to grazing pastures. They donate generously to land claim processes, for instance for lawyers who represented local people in challenging the inclusion of the 5,000 hectare piece in the Makuleke land restitution. Thus, the metaphor of the umbilical cord acts to divide locals along various lines, including leadership roles, individual/collective responsibilities and political organisation. The internal divisions, in turn, weaken any resistance to outside interventions, even if the majority of locals are not in favour.

7.7 Balancing resource use and protection: the role of permits

Most people interviewed said that, outside the PAs, other ways of protecting the environment are in

place, which still allow people to continue making a living. They, however, raised questions about the long-term sustainability of the current system, which relies on traditional authorities issuing permits for people to cut firewood, obtain poles for building purposes, make ilala palm wine and fish outside of the PAs. It is in this context that one woman added, strict control was necessary “because there can be total destruction of the environment without strict PAs” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, March 2006). Issuing permits for natural resource use highlights the local contradictions and mix of opinions on conservation approaches. On the one hand, permits are seen as an extension of control mechanisms on local people and processes through the application of rules of non-use that are relevant in PAs to inhabited areas such as Bennde Mutale. They are characteristic of buffer zones whose aim is to advance the goals of conservation through regulating use of natural resources in areas surrounding PAs (see Neumann, 1998). On the one hand, permits were portrayed locally as necessary for the environment (*mupo*), and that they should be used together with PAs in protecting the environment (*kutseledza mupo*). According to the woman quoted above, protecting the environment should involve a combination of approaches. These can involve the strict protection, such as seen in PAs, as well as more flexible approaches, such as through issuing of resource use permits, which are issued by traditional authorities in Bennde Mutale.



By combining stories from people’s experiences with the implementation of PAs and permits in the past, a set of storylines emerged which can shed some light on the apparent contradictions in local views of conservation. Firstly, the unjust implementation of PAs fuelled most of the local sentiments, and the storyline was that, for PAs to succeed, their implementation has to change and start engaging local people in a meaningful and constructive manner. Such engagement has to be inclusive rather than exclusionary. Secondly, the view of permits as an extension of rules of non-use reflects on the relations between local people and the institution of traditional authorities than on the actual purpose of the permits. The storyline in this respect was that the permit system has been abused by traditional authorities in the past, and they need to be issued in a transparent manner and the use of the money raised should be understood by all.

The permit system is disputed by others who spoke of its abuse, specifically in relation to how the money was raised and the way it is shared by local residents. The lack of mechanisms to share benefits

from the permit is largely blamed on chiefs who are seen as not accountable to local actors. Despite their contested roles during colonial and apartheid consolidation (see Ntsebeza, 2005; Mamdani, 1996), chiefs continue to have a central role in issues concerning land and natural resources. The role of the chiefs is also contested locally due to their perceived facilitation of the creation of homelands and consolidation of apartheid rule (see Whande, 2007). On the issuing of permits by chiefs, it was noted that, historically,

“It never used to happen like that. It was introduced in the 1960s with the establishment of tribal authorities¹¹ in the area” (Cattle owner, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

The permits initiated by chiefs do not seem to have any legal basis in today’s democratic state system though. Their basis is more rooted in the practice of the apartheid years, when chiefs effectively acted as local government structures, with an administrative role over land and natural resources. Changing institutional arrangements at local level have thrown the system of locally issued resource use permits into disarray as the CPA is also now issuing permits for resource collection (see Section 6.3.3, pp. 153), even though this is still limited to resource users coming from other areas.

Local residents have started voicing their concerns on how the money raised from permits is administered. They noted that the permit system as it is at the moment, is not good, as money is paid to Ha-Mutele (the chief’s residence and offices), but the use of the resources happens in Bennde Mutale. Villagers said they would support the permit system if it was more localised and benefited people in the areas where the resources are actually harvested. One interviewee used the example of Chief Tshikundamalema, a neighbouring chieftaincy to Chief Mutele, who used to provide permits for people to cut firewood in a village he did not reside. The permit holders were then chased away by the actual residents of the village - who told the firewood collectors to go to the chief’s kraal to collect the resources. While local actors spoke of sharing the monetary benefits from the permits, they also emphasised that they are more interested in knowing how much is exactly generated from the permit system and how it is spent.

¹¹ During colonial and apartheid rule, traditional leaders of various ranks from village headman to chiefs were referred to as ‘tribal authorities.’

Table 8: Different natural resource use permits administered along the Madimbo corridor.

Resource target for permit	Targeted resource users	Local authority responsible	Where collected in the area	Cost per permit
Firewood collection	Urban based buyers	The chief	Within the villages but increasingly encroaching on the Madimbo corridor	R200 per 10ton truck R150 per 8 ton truck R50 for pick up truck (bakkie)
Collection of mopane worms	Users from other areas	Both the chief and the Communal Property Association	Within the villages and also increasingly encroaching on the Madimbo corridor	R100 per collection trip
Cutting of wet poles for house construction	Local resource users, users from other areas not allowed to collect locally	The chief	Within the villages	R20 until enough material for building houses
Fishing permits	Local and outside resource users	PAs officials (Makhuya Park)	Within the villages along the Mutale River, within the Madimbo corridor along the Limpopo River and within Makhuya Park	R25 per day (an additional entrance fee of R15)

No annual estimate figures could be obtained for the different permits issued for natural resource collection. Currently, there are a variety of permits, both for people coming from other areas such as

Thohoyandou and for those based in the local villages (see Table 8 above).

The permit system has also experienced problems in terms of how and at what level the money is collected. For instance, in the past, a lot of trucks used to come to the area to collect firewood. The chief then decided that it was better if the role of collecting funds was delegated to the village headmen. The headmen would then pass the money to the chief. However, this system was abused as apparently some of the headmen misused the funds. The collection of firewood now is largely regulated by the chief's office. While supporting the implementation of both PAs and permits, local people still preferred the permit system to strict PAs.

The permit system is preferred because of the flexibility it offers. As one man indicated, with PAs, there is no way of negotiating any natural resource use even when "one's life is in danger and you need medicines from the park" (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, March 2006). He further noted that, for instance, local people have been asking for permission to collect thatching grass from the Makuleke game rangers with no success, even as their house roofs are falling apart. A resident in Bennde Mutale added that they still face difficulties even to go fishing along the Limpopo River on sections outside the Makuleke/Kruger Contractual Park, as Makuleke rangers refuse them entry. Local people added though that their requests for flexibility and resource use were not meant to downplay the importance of conservation. They recognised that

"Without protection, there wouldn't be any resources left. But Makhuya and Makuleke Park managers should not just hide behind the book and tell us they are following the law. They should consider our needs as well" (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, April 2006).

However, even while supporting the need for protection; it was not clear how local people would balance their immediate demands for local livelihood needs with conservation. In almost all situations, the balance between protecting animals for future generations and current livelihood pressures was pointed out as a hindrance to their support of exclusive PAs. Whenever discussions concerned immediate livelihood demands and future needs, this ambivalence appeared without being resolved.

7.8 Conclusion

The stories conveying struggles over resources along the Madimbo corridor are both individual and collective. They are individual in the sense that the narrators are involved in specific claims and counter claims over resources, and they are collective in that they serve collective interests and ambitions. Sometimes individual interests outweigh collective ambitions, causing tensions among local people. I discussed in this chapter how exclusion from grazing pastures, fishing pools and hunting areas through PAs leads to images, metaphors and discourses of conservation as land grabbing processes that impact negatively on local livelihoods. In examining local views of the environment, I explored local stories of PAs and their impacts, local engagements with an inside/outside dichotomy reminiscent in PAs, power and political dynamics over fences as physical and symbolic structures of exclusion. I also explored how local dynamics contribute to the exclusion of local people from certain environments. Stories are told as part of a wider framework, which gives and reproduces meaning while disputing or silencing other stories with contradictory meaning. The storylines that characterise local relations to conservation are held together by threads, such as historical and ongoing experiences, of meaning. Such meaning is context specific and both draws on historical events and local actors' own life experiences (Long, 1992). Along the Madimbo corridor, this experience remains centrally shaped by the exclusion from local environmental resources. Fences and boundaries play a signifying role on processes of making meaning, portrayed through actions defying the physical separation of local people from natural resources within enclosures. The following chapter continues to discuss local views of conservation but throws the spotlight particularly on the idea and practice of TFCAs. Since the GLTFCA is still in the process of being implemented, the next chapter traces current local opinions that are still fluid and changing as events unfold. This involves both a reflection based on historical experiences and aspirations for the future.

The chapter also highlights the linkages between implementation of expert knowledge, hence subject formation, and coercion or subjection. The implementation of rules of non-use of natural resources is not just based on the scientific basis for biodiversity conservation, but on the use of force as well.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Local opinions of conservation in the context of TFCAs

Telegraph to the future - “Tourists are like our unborn children when it comes to wildlife experiences”

Residents of Bennde Mutale village and the Madimbo corridor may sometimes appear contradictory when they speak about protected areas. On the one hand, they are scathing in their resentment of the conservation structures that they associate with exclusion and injustice. On the other hand, they look to the future and paint a mosaic where their lives are intricately linked with protected environments, where sustaining livelihoods is not perceived as threatening to the goals of conservation. These seeming contradictions are in fact, testimony to a nuanced view that is clear in the logic of their experiences and aspirations: they listen, learn and appear highly in touch with debates and events. They do not just resist but also connect to ideas of conservation. They resist the exclusionary and unjust practices. In this context, I listened to Frank Guvhane one day, sitting at his homestead. He spoke about the past, his relations with wildlife and other natural resources and the slow but increasing controls over natural resources. He was clear that things have generally changed for the worse as a result of conservation interventions.

Frank Guvhane repeated some of the things I had heard from other older people of the village such as Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Petrus Maphukumele and Endani Guvhane who painted a picture of local people as a cohesive unit that shared various natural resources, which they hunted or gathered in the past. Women would make ilala palm wine and marula beer to be shared communally. Such events would also happen in what is today Zimbabwe, and people would cross the Limpopo River to be merry. However, far from portraying a perfect past, Frank Guvhane noted that life was hard then by any stretch of the imagination. His mother even said that, at times, they would survive on leaves and that she is grateful “to this man, Mandela, for giving us grants, so we never have to go and gather leaves again.”

Guvhane continued, noting that the past reliance on the environment has been lost. This is partly because people have moved to work in the cities, partly as a result of various controls brought about by the presence of conservation, military and veterinary officials. He also noted that there is an increased number of people who come to collect resources and want to live in the area. Noria Manganyi noted that to her it seems people have been having more children since they were moved into planned villages. When I asked what the future will be like for the environment if they thought there were more and more people, they pointed out that the government has now taken responsibility for protecting the environment. Guvhane intervened, noting that it was important to protect the environment in spite of their negative views of protected areas based on past experiences. He specifically emphasised that this was important for their unborn children who might never see an elephant if it is not protected. Resorting to metaphors, he said that he does not want his children or grandchildren to travel to far off places just to see an elephant. He continued drawing similarities between today’s tourists who travel to see these animals to the unborn: “Tourists are like our unborn children here. They both rely on us protecting the animals they want to

see.” He continued that no one in the village is against conservation for the sake of sheer resistance.

These issues were repeated on a number of occasions during my fieldwork, as people pointed out that it is important to protect the environment for future generations. People were somewhat torn between their resentment of protected areas as symbols of exclusion, and their desire to protect the environment. They did not see this as a contradiction, because of a mix of attitudes, livelihood needs, old hurts, individual and collective interests. Local opinion, that the environment is important and needs to be protected, is the basis of the following.



8.1 Introduction

In chapter seven I explored local understandings of external interventions, specifically conservation, in terms of their historical experiences and interactions with external actors such as conservation officials. This chapter is still concerned with temporal dimensions of local experiences, but with a focus on the future as seen by local actors. Apart from reflecting on historical experiences with conservation, local people also referred to their future needs and aspirations in relation to land and natural resources. The focus on the future, however, generated a different set of frames in relation to conservation.

In spite of the negative impacts that local people experience at the hands of conservation authorities, they also indicated the positive aspects of conservation for the future. Thus, I observed that views on protected areas (PAs) were predominantly positive. In fact, they resonated with the main arguments for sustainability approaches, which came to prominence after the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987). In the WCED report, sustainable development was defined as development that “meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Local people spoke positively of the need for conservation, specifically in relation to future generations. The seemingly contradictory messages highlight the multiple meanings attached to the environment at local level and in villages such as Bennde Mutale.

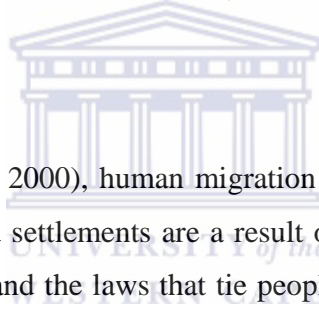
In this chapter, I discuss local views on conservation through the lens of hopes and aspirations for the long-term future. The next section is on local views of TFCAs, specifically in relation to issues of security and crime across geo-political boundaries.

By the time field research for this thesis had started, the South African government had not yet demarcated the areas that would fall under the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA). However, government officials noted that the Madimbo corridor was close enough to the core Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) to be definitely included. Yet local people were aware of the plans for the GLTFCA. Local knowledge of the GLTFCA was acquired through the radio or through the local elites who were variously engaged by private sector and NGOs in support of the GLTFCA. Based on the lack of knowledge of the GLTFCA, most respondents based their views on

potential TFCAs on their historical experiences with PAs. While local people have not gone through the experiences of formal TFCAs, they do not deem it different from previous conservation approaches.

8.2. Fostering or hindering relations across the boundary?

Local residents along the Madimbo corridor hold different perspectives on the impact of the GLTFCA on local transboundary movement. The elderly, who lived along the Limpopo River, argued that the GLTFCA could potentially improve the movement of people across the Limpopo River. Thus, the storyline to emerge out of this is that, since TFCAs are about collaboration in managing natural resources that straddle or move across boundaries, they will also facilitate greater transboundary movement of local people within their existing social, cultural and livelihood borders, restoring patterns of human movement in the area. Others anticipated that the GLTFCA will not lead to any meaningful changes in transboundary human movement, with the storyline that controls and exclusion will continue.



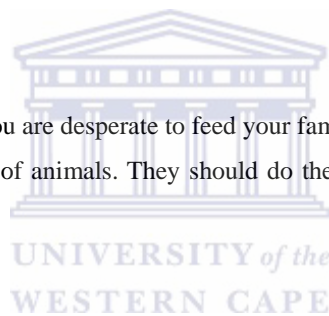
Like elsewhere in Africa (see Herbst, 2000), human migration was already prominent in pre-colonial times within the Madimbo region and settlements are a result of migrations (see Section 4.3, pp. 79). Colonial demarcation of boundaries, and the laws that tie people to “territorially defined polities” and specific geographical locations, have sought to hinder migration (Herbst, *ibid*). Historical experiences of movement across current geo-political boundaries influenced local views of TFCAs and their impact on human movement. Local views of TFCAs are influenced by people’s current personal circumstances, for instance their familial relations across the border, transboundary livelihood strategies and their historical and ongoing experiences with conservation. In the following pages I discuss two related issues: the current local transboundary dynamics from the perspectives of state control and local human relations, and what local actors anticipate from and doubt about the GLTFCA.

Transboundary dynamics across the Limpopo River pertain to state controls and to relations among local people from either side¹. In other words, the dynamics are about intraborder local relations

¹ It should be noted that transboundary movement in the area is among Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe (see Connor, 2003). However, for purposes of this dissertation, I focus on bilateral movement between South Africa and

contrasted with transboundary flow of resources. Currently, in spite of the dangers associated with transboundary movement along the Madimbo corridor, people continue to move through the corridor for various reasons. For instance, local people risk animal attacks and arrests. Reports of people killed by wild animals along the Limpopo River are widespread, not only along the Madimbo corridor but also on the commercial farms to the west of the corridor (the Herald Newspaper, January 2007). Additionally, when the Limpopo River is full, it is difficult for people to cross. The catchment zone for the Limpopo River extends as far as Gauteng Province in South Africa and to Botswana, making the prediction of water flow and floods difficult in places such as the Madimbo corridor, which is often dry even as other parts of the catchment receive rains. Nevertheless, individuals' particular circumstances force them to take the risk. This suggests that observing and obeying (or not) of political boundaries is mediated by various factors, which include considerations for individual livelihood situations and kinship relations across such boundaries. A local man who regularly assists Zimbabweans to cross the boundary noted that

“Boundary controls don't mean anything if you are desperate to feed your family. We know they are trying to combine parks in different countries to facilitate movement of animals. They should do the same for people” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).



The consolidation of the boundary between South Africa and Zimbabwe has had wide-ranging impacts on local residents. Firstly, it has led to the construction and representation of differences among actors on either side of the Limpopo River, impacting negatively on local relations through controls over human movement. Secondly, it has affected transboundary marital relations. The preference for Zimbabwean women by local men along the Madimbo is premised on perceived 'differences' between South African and Zimbabwean women. The preference for Zimbabwean women shows that the process of boundary consolidation is multi-dimensional, and that, as pointed elsewhere, it is as much about identity and class as it is about territoriality (see Newman and Paasi, 1998; Kolossov, 1998; van Houtum and van Naerssen, 2002; Paasi, 2001; Newman, 2006).

Zimbabwe, partly because the movements from Mozambique are constrained by the Makuleke/Kruger CNP and partly because the political situation in Zimbabwe has seen an increased flow of people between South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The actual dynamics along the Madimbo corridor started with the deployment of soldiers in the area in the 1970s. While meant to control cross-border movement, the deployment resulted in new social relations and dynamics, in particular a class based ‘othering’ of local men as local women preferred to go out with soldiers. This continues today and is partly fuelled by livelihood considerations (see Section 6.3.4, pp. 156). Local men view local women’s liaisons with the soldiers as engaging in sex work. In response to the presence of soldiers, the men travel to Zimbabwe to find spouses, a further indication that ‘borders’ are constantly formed and reshaped in response to local conditions. The pursuit of Zimbabwean women is now a sophisticated suitor activity as it (perhaps not much different from internet lonely hearts searches):

“now even includes the sending of photos to Zimbabwe with the hope of finding a suitable spouse, including sitting in someone’s car and claiming to own it. There are also certain grannies in the village that are well known for making arrangements for people to get married. They at times go to Zimbabwe to find suitable women for men who would have expressed an interest to get married. So a development that started with women preferring soldiers in the area has developed into a sophisticated transboundary suitor activity. When women who have been married to local men get their younger sisters visiting, it has usually translated into the younger sisters getting married to someone else, so it appears like it’s difficult to break the cycle.” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, March 2006).

Local people indicated that marriages across the Limpopo River were prominent in the past; they were a part and parcel of relationship formation and consolidation and a testimony to the area as a social border. In a way, the current emphasis of South African men to find Zimbabwean spouses is a continuation of this socio-cultural dynamic. The exact form it has taken, however, is driven by social dynamics around the presence of the military, and ironically reinforces the differences espoused in boundaries. The shifts, first from local women preferring soldiers and later men going for Zimbabwean women, are a part of social process around value shifts that are linked to livelihoods, but these shifts are all represented through morality discourses (see Section 6.3.4, pp. 156).

Local men noted that Zimbabwean women are more faithful and unlikely to have multiple partners. The reality on the ground, however, paints a more complex picture than arguments of faithfulness. A local man once beat his Zimbabwean wife severely, but she would not go to the police as she feared the police would deport her. Her fear is with precedent along the Madimbo corridor. In 2003, the assistant

headman in Bennde Mutale village was involved in a fight over a Zimbabwean woman. When he was beaten up by a village resident in the ensuing fight, he chose to go to the police to try and get the woman deported. The police's response was to round up every Zimbabwean woman and deport them. Now Zimbabwean women, as was the case with the one beaten by her husband, choose not to go to the police to report any forms of abuse as this might lead to deportation. Given the current state of the Zimbabwean political and economic situation, Zimbabweans have few options in terms of their livelihoods.

Van Houtum and van Naerssen (2002:130) note that "processes of adaptation and re-assertion will be expressed in various spatial patterns of displacement within the country of settlement." Along the Madimbo corridor, a different kind of spatial displacement happens when Zimbabwean women move in with their husbands, there is no clustering together of the newcomers, depriving them of what van Houtum and van Naerssen term "a shield of emotional protection against the new strange society" they find themselves in. Thus, while marriages are a testimony to the socio-cultural border and a transcending of the 'othering' created by geo-political boundaries, the women remain subservient to their husbands, even when abused, since they cannot access the law. The border region, as a result, has dissolved and now reflects the political boundary. Yet, legally, a married person has the right of residence in South Africa (Government of South Africa, 1995).

Therefore, while it might be a true reflection that Zimbabwean women tend to have less sexual partners, a more compelling reason might be that they have no access to legal recourse in cases of abuse; they lack the shields of emotional protection by friends, peers and family. This is not only the case in the family set up but also happens on farms in the Limpopo province where commercial farmers employ Zimbabweans without work permits. At the end of the month some then call the police to round the workers up, and deport them. Hence, they have free labour (see South African Human Rights Commission, 2003).

A central aspect of the transboundary dynamics is that of livelihoods. There are various ways for Zimbabwean women to make a living once they are married to South African men. Apart from the incident with the assistant headman who called the police after he was beaten up, it is very rare that the

police will come to the villages to check if everyone has identity documentation or visas to be in the country. The ambivalence of the police in this regard means Zimbabwean women can find work in South Africa without much inspection. Besides the possibility of work, Zimbabwean women with children are able to receive child support grants (see Table 5, pp. 145 for amounts per grant). In some instances, women who are now divorced from their husbands and have moved back to Zimbabwe continue to draw child support grants, often visiting at the end of the month to get the grants and to shop for foodstuffs before going back to Zimbabwe. From a legal and official perspective, however, the movement of people across the boundary without the relevant documentation is an illegal act (Government of South Africa, 2002). The local Home Affairs official at Masisi noted that they were aware that this was happening, and, at times, they catch people moving across the Limpopo River².

Some local elders based their explanation of the continued transboundary movement on historical and cultural ties among local people on either side of the Limpopo River. Alphios Gakato Mashavha, in relating his life history, argued that the presence of the military affected local transboundary relations where historically shared social, cultural and natural resource border area existed.

Alphios Gakato Mashavha, a life history

Alphios Gakato Mashavha was born in Mabyeni, an area on the banks of the Limpopo River, now within the Makuleke/Kruger CNP. As he grew up, Gakato and his friends collected different plants and fruits for consumption. These activities were mainly limited to the area close to their homesteads, as he notes, “there were very few people, and we didn’t have to travel long distances to collect fruits and other edible plants.” During the rainy season, the families would grow crops, using donkeys to pull the plough and hands for weeding. When they lived in Mabyeni, people only had donkeys and no cattle. The only people who had cattle then were in the village of Nkotswi, which is next to Bennde Mutale village across the Mutale River. The main crops included maize and sorghum. The crops were grown for family consumption and not for sale. Even when someone was given some maize and sorghum, it was usually done for free to support those who didn’t have anything. Such acts were usually reciprocated with other goods, for instance, a hunter would give meat.

Gakato notes that things have changed, these reciprocal acts are rare and that selling of agricultural produce is more common than in the past. Beer was also brewed for people to get together, then: “people would brew beer and invite others to drink for free”. As a young man, Gakato was also involved in hunting, mostly kudu, impala and catching fish. For fishing,

² Interview with the local Home Affairs official, October 2006, Masisi.

he explains that he “mostly used a *duvo*, cone shaped fish trap made of reeds which the fish enters from one end, and then won’t find its way out.” He hunted mainly around Mabiligwe, part of which is incorporated into the Makuleke/Kruger CNP. He also would cross the Limpopo River to hunt in present-day Zimbabwe. Households then were spread far apart and well dispersed; hence, conflicts over hunting were very rare, even when he crossed the river to hunt in Zimbabwe. Other cross-border activities for Gakato included going to Zimbabwe to drink beer with friends and relatives. An important aspect of the visits to Zimbabwe was also courtship. Gakato notes that he even had two wives, one here and one in Zimbabwe where he maintained his second homestead.

To support his families, Gakato went to Johannesburg to work in the mines. He used to support his family in Zimbabwe “by sending bags of mealie-meal and money and occasionally going there to visit when back from work in Johannesburg.” At that time, there were no border controls, so he could travel there any time to be with his family. But with the liberation war in Zimbabwe³, it became more and more difficult for him to travel to visit his Zimbabwean family and send food as there were more border controls. At about the same time, villagers were forced to move from Mabyeni to Bennde Mutale⁴, a village about 5km to the south of the Limpopo River. When they were moved Gakato decided to bring his family from Zimbabwe to South Africa, and they all settled close to where the current Tshipise-Pafuri road runs, about 500m from the present-day Kruger National Park Pafuri Gate⁵.

Other cross-border relations were interrupted when people were forcibly moved from the Mabyeni area to settle in areas such as present-day Bennde Mutale village. The forced removals, effected in 1969, marked a time that had a huge impact on people’s lives. Gakato explains that when families were moved from Mabyeni, “they started selling crops, beer and other food stuffs, as they came into contact with more and more people from elsewhere who made a living through selling salt and buying animal bones for fertiliser.” His point is corroborated by M.P Khuba, a trader and cattle farmer, who opened the first shop at Bennde Mutale village in the early 1970s. Apart from the changes from a non-monetary to a monetary economy, Gakato also notes that the households were now placed in one area, where they were all too close together⁶. The move, as Gakato explains, “changed the distances between households and we were all placed in one area.” This point is in line with the official betterment planning documents for the area, which proposed moving people into planned villages. Gakato notes that the whole moving process was explained to them by the chiefs who requested they make way for the military. Gakato noted that the main argument of the chiefs for moving people was that the “military wanted to be stationed in the area, as there was a war in neighbouring Zimbabwe.” Gakato continued to supplement his livelihood through hunting, even after the move from Mabyeni. He also planted crops such as maize and sorghum. From the hunting, Gakato would sell the meat

³ The war of liberation officially started in the mid-1960s.

⁴ The forced removals happened in 1969.

⁵ It should be noted that when the Kruger National Park was extended to incorporate the Pafuri triangle, it did not include about 5000 hectares, which are now part of the Makuleke/Kruger CNP. These 5000 hectares formed part of the Madimbo corridor and the Pafuri or Halfway Gate was 6km from the village of Bennde Mutale or Madavhila as it was called.

⁶ The forced removals of 1969 were also facilitated by ‘betterment planning,’ a programme that resulted in the limiting of local people’s agricultural land and planned settlements with villages close together.

mostly in 'Venda'⁷ to be able to buy maize meal.

In the midst of these transboundary dynamics, local people along the Madimbo corridor have received the plans for the GLTFCA with some anticipation of changes this will bring into their lives. The first reference point for local people is a facilitation of human movement, reversing the controls brought about by the colonial boundary consolidation. It is in this context that plans to build a bridge across the Limpopo River were greeted with support, with one woman pointing out that

“We have heard that a bridge will be built to facilitate the movement of people across the border (*mukano*⁸). Now people are using illegal means and travelling through the bush, which is dangerous as they can be attacked by wild animals. If they are attacked by wild animals, they don't report to the police or go to hospital, as they fear getting arrested” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

The bridge was spoken of as a symbol of the changes the GLTFCA will bring for local transboundary human movement. Local people anticipated these changes to serve three objectives related to facilitating marriages, accessing natural resources and for social purposes. Locally, legalising transboundary crossings is premised on local treatment of the area as a border region as witnessed by kinship relations across geo-political boundaries. For instance, in the village of Bennde Mutale alone, 70 out of the 120 households had a spouse, mostly women, from Zimbabwe. The anticipation is further related to the fact that the area across the Limpopo River is predominantly occupied by people of Venda descent who, as Ralushai (1979, 1982) notes, never regarded the river as a barrier, but as a resource that often brought people from both sides together. In other words, it is a border region defined along cultural as well as natural resource parameters. Local residents along the Madimbo corridor spoke of combined resource management, specifically the opening of the fish season in some of the floodplains along the river, systems that were disrupted by the consolidation of colonial boundary (see Section 4.4.1, pp. 81).

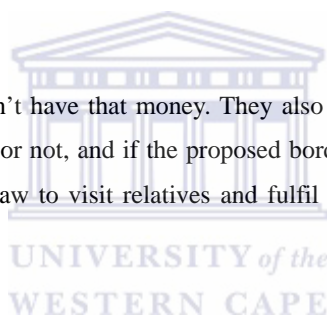
⁷ Most people here speak of places such as Sibasa, Thohoyandou as Venda despite the fact that they also were in Venda. It might be a political statement given that the parliament for Venda was in Thohoyandou or Sibasa.

⁸ The word *mukano* (mikano- plural) is used for both boundary and border in TshiVenda.

Local people spoke of the GLTFCA as recognition of the continuity of the border area in terms of social, livelihoods and cultural parameters. Specifically, they highlighted the possibility to make transboundary movement easier to facilitate the integration of spouses into their new families without fear of being deported. Thus, local residents along the Madimbo corridor took a very practical and personal view of the potential of the GLTFCA.

However, some cautioned that TFCAs are not going to make the local situation any better, citing the need for passports, which will probably cost money to obtain. Indeed, most people in the villages along the Madimbo corridor do not possess any passports, including those from Zimbabwe who are married to South Africans. Locals pointed out that the real value of TFCAs would be if they were to facilitate movement across boundaries without having to produce any passports. One man married to a Zimbabwean reflected:

“Passports cost money and villagers here don’t have that money. They also don’t need the passports. People have always crossed the border, whether they are allowed or not, and if the proposed border post doesn’t make anything better for their movement, they will continue breaking the law to visit relatives and fulfil other livelihood related activities” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).



This section has discussed the social dynamics that have evolved as a result of the consolidation of border controls along the Madimbo corridor. As well as being affected by the ‘othering’ effects of boundaries, local residents along the Madimbo corridor are involved in social relations that are essentially bordering and othering exercises in terms of how they are constructions and representations of difference. By discussing local historical accounts of human movement across the boundary, it has provided a context to analysing ongoing local understandings of what TFCAs can facilitate in terms of human movement. Of particular importance are gender dimensions in the GLTFCA. This raises questions of whether the GTFCA can provide a vehicle through which human security in relation to women can be addressed. A related issue to the question of human movement is the perception and reality of transboundary crime. Local people wonder whether TFCAs can be a vehicle to address such problems too.

To return to the issues of subject formation and subjection, this case illustrates that there are different levels at which these processes are exercised. The first level is informal, at a socio-cultural level, through marriages. The act of local men, who enter into marriages with Zimbabwean women, while a continuation of long held practices, is now panning out in different configurations. The abuse of women from other countries, in a way, confirms the state's subject formation processes premised on treating people across the Limpopo River as different. As a result, the legal definition of who belongs to which territory is now a primary organising principle even at a local level, and not the long held cultural practices as argued by elders such as Gakato (Life history above). At another level, official state based actors, such as the police and the military, straddle the legal and social aspects of control. While exercising within the legal stipulations to control the movement of people across the boundary and hence subjection of local people, they also resort to exercises that are a result of their own conditioned behaviour.

8.3 Curbing or perpetuating illegal transboundary activities?

Official GLTFCA documents list transboundary crime as a major security concern and challenge (GLTFP Joint Management Board, 2002). While local people also find transboundary crime a challenge, their rationales often differ from those of the Joint Management Board (JMB). As a result, the solutions sought also differ from official efforts to control human movement and are often in conflict with the local practices (see Section 8.2, pp. 203 above). Even at a local level, people hold different and at times conflicting views on the role of TFCAs in curbing or perpetuating crime.

For instance, a widely held perspective by local cattle farmers is that Zimbabweans cross the Limpopo and cut the electric fence to steal cattle in South Africa. The cattle are supposedly driven to Mozambique where they are sold. Local cattle farmers viewed the GLTFCA in terms of facilitating easier tracking and recovery of stolen cattle. Currently factors such as veterinary disease controls and controls over human movement affect local efforts at recovering stolen cattle.

A major concern for veterinary officials involved in the conceptualisation of the GLTFCA is that mixing of wildlife and livestock can result in diseases such as Bovine Tuberculosis (BTB) and Foot and

Mouth Disease (FMD) being passed on to livestock. Currently, a variety of studies within the GLTFCA are seeking to determine if there have been any outbreaks of disease in livestock as a result of mixing with wildlife (Cumming *et al*, 2007). For instance, the veterinary sub-committee of the GLTP JMB has been conducting surveillance studies in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, the AHEAD-GLTFCA network has a strong focus on animal health issues within the GLTFCA. The current approach to avoid the spread of disease to livestock is to separate it from wildlife, even though the Madimbo corridor is indicated as shared range between wildlife and livestock (see Moerane, 2008). Control approaches in South Africa are premised on protecting the marketing of livestock products, and adhere to the World Organisation for Animal Health (Moerane, 2008). A combination of control approaches includes fencing and separating livestock from wildlife, vaccination and culling infected animals. Along the Madimbo corridor, the predominant approach is the setting up of fences (see Section 7.5, pp. 187), interspaced with posts to also control transportation of meat from areas where livestock and wildlife potentially mix. Local cattle farmers, however, view these controls as impacting their efforts to track stolen livestock across the border.

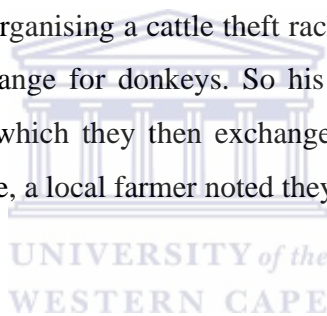
Local cattle farmers noted that, as a result of veterinary and military controls in the area, it is not easy to pursue cattle thieves into Zimbabwe. One cattle farmer had his cattle stolen once and, because he had to travel to Beitbridge to go through to Zimbabwe, by the time he had reached the villages immediately north of the Madimbo corridor, the cattle thieves had already gone. Even if someone was to find their cattle, to bring them back to South Africa takes a long time, including putting them in quarantine at the veterinary holding pens. Some local cattle farmers view the GLTFCA as potentially resolving this problem through facilitating collaboration among law enforcement units in tracking stolen cattle across the borders. At a regional level, some commentators view cattle rustling as a possible area for inclusion into the wider regional security co-operation (Mills, 1995).

However, other cattle farmers and officials in the Department of Agriculture warned that putting too much emphasis on cattle thefts by Zimbabweans was to ignore the fact that this problem also exists in South Africa. An official in the Department of Agriculture in Vhembe District Municipality indicated that they had similar cattle theft problems even between districts and between the rural and urban areas, and the provincial South Africa Police Service (SAPS) started a partnership programme with farmers'

organisations and the department of agriculture to combat and investigate stock theft in Limpopo Province. The agricultural official noted that the TFCA and increased human movement across boundaries are not going to help “curb the problem of cattle thefts” (Interview, Tshilamba, June 2006). Some local cattle farmers themselves were also sceptical that TFCAs and relaxed human transboundary movement would help in recovering stolen cattle, with one of them indicating that:

“There are cattle thieves in every country. Some South Africans steal cattle to sell in the cities. The same happens in Zimbabwe and even in these intra country cases, it’s difficult for one to track their cattle. (Interview, Cattle farmer, Madimbo corridor, October 2005).

Some of the cattle farmers also noted that cattle rustling was not done by the Zimbabweans alone; they often work with the assistance of people within the villages. For instance, in 2006, one of the cattle farmers was arrested for supposedly organising a cattle theft racket, which involved him stealing cattle and sending it to Zimbabwe in exchange for donkeys. So his Zimbabwean counterpart would steal donkeys, and he would steal cattle, which they then exchanged and shared proceeds from the sale. Because cattle rustling is unpredictable, a local farmer noted they need



“A resolution of access to natural resources, especially grazing for our cattle, and not waste our time on cattle rustling. If your cattle are stolen, you know you have to go to the police and pray that you catch the thief still with the cattle. So I am more worried that my cattle will die from drought or lack of water” (Interview, Madimbo corridor, October 2006).

The issue of access to grazing was oft repeated, with local cattle farmers noting the TFCA agreement should also facilitate the movement of livestock to better grazing sites, even across boundaries, without fear of them being stolen. The possibility of grazing cattle across boundaries is motivated more by the inability by South African farmers to access grazing pastures within the Madimbo corridor than any willingness to drive cattle into Zimbabwe, given the uncertainties over theft.

However, cattle from Zimbabwe graze in South Africa while South African cattle cannot cross the veterinary fence approximately 5km south of the Limpopo River. The Madimbo corridor fence runs

approximately 5km parallel and south of the Limpopo River (see Figure 2, pp. 23; Figure 4, pp. 67). Cattle from South Africa do not have access to this fenced off area while those from Zimbabwe are driven across the river to graze in South Africa. The irony of this is that if the SANDF did not occupy the Madimbo corridor, cattle from South Africa would be able to graze within the corridor and be more exposed to supposed Zimbabwe cattle rustlers. It would appear that the presence of the military and the fences to the south act as a security mechanism against thefts of local livestock. Thus I observed that while viewing the GLTFCA as a possible way of supporting resource use and combating cattle rustling across boundaries, local leadership, especially the Vhembe CPA, were proposing to move the Madimbo corridor fence to run along the Limpopo River⁹, a move that presents contradictory messages between calling for transboundary cooperation and simultaneously proposing tighter controls. The government has indicated there is no funding for the exercise, prompting the CPA to suggest that the fence should be removed altogether. The proposals from the Vhembe CPA and the responses from the SANDF have to be analysed from a negotiation perspective, indicative of positions where the negotiators are involved in mutual gains and distributive approaches (see also Fay, 2007 and Steenkamp, 2001). The mutual gains approach of the SANDF is premised on keeping part of the land for training purposes and ceding the other part to local claimants (LRLCC, 2004). The CPA proposes to move the fence to the river to facilitate local access to grazing pastures and other resources such as firewood within lands currently occupied by the SANDF. Additionally, proposals to get rid of the fence altogether are also to facilitate resource access. Both proposals effectively mean the sharing of land between the SANDF and local people, which the military argues is not feasible because of mines that did not explode on landing during training. The concern by the SANDF about unexploded missiles and land mines is a benevolent argument rejected by the local residents.

Given official veterinary concerns about the spread of diseases, it is very unlikely that the fence will be removed. This is rather ironic as cattle from Zimbabwe graze within the corridor and apparently mix with wildlife. While there has not been any recent outbreak of BTB or FMD in Zimbabwean cattle (see monitoring results from Marabini and Dutlow, 2006), South African officials are concerned that contact with wildlife and Zimbabwean cattle might result in veterinary diseases spreading across boundaries.

⁹ This idea was presented to various government departments on 20 April 2006. The government's response was that the fence can be moved if the CPA has the finances for such a move. As a result, this has not been followed up on.

The ‘porosity’ of the boundaries in the area is increased by livelihood needs and perceived threats. For instance, it is easier for people to take meat from Zimbabwe into South Africa than it is for them to move livestock (see Bennde Mutale characterisation, pp. 1). Often this meat is sold at pension payouts. Also increasing is the movement of goats destined for the growing market in Thohoyandou. Local people indicated that immigrants from Somalia and Pakistan, now resident in Thohoyandou, prefer goat meat to beef. The Department of Agriculture in Tshilamba also noted that it had received an official request for exporting goats to Pakistan, suggesting that the goats destined for Thohoyandou might even be taken out of the country. Since goats are smaller and easier to move than cattle, there is supposedly an increase in the number of goats that are driven into South Africa from Zimbabwe, to then be loaded onto trucks destined for the city. Local people who were at some point involved in buying goats from Zimbabwe said that this is a way of making a living. They see no reason why they should be punished by government authorities that control the movement of goods and services. TFCAs, in local people’s view, should facilitate such transboundary livestock trading as a means of making a living instead of treating them as illegal.

Finally, illegal activities between the two countries also include petty crimes such as housebreaking. The police at Masisi Police Station and in Thohoyandou indicated that they have already had transboundary collaboration with the Zimbabwean police and meet regularly to discuss how to deal with cross-border crime. For example, a database of fingerprints now held jointly between the two countries helps to confirm the identity of criminals even if crimes are committed across boundaries. Local people, angry that this should be the focus of the criminal investigations, pointed out that the police were just eager to stop their relatives from visiting them rather than dealing with crime. The South African Police Service (SAPS) did, on one occasion, go to the villages and threaten to arrest South African families that host illegal Zimbabweans who the police claimed ended up “committing crime.”

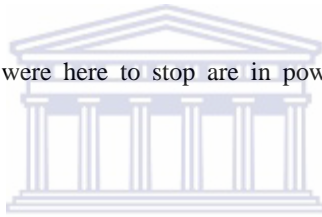
These local realities show the multi-dimensionality of transboundary relations and the varying number of actors potentially affected by transboundary initiatives such as the GLTFCA. It also shows that TFCAs might have a wide range of issues to deal with rather than the current primary focus on conservation and tourism driven livelihoods. While transboundary crime is explained locally in terms

of livelihoods and access to natural resources; in official documents and agreements for the establishment of the GLTFCA, it is viewed in terms of security.

8.4 Security along a frontier zone

Widespread forced removals along the Madimbo corridor and within Pafuri triangle were to achieve objectives of conservation; state security and apartheid homeland consolidation (see Section 4.4.2b, pp. 90; Whande, 2007). In a democratic South Africa, the controls that were implemented in the 1960-70s are still prevalent. The SANDF is still present and requesting a continued stay on the pretext of conducting military training. Local people, however, are unhappy about the continued military presence. Local people's responses to the presence of the military indicate that they link it to national security. For instance, one headman, arguing that democratic changes have not changed local realities, said

“Now that the “terrorists” that the soldiers were here to stop are in power, we assume the military will leave soon” (Interview, Gumbu village, April 2006).



The reality on the ground and in policy documents, however, suggests that the presence of the military is more than just for training purposes. Over the last few years, old military camp sites have been revived (for example, the one just north of Bennde Mutale village which had been abandoned), increasing the number of tented camps within the corridor. The Madimbo base is the only permanent military site along the corridor, with various movable tented camps along the entire corridor. The soldiers are increasingly involved in police work, patrolling the corridor, occasionally catching Zimbabweans moving into the country illegally. Illegal immigrants caught by the military are usually handed over to the SAPS who process their deportation back to Zimbabwe. The targeting of illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe is consistent with official thinking in South Africa that internal strife in neighbouring countries can be a source of insecurity, especially if there is a flood of refugees. Nathan (1998) discusses the shift of defence policy from military as the epicentre of defence to other forms including regional cooperation to deal with issues of poverty as a potential source of instability, which ultimately can spill over into South Africa. The movement of people from neighbouring countries is inevitable as South Africa is the strongest economy in the region. Maintaining a strong military

presence along the corridor therefore assists in intercepting refugees and migrants before they enter South Africa. The government has also increased the resources dedicated to border control, which has seen an increase in military installations along the border (Vigneswaran, 2007). Clearly, the presence of the military along the Madimbo corridor serves to maintain national security.

The local residents along the Madimbo corridor are divided over the presence of the military. Some pointed out that the military is important for protecting the interests of the country, while others noted that the military was an obstacle to finalising the land claim. A senior member of the CPA, for instance, is vehemently opposed to the presence of the military when he talks of access to land, water and natural resources, such as grazing, within the corridor. However, he spoke positively of the military when discussing issues of national security, noting that “they must stay to protect the country but must also let us use the area for our livestock” (Interview, Tshenzhelani, July 2007). The contradictions between the local and personal on the one hand, and, the broader political and national issues, on the other hand, are characteristic of how people speak about security along the Madimbo corridor. While accepting the presence of the military, the CPA and this official advocate that the military should leave the area and allow local people access to grazing pastures within the Madimbo corridor. To access grazing pastures, the fence separating local villagers from the corridor would have to be moved or at least gates installed (see Section 7.5, pp. 187). This message of protecting national security interests is advanced by the CPA official concerned in the same breath with efforts to move the electric fence to the banks of the Limpopo River.

Local residents speak of the presence of the military along the Madimbo corridor predominantly in terms of how it has compromised local livelihoods. The documents submitted in support of the land claim for the Madimbo corridor further highlight the need to restore access for livelihood purposes (Masikhwa, 1997). In this regard, and given the previous section on transboundary local relations, it appears local perceptions of security issues are about livelihoods and secure access to resources within the Madimbo corridor. In this respect, the presence of the military is also seen as

“Promoting poverty as they limit opportunities for people. For instance, with R10 you can go to Zimbabwe and buy maize at a cheaper price than here. Even to buy goats, it’s cheaper there” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2006).

From this, it would appear security issues are not just about national military concerns but have other dimensions. At times, the means to achieve local secure livelihoods and access to natural resources have been contradictory. For instance, while calling for the military to leave, those interviewed also spoke of Zimbabweans as ‘taking our jobs.’ This potentially presents a dilemma for local residents, should they support the continued presence of the military (and protect jobs) or negotiate for the military to move out of the Madimbo corridor to sustain livelihoods through land and natural resources? However, the concern with jobs is ironic, given the kind of jobs Zimbabweans are forced to settle for. Most unskilled Zimbabweans who cross the boundary illegally end up working on the farms in the area, the kind of jobs that local residents along the Madimbo corridor are not keen to take. One of the interviewees explained his predicament:

“I was working on the farms in Tzaneen. After five months of getting paid R300 a month, I decided it was time for me to come back home and continue to live here and try my options with cutting firewood. Out of the R300, I had to pay rent to the farmer, buy monthly supplies and send money to my wife and children. I decided it’s better to cut firewood where, if I fill a truck, I can get R800 per truck load, and I can fill two trucks a month. But on the farms, it’s hard. You fill so many trucks with tomatoes and only get paid R300 – I decided they can get Zimbabweans for that kind of job. They are desperate and would do anything to be out of that country” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, April 2006).

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Thus, it appears that fears of Zimbabweans as a threat to job security are in relation to jobs perceived as being better paid in the city, such as security guards. If anything, the presence of Zimbabweans in the area provides local people with an alternative source of livelihoods. There is an increase in the number of people crossing the Limpopo River and needing local support in evading the police and the military (see Chapters Four, pp. 72; Six, pp. 126)

Additionally, the reality on the ground is that, in light of the kinship relations discussed above, many people who illegally cross the Limpopo River know someone in one of the villages, they all constitute a cultural border which has been sustained over generations through marriages, a shared language and shared natural resources. Those who have relations in South Africa usually travel first to their relatives. Recently, the police had to warn villagers along the Madimbo corridor to not receive any guests

without proper travel papers. The police even threatened to arrest local residents who are found violating this request. This shows that local concerns over job security are contradictory to the reality on the ground, where residents continue to receive and benefit from Zimbabweans. Thus, there are multiple messages on security that compete between an acceptance of Zimbabweans, on the one hand, and a portrayal of their presence as a source of livelihood insecurity and a potential source of criminal activities, on the other hand.

The villagers who regularly drink beer at the local tavern highlighted another security dimension. One of them explained how the free transboundary movement of people would be useful in resolving or avoiding disputes:

“One day we were here, drinking beer with a group of Zimbabweans who we know did not have papers. An argument ensued when people were drunk, and one of them grabbed me by the collar and dragged me to a corner where he beat me. By that time I was too drunk to fight. The next day they had gone, as they knew that it was going to be war. And I decided that it was not worth it pursuing them, as I could get arrested for crossing the border and for fighting. If we were allowed to cross freely, this fight would have never happened because that guy would have known that the next day I would pursue him” (Interview, Tshikuyu village, October 2005).



While the interviewee seems not to see it as such, the restrictions on transboundary human movement prevented an escalation of the conflict. It also appears, from what he said that free human movement in the area can result in the escalation of conflicts. Local security concerns raise a pertinent issue in relation to TFCAs and their security objectives. In most cases security in TFCAs is portrayed in terms of advancing regional integration and promoting peaceful resolution of inter-country conflicts. As shown by the variety of security concerns at a local level, the current conceptualisation of security in relation to TFCAs is not adequate (see Whande, 2007). Whilst the national focus is important, it hardly addresses the local level dynamics in terms of security over livelihoods and access to land and natural resources. Some of these livelihood strategies, because they are transboundary in nature, are threatened by various forms of natural resource use controls by the state.

8.5 Boundaries in a time of TFCAs

Boundaries have been continuously interpreted, negotiated and contested before and throughout colonial times (see Chapters Four, pp. 72 and Seven, pp. 169). Attempts to redress historical injustices in relation to land and natural resources are, in part, about boundaries. Various factors, both local and further reaching, have resulted in contestations over boundaries. These include (but are not limited to) local historical understandings of boundaries as fluid and negotiable, different understandings of boundaries generated by social and natural sciences, and the colonial fixation of and on geo-political boundaries. Fixation of boundaries has also been in advancing specialist knowledge linked to conservation, which has largely been premised on the duality between ‘nature and culture’ (Fall, 2002).

In a post-apartheid South Africa, the various uses of both internal and national boundaries are prominent in land restitution claims and facilitating regional economic integration. Post-apartheid change to the internal boundaries of South Africa infused spaces with new meanings (Ramutsindela, 1998). This is especially so in relation to the areas that were subject to forced removals and the creation of Bantustans. However, instead of changing the spatial legacy of colonialism and apartheid through such approaches as land reform, the effect of post-apartheid practice has been one of “cementing the geography of the former Bantustans” (Ramutsindela, 2007:1) and amplifying conflicts over territory among local land claimants. The end of apartheid also brought new thinking on national boundaries, prominent among which is adopting an ecosystems approach in managing the environment such as through TFCAs, peace parks and transboundary protected areas (see Ferreira, 2004; see Section 5.3, pp. 101), suggesting border regions premised on ecosystems. While not proposing any radical changes to how geo-political boundaries in Africa are viewed and operationalised, TFCA policy and practice suggests that boundaries could be vehicles for peace and security (see Hanks, 1997).

The history of geo-political boundaries is rooted in colonial advancement (see Mbembe, 2000). Mbembe further challenges the perception that colonial boundaries were arbitrary, noting that they were a result of conferences, such as the Berlin Conference, as well as subject to the conventions governing colonial relations such as the London Convention (Brownlie, 1979). Colonial powers relied on natural features as landmarks for boundaries, yet Brigham (1919) notes that the interface among different groups competing for resources naturally led to areas beyond which they would not proceed.

Authority over colonial territories was a result of diplomatic negotiations or treaties of cessation, annexation and exchange among imperial powers. Additionally, the territories were given names, for example, southern Rhodesia, which identified them with their colonial administrators. Boundaries “reflect commercial, religious and military realities, the rivalries, power relationships and alliances that prevailed among the various imperial powers and between them and Africans” (Mbembe, 2000: 259-260).

In postcolonial Africa, national boundaries have been accepted, particularly by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) inaugural conference in 1963, which noted that tempering with the boundaries would lead to conflicts. Yet, as argued by Mbembe (2000) and Ralushai (1979, 1982), colonial geo-political boundaries separated ethnically affiliated people, with common linguistic and cultural entities. Furthermore, in recent years, conservation biologists have advanced the argument that boundaries also disrupted continuous ecosystems (Hanks, 1997; Griffin *et al.*, 1999). Both arguments for ethnic and ecosystem continuities have one related issue, that they should have been treated as continuous structures and not subject to different governance and authority as a result of geo-political boundaries. In other words, political boundaries disrupted social, cultural and natural border regions. However, the ecosystem and cultural integrity arguments are far from ideal. Ecosystems and cultural groups are themselves never contiguous, some groups of people live within identifiable ecosystems while different groups can and do share ecosystems.

Yet, responses from local residents along the Madimbo corridor indicate the contested nature of geo-political boundaries as well as of biodiversity conservation approaches premised on separating people from their environment. GLTFCA proponents, while arguing geo-political boundaries disrupted ecosystem border regions, have themselves continued to premise planning on disrupting human-environment relations through consolidated PA boundaries. Relating to national boundaries, one woman indicated that

“We used to cross the Limpopo River without any problems. Even here, there are boundaries with Nkotswi village, with Makhuya Traditional Authority but we cross these without any problems. Why should the Zimbabwe border lead to the death of people or necessarily make it difficult for people to move across” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

The storyline to emerge from local perspectives of boundaries is that, in the past, human movement was not constrained. This movement, however, was restricted by the delimitation and demarcation of geo-political boundaries (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4, pp. 81). In the case of conservation, specifically through PAs, restrictions on human movement were effected through fences (see Chapter Seven, Sections 7.2, pp. 173; 7.6, pp. 192). These restrictions, the storyline continues, persist today even for TFCA implementation, which is ironic in light of official policy discourses about TFCAs potentially contributing to the breakdown of boundaries. The predominant focus of ecosystem management as a vehicle for addressing inter-state conflicts does not necessarily deal with local understandings of boundaries, and assumes that most interstate conflicts are over territorial boundaries.

The statement by one of the interviewees that Bennde Mutale was both “at the end and beginning of the world” (see opening piece to this thesis, pp. 1) was used to explain that local residents were forgotten by the state, hence highlighted the marginality of the area that is far from the centres where decisions are made. It does not, however, explain the political significance of the area in geo-political terms. State actions such as deployment of the military and controls of human movement through commercial farms (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.1, pp. 81) and PAs (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2, pp. 86) highlight the political significance of the area. It is therefore, marginal for state responsibilities for social issues but significant for national and political interests. The result is restrictions on local human movement through physical reemphasis of geo-political boundaries.

Local people did not interpret these controls merely as national interests for territorial integrity but indicated that boundaries to national territories and for demarcating conservation areas limit local access to land and natural resources. This exclusionary purpose of boundaries is at variance with local understandings of the sole purpose of boundaries as the separation of areas falling under different leadership and authority structures but not used to stifle interactions among the people. In other words, people should be allowed to move across these boundaries. As a result, the nature of political boundaries is problematic as it appears

“Their purpose is to control the movement of people. But people will cross these boundaries in any case as they are forced by other factors such as relatives in other territories, looking for opportunities to make a living. This can be witnessed by the fact that even if there are soldiers within the Madimbo land, Makuleke rangers within the upper end of the Kruger (Makuleke Contractual Park), people still cross despite the dangers. As they are trying to combine the PAs across political boundaries to facilitate the movement of animals, they should do the same for people” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005).

Advocating for boundaries that do not control their movement, boundaries are locally perceived as flexible. Giving the example of homesteads, local understandings of a fence around a homestead¹⁰ does not necessarily mean one cannot move across it, but it means they cannot, for instance, cut a tree or collect resources such as mopane worms inside the fence. Thus, local understandings of boundaries are as a change of authority and definition of rights to resources but not as exclusion to movement. Boundaries across villages were often invoked in times of disputes between the respective leadership.

For instance, during my fieldwork, a group of people went and settled on an empty piece of land between the villages of Bennde Mutale and Tshikuyu, supposedly to form a new village called Tshiawelo. The headmen of both Bennde Mutale and Tshikuyu villages immediately claimed that the new settlement was under their authority, using landforms such as small streams and hills to argue where these boundaries lay in their claims to territory. They both argued that the settlement could not be allocated its own headman as it was in a territory, which, at that time, both headmen claimed was under their authority.

While the negotiation over village boundaries is between local leadership, it highlights local understandings of boundaries as flexible and interest-oriented. Boundaries are not invoked for limiting human movement across, for instance, villages and chieftainships. They, however, assume a more prominent role in clarifying and resolving disputes should they arise over territory among local leaders. Another example that shows local interpretations to relations to boundaries is the dispute between the Gumbu-Mutele people and the Tsonga tribe of Makuleke over a piece of 5000 hectares that has been restituted to the Makuleke people. The Gumbu-Mutele people, represented by the Vhembe CPA, argue

¹⁰ Different kinds of homestead boundaries (fences) were discussed to include rocks, tree branches or a wire fence.

that the restitution is in violation of territorial boundaries between the Pafuri triangle and the Madimbo corridor, further confirming contemporary arguments of boundaries as multi-faceted (see Paasi, 2001; Newman, 2006). While this conflict is over territory, the basis upon which it is being contested is actually understandings of ethnicity between Venda and Tsonga clans. In the past, these conflicts would be resolved by the elders who would

“Sit and discuss where one’s authority started and ended. But there is nothing we can do about national boundaries” (Interview, Bennde Mutale village, October 2005).

At the same time, however, local actors indicated there are difficulties in demarcating the exact boundaries on the ground. At times local understandings of boundaries indicate overlaps on the ground and not clear cut separation of territories or countries¹¹ or places under different authorities. In particular, it is difficult to know where these boundaries end and begin, especially as they relate to places under different chiefs. This situation is different from national geo-political boundaries where local people indicated that

“The only reason people know the boundaries between countries is that they are strongly enforced. If you break the law, you get arrested or get beaten” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005).

However, knowledge of the national boundaries does not mean compliance with their purpose. As a result, continued movement across geo-political boundaries is observed, with local people noting that

“Boundaries only work in controlling people as far as they find you and arrest you, but otherwise most of the times they don’t, so you learn to take chances” (Interview, Bennde Mutale Village, October 2005).

The local understandings of boundaries as flexible raises questions for TFCAs. Of particular relevance is the place and role of TFCAs in facilitating human movement and not constraining it. To date, the main emphasis for TFCAs has been on migratory wildlife and its movement across boundaries and

¹¹ Local people often spoke of country to refer to land and not nation-states.

rarely on human movement. In fact, human movement is treated as a threat to the successful implementation of TFCAs (see Hofstater, 2005).

8.6 Conclusion

Transboundary local relations are continuously shaped by and respond to external challenges and opportunities presented for livelihood sustenance. There are observed continuities of transboundary human movement through maintaining kin relations through old generational family ties but also through recently established relations through marriages. While transboundary human movement follow historical patterns, they are also largely defined by livelihood considerations such as employment opportunities. A gendered dimension to transboundary movement shows the vulnerabilities of women immigrants who, without support, fall victim both to official restrictions of human movement and abuse by local men. local people, as a result, contest and perpetuate border controls at the same time. Border controls become a continuum along which fault lines develop.



CHAPTER NINE: Closing or opening windows of opportunity

Endani, Gakato and Maphukumele – closing or opening the windows (still no resolve)

The last time I saw Endani, frail, half blind and over a hundred years old, he repeatedly pointed to the very rudimentary plan he had for a house. The plan, drawn on the ground in the form of trenches for the foundation, had been standing there the entire time I was conducting research along the Madimbo corridor. He had only spoken about it one other time when he noted that he would prefer to 'live in that house before I die.' However, that was not to be, as he died before the house could be built. His one-roomed house was very basic. It had a single window on one side, located high up close to the roof. It was clear that this window was too high for Endani to look through to the outside from the side of his bed. On numerous occasions during my visits, he would be sitting at the entrance to his house, probably to freshen up. He died without enjoying a bigger window, level with his bed so he would not have needed to call his children to move him to the door.

After his death and on my return, the walls to the new house he so desired were finally going up. It has the windows that would have been comfortable for Endani to sit, relax and only move to go for his regular walks. During the fieldwork, Endani described his experience with state intervention. To me, his descriptions were themselves a window in time, which opened up new perspectives of the past and for the future. His stories provided me with a different understanding of the windows through which he viewed various interventions. Others, in particular the CPA for land claims and SANPARKS social ecology researchers, had also turned to him in a quest to understand life before people were forcibly moved. His descriptions were therefore important for actors representing often competing and conflicting views on natural resources management. So were the accounts of his counterparts, Gakato and Maphukumele, in the village of Bennde Mutale.

In the village of Bennde Mutale, Endani's companions of similar age, Gakato and Maphukumele, had managed to get their houses, courtesy of the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme. Yet they too would always sit at the entrances of their houses, and not by their expansive windows. To me they opened windows of their memories as hunters in their youth. They spoke of local people's relations with state actors, specifically those tasked with implementing conservation initiatives.

In the two years I visited the villages along the Madimbo corridor, the three old men shared their experiences of life along a frontier zone. They had highlighted their aspirations and disappointment at how these aspirations had not been met. However, while expressing sadness about some of their experiences in the past, they did not lose sight of the future. The future was carried in the stories they told about their childhood living along the Madimbo corridor. The stories formed the basis upon which local people's claims to territory were based. The stories, though they speak of hopes and current

expectations, are the windows the elders have left for us to look at what has been. They provide the frames through which local ways of making sense of external interventions can be seen or discerned. By sharing their stories, the old men were exploring the future for their children who have become the new generation of leaders, the new bearers of stories for the future.

In the end, they shared their last moments in the same hospital ward. Gakato eventually bid farewell to Maphukumele and, as the village busied itself preparing for his burial, news arrived that Maphukumele had also just died. They were buried on the same day. With them died the experience and knowledge of another time, free of regulatory fences.



9.1 Introduction

Land and natural resources are central to local people's relations with their counterparts in neighbouring Zimbabwe as they are for relations with state institutions, national and international organisations. As well as being important for multi-level actor relations, natural resources are also critical for local livelihood strategies. This study has attempted to understand the way local actors frame external intervention. I have focussed on two aspects of the political ecology framework, firstly, temporal scale, in particular the role of historical experience in shaping local actors' views of external intervention, and secondly, the nature of multi-level connections among a variety of actors, from local resource dependent actors, to national, regional and global actors, and, the political dynamics among these actors. Through historical analysis of various interventions and current assessments of TFCAs as an external intervention, this study demonstrates that the more land and natural resources management approaches change at national and global levels to purportedly support local processes, the more conditions stay the same for local residents along the Madimbo corridor.

Three empirical questions have guided this study. First, I set to understand the ways by which experiences with external interventions are framed locally, in particular of conservation, and related issues of national security and boundary consolidation along the Madimbo corridor. Second, I explored the place of natural resources in local livelihood strategies and the character of discursive practices in relation to these resources. Third, I evaluated the discursive alliances that emerge from local views and perceptions and more prominent or official sets of ideas. I relied on storylines to establish alliances, points of negotiation and contestation between local ways of viewing and perceiving the environment and external intervention.

I explored these questions by combining the place of expert knowledge (after Singh, 2001) and by examining the emerging policies as part of the construction of policy as a function of the preferences of individuals and groups as well as broader conflicts among these actors (Gibson, 1999). By highlighting the policy-making process for TFCAs, I have engaged with the political dimensions as well as the deployment of specialist knowledge in policy formulation. More critically for this dissertation, I have mapped the dynamics that result when policies are implemented at a local level, highlighting Long's (1992) assertion of an interface at which external prominent knowledges are contested. Chapters four

(pp. 72) and five (pp. 98) provide the broader policy-making and political dimensions of natural resources management while chapters six, seven and eight discuss livelihood strategies and provide the dynamics at the interface of policy implementation.

9.2 Framing the political ecology of external interventions – empirical observations

The vignette accounts presented at the beginning of each chapter provide the windows through which my understanding of local realities, dynamics and processes has emerged (see also Chapter Three, Section 3.2.4, pp. 62). Local stories became my windows into the complexity of local issues in relation to land and natural resources. However, as I show in most of these accounts, local processes and the dynamics over gaining access to land and natural resources are located in the locality and also between the local and the global.

The key findings of the study are closely related to the two aspects of the political ecology framework used; the role of historical experiences, hence temporal scale, in shaping current views of external interventions, and, the multi-level connections and dynamics among a variety of actors ranging from local resource users to national and global policy makers. These are the key issues emerging from this study:

- The processes of subject formation, conditioning local people to act and behave in certain ways, and subjection, instituting state control over local processes, have historically been simultaneously pursued along the Madimbo corridor to achieve goals of conservation, veterinary disease control and national security.
- TFCAs, contrary to current claims of creating conditions for the participation of, and generating benefits for local people, continue to be exclusionary in policy formulation and practice. Evidence from this study indicates that exclusion of local people from policy-making processes for TFCAs is often replicated in practice.
- A look at historical experiences is critical to understanding local views of and actions towards conservation today and ultimately to successfully implementing new conservation initiatives such as TFCAs. While historical experience is important,

temporal dimensions of political ecology should not be treated as linear as other variables, such as seasonality of resources and role of a resource, also impact on historical aspects.

- Local engagements with the GLTFCA going into the future are premised on the initiative restoring socio-cultural and livelihood transboundary processes. While these issues form an integral part of the objectives of the GLTFCA, the actual process of realising them is not clear and appears contradicted with the current focus on finalising a core GLTP and exclusion of local people from the policy-making process.
- Livelihood strategies within the GLTFCA are diverse and complex and dependent on the range of assets and capabilities of individual households. In spite of the diversity of livelihood approaches, TFCAs continue to be premised on the implementation of conservation driven tourism, inherently creating areas of tension among livelihood approaches.



9.2.1 Dynamics among locally based actors

I have explored the temporal dimensions impacting on local people's framing of external intervention (see Chapter Four, pp. 72) and the local level dynamics among a variety of actors subjected to external interventions. My findings indicate that dynamics at a local level are driven both by the temporal dimensions and by actor relations of political ecology.

Temporal dimensions of political ecology dealing with discursive practices need to distinguish between aspects of the past, present and future. Local accounts of experiences with external intervention highlights what can be termed 'collective' memory in that the storyline is held by a common thread of having suffered, faced displacement and exclusion. They experienced conservation as a coercive approach, like in most parts of the world, with negative consequences for local resource dependent users (Peluso, 1992; Neumann, 1998). Collective memory along the Madimbo corridor mirrors a local strategic position in contesting external interventions with the result that PAs are presented as having caused collective suffering. Along the Madimbo corridor, collective memory formed the basis for contesting historical injustices and seeking redress through the land restitution process (see Section

4.5.2a, pp. 95). In this respect, “Memories of a shared past” are “collectively constructed and reconstructed in the present” (Rigney, 2005: 14 quoted in Nazarea, 2006: 326). It is part of a collective storyline that downplays local forms of social division while amplifying multi-level, from the local, national to global, strains in conservation. Historical experience is also invoked where conservation “remains a practical problem in areas where the coercive hand of the state has blurred the line between colonial and postcolonial regimes” (Chan *et al*, 2007: 63).

A second aspect of the temporal dimension is the framing of intervention in the present and future. Collective processes displayed in framing historical experience are supplanted by interest dynamics when it comes to thinking of the future (see Chapter Seven, pp. 169). Fault lines emerge with framing external intervention going into the future, particularly around issues of land uses. Thus, collective memory of conservation impacts does not seem to result in collective strategies for confronting continued exclusion. A possible explanation for this disjuncture might be related to livelihood strategies that different socio-economic groups engaged in.

Local accounts suggest that, while there were no clear patterns of displacement locally of poorer and less powerful groups by the wealthier and more powerful local actors as a result of conservation implementation (see Chapter Seven, pp. 169), differentiation according to livelihood strategies was enhanced. This was specifically through different groups, ranging from the poorest, poor, rich through to the wealthy, becoming more specialised in livelihood approaches that matched and were determined by the assets they had (see Chapter Six, pp. 126). For instance, with land scarcity as a result of exclusion from certain environments, Gore (1994) finds that factors such as inputs to enhance the productivity of land are more important, as well as access to such inputs in determining agricultural livelihoods. Lahiff (1997) reaches the same conclusion and finds that the richer cattle farmers along the Madimbo corridor resort to supplying their own cattle feed and drilling boreholes for livestock in times of severe droughts, which, while not the same as human-driven external interventions, result in similar limitations on land-based livelihoods. The same is done when new enclosures limit grazing pastures or access to natural resources for sustaining livelihoods. These specialisations of livelihood strategies influence how actors frame future land use options.

The change in strategy to confront the future might also be related to strategic re-positioning according to local people's interests. Strategies for confronting continued exclusion are organised along the diverse livelihood strategies that are in lieu of land use choices. As a result, we observe that poorer households are concerned with gaining access to reserved areas for collecting specific resources such as thatching grass, and for the basic provision of food, particularly protein, through access to fish and animals. The wealthier households, on the other hand, are concerned with gaining access to grazing pastures and water resources. While such social groups all aim to access natural resources for a variety of reasons, there appears to be little organised resistance among the local actors around challenging conservation, which remains largely premised on past exclusionary approaches.

9.2.2 The multiple dimensions of conflicts

A recurring theme in the opening vignettes to the chapters speaks of the struggles and conflicts over land and natural resources, specifically over access and control. Conflicts over natural resources form a central area of inquiry in political ecology (Brown 1998; see Chapter Two, Section 2.2, pp. 34). In turn, “the influence of the broader context (that is by the state, and from regional and global levels), and also the evolving nature of the situation where environmental changes, both inside and outside the location, have profound and direct implications for patterns of resource use by various users” are important (Brown, 1998: 74). By looking at political relations at a local level, as well as the linkages across various levels, multiple dimensions of conflicts are revealed. These conflicts are couched in historical experiences of restrictions over access to land and natural resources.

I find that national legislative changes aimed at addressing land dispossessions of the past are resulting, at a local level, in conflicts of authority over land and natural resources (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5, pp. 91). The conflicts of authority between the chief and the CPA are as much about the future land uses of the Madimbo corridor as they are about the historical role of traditional leaders. Historically, traditional leaders (tribal authorities under apartheid rule) acted as “decentralised despots” for the apartheid regime (Mamdani, 1996; see also Chapter Two, Section 2.2.1b, pp. 37), with wide ranging administrative authority over land and natural resources. The introduction of elected local structures with authority over land has resulted in increased conflict between the CPA and the traditional leaders over land use decisions. These conflicts, however, are as much a reflection of local contestations as

they are about external actors' impositions of conservation and development agendas.

An analysis of the external conservation actors along the Madimbo corridor reveals conflicts not only driven by the respective interests of these actors, but by their values and moral imperatives as well. Organisations, such as PPF, Nkuzi Development Association, government departments and private sector, all have different values in relation to biodiversity (Büscher and Dressler, 2007). These values include the dichotomy between use and non-use of natural resources, and balancing conservation with social justice issues. External actors argue for land uses that reflect their respective values, applying a series of "moral judgements about the ethical content of 'nature' (past, present, future), as well as shifting human identifications with nature" (Bryant, 2000: 677-78). Bryant further notes that "there is a need for moral assessments about the relative value to be attached to conservation projects in relation to other projects requiring social attention." Similar observations are made in relation to the GLTFCA in that its implementation coincided with the end of apartheid in South Africa and civil war in Mozambique. Both historic processes needed state involvement in resolving issues of land rights and local development, while at the same time meeting international obligations for the conservation of biodiversity (see also Ramutsindela, 2004; Whande, 2007). As a result, land use conflicts observed along the Madimbo corridor not only reflect the local interests but broader issues of values and moral issues over biodiversity, its conservation and use. These conflicts are playing out through an increased politicisation of the moral imperatives for biodiversity conservation (through the actions of various conservation NGOs and their local supporters – see Chapter Five, pp. 98) as well as the need for restoration of land and resource rights and the sustenance of land based livelihoods.

The conflicts over land uses also highlight the disjuncture between the pace of policy-making and practical efforts and processes, such as consultation of local people and an analysis of livelihood strategies, to understand local conditions that need to be addressed through such policies. I find that policies that are developed without active local involvement often lead to conflicts during implementation and can result in livelihood insecurity at a local level such as the Madimbo corridor. By the relaxation of geo-political boundaries and harmonisation of conservation policies among parties to the GLTP (Governments of Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 2002), transboundary approaches in theory present an opportunity to resolve fragmented administrative and management

problems over biological resources. They provide a vehicle for recognising the ecosystem border regions along geo-political boundaries. As a means of redefining boundaries, TFCAs present a number of challenges. Firstly, the nation-state remains the strongest unit of political and administrative organisation, despite the conceptual and practical attempts at regional integration and decentralisation of power and authority. As a result, the protection of border regions as zones that mark transition of political systems is still of importance to nation states, in particular where there are economic disparities such as between South Africa, on the one hand, and Mozambique and Zimbabwe, on the other hand. Secondly, the preferred economic activity to drive TFCAs, tourism, is not equally accessed among the signatory countries and, hence, the flow of benefits among the parties is skewed. Additionally, diverse local livelihood strategies at a local level mean that conservation driven tourism as the most viable land use invariably results in conflicts. Thirdly, the implementation plans are determined by political expediency, such as cabinet ministers wanting to be identified with a legacy, rather than the conditions at a local level. Fourthly, local level support for TFCAs remains questionable raising questions about success of the initiatives.

Solutions to biodiversity conservation, regional economic integration and security proposed by TFCAs mirror the perspectives of actors with the greatest influence (see Chapter Five, pp. 98). For instance, I have shown that the process of TFCA policy-making has been exclusionary of local people and that actors with resources and access to influential politicians have a weighted impact on the evolution of policy. Similarly, Hughes (2002) argues that TFCAs are resulting in increased local controls while facilitating easier movement across boundaries for richer actors such as tourists. The marginalisation of local people is partly a reflection of their exclusion from policy-making processes (see Chapter Five, pp. 98). Local residents along the Madimbo corridor have little input into the evolution of policies and hence little influence on solutions to natural resources management problems, even though they are most directly affected. Larsen *et al* (2005) find that policies formulated without the involvement of resource users did not effectively address conservation and sustainable use of non-timber forest products in Nepal. Despite knowing better, this exclusion is still a widespread occurrence and “policy options have not generally been defined by local users through participatory political means” (Brown, 1998: 82). Along the Madimbo corridor, the result of the exclusion of local residents from policy processes is a consolidation of various forms of boundaries, resulting in new forms of state sanctioned local controls.

TFCAs, contrary to popular imagination, are resulting in a consolidation of geo-political borders and increased controls over local human movement. This is happening through states invoking sovereignty in cases where free human movement within TFCAs might be a possibility (Mombeshora, 2005; Duffy, 1997; Van Ameron, 2002), meaning controls within border regions remain intact or are even tightened. The continued presence of the SANDF along the Madimbo corridor and increased border patrols are evident of the continued state control over local human movement. Besides the military presence, veterinary disease controls are also leading to controls over transboundary human movement. The result, contrary to the breakdown of boundaries, is a consolidation of boundaries and increased conflicts between local actors, on the one hand, and the state and conservation NGOs, on the other hand. However, while a consolidation of boundaries is evident for local residents along the Madimbo corridor, the removal of fences within PAs facilitates free movement of tourists and wildlife.

Thus, we have seen media orchestrated ‘removal of fences’ within these PAs but the same has not happened within social, cultural and livelihood borders where fences continue to be used to regulate local people's movement. The emphasis on PAs has also meant that local people and PAs continue to be separate entities. As a result, the breaking down of fences within PAs now facilitates the free movement of wildlife while the opening of border control posts within PAs, such as at Giryondo between Mozambique and South Africa, facilitates easier movement of tourists across geo-political boundaries.

9.2.3 Certain windows remain closed – TFCAs and state control

In relation to state control, I find that TFCAs present new avenues for state control along geo-political boundaries. This is happening through a number of strategies and approaches: a). use of formal laws to restrict access to land and natural resources, and hence a subjection of local people to state control processes; b). deploying specialist knowledge in enhancing state control and hence subject formation through conditioning local actors' behaviours according to scientific predictions; c). by remaining ambivalent about resolving the tensions arising from the fact that the state is not a monolithic unit and is plagued by policy differences and approaches to natural resources management.

I show that the settlement of settler commercial farmers, in the then Transvaal, paved the way for state control along the Madimbo corridor (see Chapter Four, pp. 72). State control was achieved by alienating Africans from their land. Disenfranchisement was a useful strategy for consolidating state control and for creating cheap labour reserves to work on the emerging mines and commercial farms (Carruthers, 1995). Thus, I show the deployment of farmers along the western edge of the Madimbo corridor at the turn into the 20th century as a precursor to a more systematic control of local processes by the state.

I have discussed the exclusionary effects of state interventions, over time, on local livelihood strategies, freedom of movement and social cohesion. My analysis of the different initiatives implemented by the state indicates that most of them served objectives of control or subjecting local people to state demands. As observed elsewhere (Singh and Van Houtum, 2002), the state relied on specialist knowledge, such as veterinary and conservation sciences, to achieve these objectives of control. These initiatives also allowed the state to establish authority in politically and economically peripheral areas such as remote boundary regions.

In post-apartheid South Africa, various processes and legislations have been put into place to redress the history of exclusion and displacement (Kepe *et al*, 2005). Rather than only a technical approach to redress historical injustices, this shift reflects the predominant storyline in post-apartheid South Africa in relation to issues of land and natural resources: that the state is now on the side of the people and will restore land and natural resource rights. Experiences gained from the Madimbo corridor, however, indicate that this storyline is inadequately addressed, especially because the state is not and does not act as a monolithic unit, a situation Bryant (1998: 82) observes as “the diversity of bureaucratic interests that the state often encompasses”. The state is characterised by contradictions and competing interests and different state institutions such as those responsible for conservation, land and agriculture all assert their authority in the realm of historical injustices, of development, and of the conservation of globally significant biological diversity. Since there is no monolithic state redressing historical injustices in relation to land and natural resources, there is no monolithic state to achieve global targets for conservation either. Myers (1999: 103) finds in Zanzibar that there is no monolithic state apparatus controlling mining or the collection of construction sand and stones. Instead, he notes the “state ought

to be seen as a web of fractitious institutions which encapsulate many of the tensions of the society as a whole.” Similarly, dynamics within the GLTFCA indicate that the state does not act with one voice, especially on issues of conservation and land rights. TFCAs are conceptualised as contributing to the increased movement of goods, services and people across geo-political boundaries. In reality, however, their implementation is stalled around issues of national security. Due to the presence of the military along the Madimbo corridor, it appears that the state is aiming at restoration of land and resource rights (through the land claims process) but also delays the transfer of these rights (because of military concerns for national security and conservation interests to expand PAs).

To the extent that the state comprises its own various components, such as government agencies (Carlsson and Berkes, 2005), its bureaucratic system is defined by sectoral interests, some of which are complementary, others conflictual. An analysis of the multiple state agencies operating along the Madimbo corridor, of their interests as well as interactions, indicates that the state maintains control over local people, land and natural resources by sending conflicting messages. This can be seen in the negotiation process for the Madimbo corridor land claim led by the Vhembe CPA, which continues to face problems partly as a result of a ministerial agreement between the Ministers of Defence and Land Affairs that pre-empted the negotiation process for the land claim (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5, pp. 91). Instead of completing an unproblematic land restitution process, the agreement resulted in the continued stay of the military, continued negotiations on the nature of this stay and continued restrictions on local people’s movement. This raises questions about the state’s negotiation role in the land claim. Clearly, the state is not a neutral arbiter or judge but rather a negotiator trying to promote its own (often internally conflicting) interests.

State control is also aided by various social constructs. One of the constructs is around the idea of ‘community.’ Three land claims (each supposedly by a clearly defined ‘community’) for different parts of the Madimbo corridor were initially lodged in the mid-1990s; the Makuleke, the Gumbu and the Mutele claims. The Makuleke community land claim was settled separately, while the Gumbu and Mutele claims were amalgamated to avoid multiple claims to the same pieces of land. Given the spatial spread of the villages along the Madimbo corridor and the divisions among the leadership on land uses, the label Gumbu-Mutele is a misnomer. Thus, while the land claim for the combined Gumbu-Mutele is

being processed, deep divisions over leadership and land use options result in a less united front in negotiations for land restitution. This serves the state as negotiation with multiple local groups delays the settlement of the claim.

9.3 Framing political ecology of external interventions: theoretical considerations

This study draws from a variety of conceptual considerations to evaluate the ways in which local resource dependent actors frame their experiences with external interventions. I use the work of Apthorpe (1996) on framing as inclusion or exclusion of certain actors, Agrawal (2005) on environmental subject formation, Snow and Benford (1988) on framing as both a process and an outcome to evaluate historical, livelihood and policy dynamics over external interventions along the Madimbo corridor.

Different understandings of framing either refer to it as a process (Snow and Benford, 1988) or as a template through which reality is understood (Apthorpe, 1996; Hajer, 1995). The contestations over scientific approaches -specifically through conservation, veterinary science and militarised security along the Madimbo corridor- highlight the complexity of framing. It is both a process and a template. The process is highlighted by local responses to imposition of templates (through targets for biodiversity conservation, control of veterinary diseases), further questioning the rigidity implied in framing as a template. Framing, as a result, is a result of a dialectical relation between frames as fixed templates and as a process. The dialectical nature of framing can also be extended to specialist knowledge as a basis for policy evolution and intervention.

I have located this analysis within a political ecology framework, evaluating the dynamics over land and natural resources among a variety of actors from the local level to the national, regional and global. Drawing from insights of framing as both process and an outcome provide the foundation upon which I analyse the local discursive ways of engaging with prominent ideas and proponents of specific approaches to biodiversity conservation. By linking micro to meso and macro issues of biodiversity conservation, TFCAs offer a vehicle for the evaluation of actions and interactions of local resource

dependent actors, 'street level' and transnational technical bureaucrats. I seek to understand the ways in which environmental and political forces interact to shape access to and use of land and natural resources and also explore the current management approaches.

Various scholars have analysed social and environmental change using the framework of political ecology (Blaikie and Brookfield, 1987; Bryant and Bailey, 1997; Escobar, 1999). By evaluating the relationships between science, power and politics (Escobar, 1996; Bryant and Bailey, 1997; Peet and Watts, 1996), questions of the dominance of certain ideas in biodiversity conservation have been raised. These questions, however, do not address the issues of why certain actors remain on the periphery of policy and decision making and hence offers limited space to solve resource management problems. Through an analysis of biodiversity conservation policy processes and approaches, both in historical terms and on-going, this study discusses subjection and subject formation processes couched in the politics of state consolidation, natural resource control and the application of knowledge. This has implications for contemporary efforts to balance localised demands for land and resource rights and conservation as a global public good as well as on local framing of experiences with external interventions. My contribution through this study is that dynamics among a variety of actors should necessarily include dynamics in policy-making as well as physical exclusion from certain environments that result from policy perspectives.

9.4 Conclusion: rethinking external interventions

This study has focussed on understanding local people's framing of external interventions. Frames are both a process and a template. As a template, they are a window through which sense is made of phenomena. The metaphor of frames as windows captures the realities of local residents in relation to biodiversity conservation. On one hand, a window gives the impression of being part of the process but on another looking through a window leaves one on the periphery, an onlooker. Certainly, in relation to biodiversity conservation along the Madimbo corridor, local people have often been witnesses, delegated to look through windows where they could neither hear nor understand the voices articulating the need for conservation. At the same time, they have felt the impacts most profoundly in terms of physical exclusion and diminishing livelihood sources. While on paper proposing inclusion, TFCAs are in fact exclusionary of local people who are unable to meaningfully contribute to conservation while sustaining their land and resource based livelihoods. The exclusion of local people is achieved through

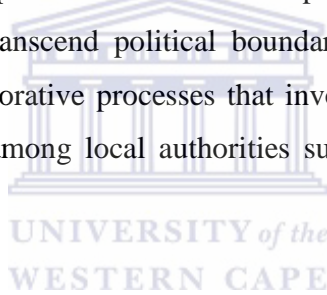
policy processes that only involve transnational technical bureaucrats but not local resource dependent actors. This is inherently linked to policy evolution based on specialist knowledge, a trend which continues with the evolution of TFCAs.

Based on my research, I find the need to reconceptualise TFCAs if states such as South Africa are to meet their international obligations for biodiversity conservation as well as their local social responsibilities. I offer the following on rethinking external interventions:

- External interventions are often carried out as if local actors represent a homogeneous entity, yet individuals and households possess various resources, assets and engage in different processes in their day-to-day activities to make a living. External interventions can further local socio-economic differentiation. As a result, such interventions are locally viewed in a variety of ways. Notable differences exist between those who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods and those in positions of authority, who are more likely to benefit from outside interventions through appropriately positioning themselves. In light of these differences, it is important that external interventions are structured in a way that enhances and strengthens the position of the poorest members in a local setting.
- External interventions that replicate historical approaches and processes are assessed locally based on local historical experiences. For instance, the exclusion of local people through conservation ideas conceptualised during colonialism still influence the views of local residents along the Madimbo corridor negatively. The continuities of this approach can be traced in the evolution of policies. Policy evolution is largely exclusionary of local needs and aspirations. As a result, the policy interventions often still mirror the imposition of ideas of the past that further perpetuate the exclusion of local people. Rethinking conservation interventions, as a result, has to be inclusive of local inputs, not only at the implementation phase but during the entire process of policy development and implementation. This process requires that external interventions are not presented as rigid templates but as part of a more fluid and flexible process. Where historical precedents exist, such precedents will influence local understandings of the changes.

- It is now common in practice to claim that external interventions stand to generate benefits for local resource dependent people. Where prospects for benefits from external interventions exist, they need to be emphasised through dialogue and communication. Most importantly, they need to be actualised in visible results for local improvement.
- Having initially included representatives from local communities in the planning of the GLTFC, this was discontinued on the pretext that national governments were representative of all citizens. The implication of this, however, is that local people, such as those along the Madimbo corridor, have little say in the planning of the GLTFCA, an initiative that will have profound effect on their livelihoods and freedom of movement. One implication of this, already playing itself out along the Madimbo corridor, is that land uses proposed by conservation NGOs do not mirror the needs and aspirations (and even the contested discussions on land use) of local actors. The implication of this for the GLTTFCA is that in all likelihood, assumptions that land use in the area can be primarily conservation based within a 100 000km² land unit have to be revised. Authorities may be forced by local resistance to interrogate more options of achieving sustainable goals while accommodating a variety of land use possibilities.
- The current conceptualisation of security within TFCAs is still focused at national level, resorting to military enforcement of border controls. Proponents of TFCAs have not embraced new understandings of security in terms of human security, including the individuals' freedom from want and fear, providing a voice to the politically marginalised. Improved quality of life has to be taken into consideration in the further planning of GLTFCA. In particular, the consideration of livelihood realities and of local people's tenure rights over land and natural resources within the GLTFCA can contribute towards the realisation of a genuine human security in the area.
- As well as focusing on national level security concerns, TFCAs have a greater emphasis on environmental security, aiming to contribute towards conservation of environments. However, greater focus on environmental security alone has sidelined human security issues within the GLTFCA, with the result that local people continue to be excluded from natural resources and are threatened with livelihood insecurity as a result of conservation approaches.

- External interventions that are based on technical knowledge potentially result in limited understanding of local solutions to environmental problems. For instance, the continued premise of managing diseases between wildlife and livestock continues to be imposed on, and exclusionary of local actors. As a result, constructive local engagement of in disease co-management efforts remains elusive, with the implication that polarisation between local actors and technical experts increases.
- Local residents along geo-political boundaries are usually regarded as politically and economically marginalised. However, a contradiction to this marginalisation is that these areas have always been central to the national sovereignty and definition of where territorial claims started and ended. They are therefore highly critical to the nation-state. Along the Madimbo corridor I find that local residents continue to be marginalised politically and economically while the state increases patrols for controlling human movement across geo-political boundaries. In part this is a reflection of the failure of TFCAs to not only transcend political boundaries for conservation purposes but to suggest ‘nested’ collaborative processes that involve cross border agreements between the states as well as among local authorities such as traditional leadership and local government structures.



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www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=&fArticleId=3812797, last accessed 15 July 2008)

Great Limpopo Birding Routes, www.limpopobirding.com, website accessed on 7 September 2007

SABC News http://www.sabcnews.com/africa/southern_africa/0,2172,152730,00.html), website accessed 17 July 2007

<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1996/j170w881.htm> website accessed 19 January 2008

Phala Phala FM

Appendix 1: List of people interviewed, meetings attended and presentations made

Rest Kanju, Former Manager, Limpopo Environment 24 September 2004 in Pretoria
Fulufhelo Simerone, Limpopo Parks and Tourism Board 25 September in Polokwane

Marubini Mugivhi, Manager, Vhembe District Environmental Affairs 26 September 2004 in Makhado

Lufuno Reginald Kone, Manager, Tshikondeni Mine 27 September 2004 at Tshikondeni Mine

Headman Nelson Siphuga, Bennde Mutale headman, 28 September 2004 at HaMutele
Chief Mutele, Chief, Mutele Traditional Council, 28 September 2004 at HaMutele

William Mathegu interview, Makhuya Park Manager, 1 October 2004 at Makhuya Park

Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale Traditional Council Member, 2 October 2004 Bennde Mutale

Eric Ramatsea, Provincial Protected Areas Manager, 2 October 2004 in Thohoyandou

Headman Nelson Siphuga, Headman, Bennde Mutale Village, 2 October 2004

Albert Madamalala, Bennde Mutale Village Resident, 14 April 2005

Charles Munzhelele, Resident Bennde Mutale village, 14 April 2005

McDonald Nengovhela, Shop owner, Bennde Mutale village, 16 April 2005

Vinolia Hlekane, Bennde Mutale village resident, 16 April 2005

Norman Takadzani, Resident, Bennde Mutale village, 17 April 2005

Charles Munzhelele and Albert Madamalala, Bennde Mutale village residents, 17 April 2005

Richard Munzhelele, Resident, Bennde Mutale Village, 17 April 2005

Esnathi Paswana, Resident, Bennde Mutale Village, 18 April 2005

Violet Paswana, Bennde Mutale village resident, 18 April 2005

Marcus Murugana, Bennde Mutale village resident, 18 April 2005

Muhlavha Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village resident, 19 April 2005

Noria Manganyi, Bennde Mutale village resident (Sangoma or Diviner), 19 April 2005 (with Josias Manganyi)

Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale village resident, 19 April 2005

Chief Mutele, Chief, Mutele Traditional Council, 20 April 2005

Edson Mutele, Member of the Makhuya Forum and Chair of the Mutele Traditional Council, 20 April 2005

William Mathegu interview Makhuya Park Manager, 20 April 2005

Elekenyani Munzhelele, Duluthulu village resident, 20 April 2005

AJ Tshikombeni, Former Councillor, ward 9 Former Ward 9 Councillor 21 April 2005

Josephina Munyai, Bennde Mutale village resident, 21 April 2005

Headman Tshikuyu, Tshikuyu Village headman, 21 April 2005 at Masisi Shopping Centre

Marubhini Mughivhi, Manager: Environmental Affairs, 22 April 2005 in Makhado

Francis Mbulungeni, Manager, Traditional Affairs, 22 April 2005 in Thohoyandou

Group discussion - Agnes Tshidino, Grace Maphukumele, Charles Munzhelele, Eric Guvhane's wife (Tshidino (CPA Committee member), others residents of Bennde Mutale village), 22 July 2005

Masindi Hlungwani, Bennde Mutale village resident, 22 July 2005

Charles Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village resident, 22 July 2005

Petros Maphukumele, Wilson Hlakane Baloyi and Masindi Hlungwani, Bennde Mutale village residents, 22 July 2005

Norman Takadzani, Nkotswi village resident (Originally from Zimbabwe), 22 July 2005

Wilson Hlekane, Bennde Mutale village resident, 23 July 2005

Group discussion - Eric Takadzani, assistant headman; Richard Munzhelele (chair of the CIVIC); Siphuga (headman); Frank Guvhane (member of the traditional council), Oriel Mulidzwi, Joseph Mmamali; Elvis Munzhelele; Thomas Sihluri; Bennde Mutale village residents, 23 July 2005

Group discussion - Thomas Maphukumele, Morris Baloyi, Josias Manganyi, Thomas Sihluri, Oscar Matshevhele, Norman Takadzani, Norman's two wives; Bennde Mutale village residents, 24 July 2005

Masindi Hlungwane, Bennde Mutale village resident, 24 July 2005

Glynn Taylor, Former Manager – Pafuri River Camp, 24 July 2005

Group discussion -Oriel Mulidzwi, Frank Guvhane, Peter Mudzanani, Nelson Siphuga, and Charles Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village resident, 26 July 2005

Godfrey Tshivhambu, Tshimangadzo Ndou, Bharanganani Baloyi, Charles Munzhelele, Sam Hlekani and Edward Siphuga, Cathrine Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village residents, 27 July 2005

Richard Hassler, Researcher, Cape Town, 28 September 2005

Prince Magwalivha, Bennde Mutale village, 4 October 2005

Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale village resident, 5 October 2005

Phineas Ngwenya (from Zimbabwe) and Jeremiah Mmamali, Bennde Mutale village, 5 October 2005

Doris Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village resident, 5 October 2005

Jeremiah Mmamali, Bennde Mutale village resident, 6 October 2005

Thomas Sihluri, Bennde Mutale village resident, 6 October 2005

Florence Tshivhambu Mthavheni, Bennde Mutale member of the traditional council, 6 October 2005

Oriel Mulidzwi, Bennde Mutale, 7 October 2005

Thomas Takadzani, Bennde Mutale, 7 October 2005

Nyamasindi Tshivhanda, Bennde Mutale, 7 October 2005

Eric Mudzanani, Bennde Mutale, 8 October 2005

Elina Paswana, Bennde Mutale, 8 October 2005

Petrus Maphukumele, Bennde Mutale, 8 October 2005

Naumuni Tshivhambu, Bennde Mutale, 9 October 2005

Samson Baloyi, Bennde Mutale, 9 October 2005

Bennde Mutale village meeting, Residents of Bennde Mutale village, 9 October 2005

Elisa Makamu, Bennde Mutale, 9 October 2005

Mwamaholisi, Bennde Mutale village resident, 10 October 2005

Albert Madamalala, Bennde Mutale village resident, 10 October 2005

Ratshibvumo Kathutshelo, Bennde Mutale, 10 October 2005

Emily Nengudza, Bennde Mutale, 10 October 2005

Esnathi Paswana, Bennde Mutale, 11 October 2005

Eric Takalani, Bennde Mutale, 13 October 2005

Muhlavha Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale, 14 October 2005
Headman Siphuga, Bennde Mutale village headman, 16 October 2005
Bennde Mutale village meetings, 16 October 2005
Ndwambi, Bennde Mutale Village, 16 October 2005
Mpho Takalani, Bennde Mutale member of Makuya Forum, 16 October 2005
Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Bennde Mutale, 17 October 2005
Noria Manganyi, Bennde Mutale, 17 October 2005
Endani Guvhane, Tshikuyu village resident, 17 October 2005
Petrus Maphukumele, Bennde Mutale, 17 October 2005
Nelson Masikhwa, Tshenzhelani village resident and Chair of Vhembe CPA, October 2005
Elekenyani Munzhelele, Duluthulu village resident and member of the Mutele Traditional Council and Makuya Forum, Duluthulu village and member of the Makhuya Forum, 18 October 2005
Chief Mutele, Chief of the Mutele people, Masisi, 19 October 2005
Wilson Mawela Matakanya, Tshikuyu village resident and member of the Vhembe CPA, 20 October 2005
Frank Guvhane, Edward Siphuga, Charles Munzhelele and Chris Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village residents, 20 October 2005
William Mathegu, Manager of the Makhuya Park, 20 October 2005
Lamson Maluleke, Makuleke Kruger Contractual Park Manager, Makuleke, 22 October 2005
Marubhini Mughivhi, Environment Manager, Vhembe District, 23 October 2005
Abram Matsila, Limpopo Parks and Tourism, Former Manager at Makhuya Park, Polokwane, 24 October 2005 (Polokwane)
Giuseppe Daconto, Former Programme Director, CESVI Harare, 11 November 2005
IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa, Regional workshop on protected areas and indigenous peoples, 11 November 2005
Andre, Advisor in the President's office, Cape Town, 1 January 2006
Elisa Manganyi, Bennde Mutale village resident, 8 January 2006
Sylvia Semani Paswana, Bennde Mutale village resident, 9 January 2006
Melissa de Cock, GLTFCA Manager, Peace Parks Foundation, Cape Town, 31 January 2006
Melissa de Cock, GLTFCA Manager, Peace Parks Foundation, Peace Parks Foundation, Stellenbosch, 8 February 2006
Helen Suich, Former Programme Officer, Conservation International, Cape Town, 9 February 2006
Leo Braack, Director, Transfrontier Conservation, Conservation International, 10 February 2006
Henrique Massango, Project Implementation Unit, Limpopo National Park, Maputo. Mozambique, 17 February 2006
Jorge Ferrao, Programme Coordinator, GLTFCA, Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique, 17 February 2006
Gilberto Vicente, Manager, Project Implementation Unit, Limpopo National Park, Maputo, Mozambique, 18 February 2006
Ebenzario Chonguica, Country Director, World Conservation Union Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique, 18 February 2006
Simon Norfolk, Land Rights and Natural Resources Management Researcher, Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique, 19 February 2006
Estevao Filimao, Ministry of Agriculture official, Maputo, 19 February 2006
Germano Dimande, Project Implementation Unit, Limpopo National Park, Maputo, 20 February 2006

Ebenzario Chonguica, Lusophone Africa Programme Coordinator, IUCN Mozambique, Maputo, 20 February 2006

Carsten Sandhof, Country Representative, KFW Maputo, 21 February 2006

Gilberto Vicente, Manager, Project Implementation Unit, Limpopo National Park, Maputo, 21 February 2006

Celia Enos, Ministry of Agriculture, Mozambique, Maputo, 21 February 2006

Harry van der Linde, African Wildlife Technical Advisor, White River, White River, 22 February 2006

James Ramsay, Programme Director, Wilderness, Johannesburg, 2 March 2006

Prof. David Bunn, Wits University Professor, Johannesburg, 2 March 2006

Kule Chitepo, Director, Resource Africa, Johannesburg, 3 March 2006

Ntabiseng Motete, DEAT, GLTFCA Coordinator, Pretoria, 6 March 2006

Michael Eustasis, Director, African Parks Foundation Johannesburg, 7 March 2006

Giuseppe Daconto, Programme Director, CESVI Harare, Malelane, South Africa, 10 March 2006

Danie Pienaar (GLTFCA JMB), Roy Bengis (GLTFCA JMB) and Mike Murphree (University of KwaZulu Natal) Members of the AHEAD-GLTFCA research network and GLTFCA JMB, Malelane, South Africa, 10 March 2006

Glynn Taylor, Former Manager, Pafuri River Camp, Pafuri River Camp, 12 March 2006

Charles Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 13 March 2006

Muhlavha Munzhele, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 13 March 2006

Edward Siphuga, Charles Munzhelele and Cathrine Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village residents and leaders of the tourism youth project, Bennde Mutale 14 March 2006

Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale village resident and member of traditional council, Bennde Mutale 14 March 2006

Glynn Taylor and Frank Guvhane, Former Manager, Pafuri River Camp and Bennde Mutale village resident, Pafuri River Camp, 14 March 2006

Naumuni Tshivhambu, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 15 March 2006

Ratshibvumo Katutshelo, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 15 March 2006

Jack Greef, Senior Ranger, Kruger/Makuleke Contractual Park, Pafuri Gate, 17 March 2006

John Levhisi, Tshikuyu village resident, Tshikuyu, 19 March 2006

David Goette, Manager, The Outpost The Outpost, Makuleke/Kruger CNP, 14 April 2006

Ronald Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 16 April 2006

Tshimangadzo Munzhelele, Charles Munzhelele, Edward Siphuga, Ronald Munzhelele and Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale village residents and members of the youth tourism project, Bennde Mutale, 18 March 2006

Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 20 March 2006

Sergeant Makgofane, Manager, Madimbo Military Base, Madimbo Military Base, 20 March 2006

Esnathi Paswana, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 20 March 2006

Eric Takalani, Bennde Mutale village resident and assistant headman, Bennde Mutale, 20 March 2006

Jeremiah Mushemula, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 21 March 2006

Charles Munzhelele and Albert Madamalala, Bennde Mutale village residents, Mopane worm collection excursion along Madimbo corridor, 22 March 2006

MP Khuba Tshikuyu village resident Mabiligwe/Tshikuyu, 23 March 2006

Sophie Tshiwandalani, Tshikuyu village resident and Secretary for the Vhembe CPA, Tshikuyu, 23 March 2006

Jeff and Colleen, Managers – Pafuri Camp Pafuri Camp, 24 March 2006

Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Bennde Mutale village resident Bennde Mutale, 24 March 2006

Glynn Taylor, Former Manager Pafuri River Camp, Pafuri River Camp, 24 March 2006

Headman Siphuga, Bennde Mutale village headman, Bennde Mutale, 25 March 2006

Joyce Endani, Frank Guvhane, Nelson Siphuga, Endani Guvhane, Charles Munzhelele, Peter Mudzanani, Bennde Mutale and Tshikuyu village residents, Tshikuyu village, 25 March 2006

Professor Ralushai, Retired History Professor at the University of Venda, Thohoyandou, 26 March 2006

Captain Malelo, SAPS Vhembe District Spokesperson, Thohoyandou, 27 March 2006

Florence Tshivhambu, Bennde Mutale Village resident ad member of the traditional council, Bennde Mutale, 28 March 2006

Jeremiah Mmamali, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 28 March 2006

Pastor Budeli, Dovho village resident and paster, Dovho village, 29 March 2006

Jerry Chauke, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 30 March 2006

Mavhungo, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 30 March 2006

Bennde Mutale village meeting, Bennde Mutale residents, Bennde Mutale, 2 April 2006

Elina Paswana, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 3 April 2006

Mr. Mutshembele, Mutale Municipality Environmental Affairs Manager, Tshilamba, 4 April 2006

Dzivhu Mashila, IDP Manager, Mutale Municipality, Tshilamba, 4 April 2006

Mr. Mahlale, Land Care Manager, Department of Agriculture, Mutale Municipality, Tshilamba, 4 April 2006

Lamson Maluleke, Makuleke/Kruger CNP Joint Management Board Manager, Pafuri Gate, 8 April 2006

Frank Guvhane, Bennde Mutale village resident and member of the traditional council and Vhembe CPA, Bennde Mutale, 18 April 2006

Happy Maluleke and Joyce Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village residents, Bennde Mutale, 18 April 2006

Mr. Mamidza, Manager, Traditional Affairs in the Premier's Office, Thohoyandou, 19 April 2006

Captain Malelo, Vhembe District Police Spokesman, Thohoyandou, 19 April 2006

Charles Munzhelele and Albert Madamalala, Bennde Mutale village residents, Madimbo corridor, 20 April 2006

Colbert Nephawe, Madavhila School Headmaster, Bennde Mutale village, Bennde Mutale village, 20 April 2006

SANDF, Limpopo Parks, Vhembe CPA, Local Chiefs, Department of Public Works, Residents along Madimbo corridor, Stakeholders meeting, Madimbo Military facility 20 April 2006

Charles Munzhelele and Peter Mudzanani Bennde Mutale village residents, Bennde Mutale village, 7 June 2006

Mr. Muchembele, Environment Manager, Mutale Municipality, Tshilamba, June 2006

Pastor Budeli, Dovho village resident and Pastor Dovho village, 10 June 2006

Bennde Mutale village meeting, Bennde Mutale village, 11 June 2006

William Mathegu, Manager, Makhuya Park, Makhuya Park, 11 June 2006

Eric Ramatsea, Limpopo Province Protected Areas Manager, Polokwane, 14 June 2006

Shonisani Mphaphuli, Director, Limpopo Province Protected Areas , Polokwane, 14 June 2006

Fannie Mutepfa, Regional Coordinator GLTFCA, Harare, 20 June 2006

Edson Chidziya, GLTFCA Zimbabwe Coordinator, Harare, 20 June 2006

Mr. Mutshembele, Environment Manager, Mutale Municipality, Tshilamba, 9 September 2006

MP Khuba, Tshikuyu/Mabiligwe village resident, Mabiligwe, 10 October 2006

Endani Guvhane, Tshikuyu Village resident, Tshikuyu, 11 October 2006

Tiennes vd Westheizen, Malale commercial farmer, Malale, 12 October 2006

Chief Mutele, Chief, Mutele people Masisi, 12 October 2006

Muhlavha Munzhelele, Bennde Mutale resident, Bennde Mutale, 12 October 2006

Headman Gumbu, Gumbu village headman, Malale, 12 October 2006

Mahwasane Muzweda, Gumbu village resident and Vice-Chair, Vhembe CPA, Old Madimbo site, 14 October 2006

Gumbu-Mutele CPA and local people from the villages along Madimbo corridor, Gumbu-Mutele land claim, Old Madimbo site, 14 October 2006

Bennde Mutale village report back workshop, Residents of Bennde Mutale village, Bennde Mutale village, 15 October 2006

Eric Ramatsea, Manager, Limpopo Protected Areas, Polokwane, 17 October 2006

Madimbo corridor general meeting, Madimbo Military base, 10 November 2006

Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Bennde Mutale Village resident, Bennde Mutale

Elisa Manganyi, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale (follow up interview by research assistant), 8 January 2007

Sylvia Semani Paswana, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale village (follow up interview by research assistant), 9 January 2007

Alphios Gakato Mashavha, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale village (follow up interview by research assistant), 9 January 2007

Nelson Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale village (follow up interview conducted by research assistant), 10 January 2007

Delly Mkhlanga, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale village (follow up interview conducted by research assistant), 11 January 2007

Alexys Symonds, Nicky Shongwe and Marcus Hofmeyer, South Africa National Parks officials Mozambique, 7 March 2007

Dr. Bartolomew Soto, Director, TFCA Unit Mozambique, Mozambique, 8 March 2007

Piet Theron, South Africa National Parks, TFCAs Manager, Mozambique, 10 March 2007

Chief Mutele, Chief, Mutele people, Masisi, 12 March 2007

Muhlavha Munzhelele, Jane Guvhane, Salina Takalani and Lettie Takalani, Bennde Mutale residents, Bennde Mutale, 13 March 2007

MF Rambuda, Home Affairs Official, Masisi, Masisi, 13 March 2007

Norman Takadzani, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 14 March 2007

Norman Takadzani, Thomas Maphukumele, Immanuel Sithole, Simon Sithole, Josias Manganyi, Caswell Siphuga, Charles Munzhelele and Peter Mudzanani, Bennde Mutale village residents, Bennde Mutale, 14 March 2007

Octovius Mudzanani, Phalaleni Munzhelele, Thilivhali Siphuga, Bennde Mutale residents, Bennde Mutale, 15 March 2007

Eric Takalani, Enos Guvhane, Norman Takadzani, Immanuel Guvhane, Mr. Masotsha, Dyson Maphiri, Charles Munzhelele, Peter Mudzanani, Mutshutshu Takadzani, Bennde Mutale residents and Makhuya Park rangers, Bennde Mutale, 16 March 2007

Major Davel, South Africa National Defense Force, Polokwane, 19 March 2007

Eric Ramatsea, Manager, Limpopo province protected areas, Polokwane, 19 March 2007

Edward Siphuga, Bennde Mutale village resident and leader of the youth tourism project, Bennde Mutale village, 3 June 2007

Mr Maradwa and Mr. Mugeru, Makhuya Park Rangers, Makuya Park, 7 June 2007
Grace Rasilingwana, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale, 11 June 2007
Ella Siphuga, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale village, 12 June 2007
Mr. Mathebula, Pafuri Gate, 17 June 2007
Norman Magomane, Security Officer, Makuleke/Kruger Park, Pafuri Gate, 17 June 2007
Eric Takalani, Bennde Mutale village assistant headman, Bennde Mutale village, 22 July 2007
Bennde Mutale Village meeting, Bennde Mutale residents, Bennde Mutale village, 22 July 2007
Morris Baloyi, Bennde Mutale village, 22 July 2007
Nelson Masikhwa, CPA Chairperson, Tshenzhelani Village, 22 July 2007
Chief Mutele, Ha-Mutele, 22 July 2007
Mr. Mmbengwa, Bennde Mutale village resident, Bennde Mutale Village (follow up interview conducted by research assistant), 20 January 2008

Presentations

Transboundary Protected Areas Research Initiative, Presentation April 2005 and September 2005. Skukuza, Kruger National Park.
University of Cape Town, Department of Social Anthropology, Presentation May 2006.
Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, Cape Town, Presentation June 2006. Cape Town South Africa.
AHEAD-GLTFCA, Presentation of research findings March 2007, Mozambique.
Centre for Applied Social Sciences Local Level Scenario Planning Programme, Field facilitation and presentation, July 2007. Tshipise, South Africa.
Heritage Governance and conservation project, University of Göteborg, presentation February 2008.



Appendix II: Field visits and time spent in the field

15-24 November 2004, Visits to Makhuya Park, Makhuya Village: reconnaissance trip, field site identification, discussions with local leadership and request for permission.

15-25 April 2005, Bennde Mutale Village, Mutele chieftainship: starting research activities, interviews with local leadership, identifying research assistants

15-25 July 2005, Bennde Mutale Village:

29 September – 30 October 2005, Bennde Mutale village, Madimbo corridor villages, CPA, Mutale chieftainship, Ward 9 Council, Thohoyandou South Africa: Livelihood interviews and observation

November 2005, Harare Zimbabwe: Cesvi livelihoods data, government officials, academic research institutes

26 February 2006 – 30 March 2006, Bennde Mutale village, Pretoria South Africa: Interviews, archival searches

June 2006, Harare Zimbabwe, Maputo Mozambique, Bennde Mutale village, Tshilamba South Africa: Interviews

October 2006, Bennde Mutale Village: report back workshop

March 2007, Maputo Mozambique, Bennde Mutale village, Pretoria South Africa: Workshop presentation, interviews

July 2007, Bennde Mutale and Tshipise: Workshop presentation, new research project facilitation

5-14 June 2008, Madimbo: research follow up

Appendix III: IUCN Protected Area Categories

Protected Area Management Categories

IUCN has defined a series of six protected area management categories, based on primary management objective. In summary, these are:

CATEGORY Ia:

Strict Nature Reserve: protected area managed mainly for science

Definition

Area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring.

CATEGORY Ib

Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

Definition

Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.

CATEGORY II

National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation

Definition

Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.

CATEGORY III

Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features

Definition

Area containing one, or more, specific natural or natural/cultural feature which is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.

CATEGORY IV

Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

Definition

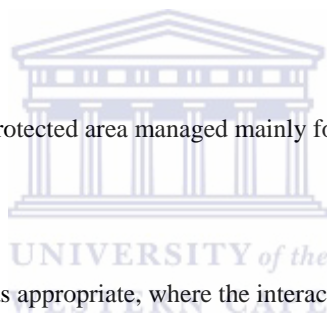
Area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.

CATEGORY V

Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation

Definition

Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.



CATEGORY VI

Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

Definition

Area containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.