



Chapter 10

Conclusions and Recommendations

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Introduction

The analysis presented in this report addressed the following key project questions in order to explore the various ways in which changing resource management practices (both practical and institutional arrangements) have implications for livelihoods:

1. What are the implications for livelihoods of changing NRM activities and options within conservancies?
2. Which critical factors affect these and how?
3. Who within communities is affected and in what ways?

WILD implemented a research programme that built substantially on a sustainable livelihoods perspective and framework. This offered an holistic approach to understanding the implications of CBNRM at the household level. Adopting a sustainable livelihoods perspective provided an opportunity to explore the implications of CBNRM for livelihoods in relation to a number of key factors. The research focused on understanding and quantifying the resources or assets available to people (material, social and physical); on the ways people use these in the pursuit of the various strategies they employ to meet livelihood security needs; on the factors of risk that make livelihoods insecure or vulnerable; and on what factors or criteria influence the activities, strategies and livelihood outcomes for people. Addressing these different components allowed the project to ‘unpack’ the key project questions and develop the analysis.

The findings and analysis presented in this report develop an understanding of the livelihood implications of CBNRM in a sequential manner. The first chapters provide an understanding of the context of the research in terms of its rationale and methods (Chapters 1 and 2). This is followed by a detailed discussion of CBNRM in terms of its origins and evolution; the policy and legislation that creates an enabling environment for CBNRM; and the various ways

in which implementation is organised through the institutional structures of NACSO. Here the discussion also provides an overview of the current achievements and challenges facing CBNRM and the conservancies (Chapters 3 and 4). Following these contextualising, but nevertheless important, chapters the report moves to the presentation of detailed livelihoods research from Caprivi and Kunene relating to existing livelihood resources, strategies and activities (Chapter 5). The discussion continues in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 and presents the findings of further research relating specifically to analysing the role of wildlife and tourism in terms of livelihoods (dealing with both benefits and costs). The final chapter of this report addresses institutional contexts and issues of governance at the conservancy level and the various ways in which these affect livelihoods, NRM decision-making and planning.

Throughout this report there are a number of cross-cutting themes that are addressed in different ways: the issue of the role and implications of policy and legislation for CBNRM and issues relating to improved participation, for example. In each chapter, conclusions and recommendations deal with the arena of policy and legislation as these are relevant to the discussion. Policy and legislation is dealt with as a subsection here in the conclusions.

The conclusions presented here are organised in the following manner. First, there is a short review of the overall impact of CBNRM in terms of achievements and challenges. Second, the conclusions present an analysis of key project findings in relation to CBNRM and implications for livelihoods, discussing in turn issues relating to existing livelihoods and the ways in which CBNRM currently provides benefits that have positive impacts on livelihoods; issues of livelihood diversification and livelihood security; and issues of differentiation (rich and poor people). Third, critical factors (both local and external) are discussed, including policy and legislation that affect both livelihoods and the successful implementation of CBNRM. The chapter concludes with a summary statement.



Overall Impact of the CBNRM Programme

Namibia's CBNRM programme originated in the context of wildlife conservation and the activities of a handful of NGO personnel, government staff and traditional leaders. It has evolved into a national programme that has the dual objectives of addressing both sustainable natural resource management and use, and socio-economic development. In the context of supporting rural development CBNRM also aims to contribute directly to social empowerment and capacity building in rural areas. CBNRM is now explicitly recognised by the Government as a legitimate strategy that can contribute to sustainable development.

At a number of levels CBNRM has achieved much. It has contributed to the protection and recovery of wildlife species, and improved wildlife management practices. It has promoted wildlife and tourism as land uses in communal areas and demonstrated the economic value of these resources to the national economy. It has enabled communities to generate substantial incomes from consumptive and non-consumptive tourism. It has contributed to the social empowerment of formerly disadvantaged rural peoples, and has enabled them to take more control over tourism and development activities in their areas. CBNRM also actively supported the Government who brought changes to policy and legislation in favour of restoring rights over wildlife to rural communities. CBNRM approaches have now entered the mainstream and outside of the wildlife and tourism sectors are being adopted and adapted as an implementation strategy in the forestry, fisheries and water sectors.

CBNRM has made an important contribution to the increase in the numbers of wildlife species found in communal areas, these include the desert-dwelling black rhino and elephant. Through the improved monitoring and management of wildlife, the density of wildlife found in communal areas now contributes to enhancing the tourism product. The numbers of huntable game available for conservancies to utilise (through community harvesting, sales to trophy hunters and through live sales) have also increased. Community-based management, through the conservancies is now being applied to over a quarter of all communal land in Namibia.

Incomes generated through tourism (both consumptive and non-consumptive) for conservancies have been significant. In 2003, it was estimated that approximately N\$14.5 million was generated by the conservancies. Approximately half of this income was earned by individual households in the form of wages from employment in the tourism sector. In a number of cases the collective revenues are being used for conservancy running costs and four conservancies are

currently operating with little or no financial support from NACSO. In addition, six conservancies have formally distributed financial benefits to their members.

The programme is supported by enabling policy and legislation, which gives communal area residents conditional rights to the utilisation of wildlife. That rights are now legislatively being given over to communities is seen by many as the single most important achievement of the CBNRM programme, although there are still policy constraints to conservancies reaching their full potential economically and institutionally. The issue of rights and empowerment is particularly significant when considered in the light of the disenfranchisement and disempowerment that accompanied the colonial and apartheid eras prior to Independence in 1990.

The programme has established institutional structures (conservancies), which offer strong fora for development decision-making and action. Significant human capital (capacity) has been built within these institutions in the areas of NRM (especially for CCGs, Community Rangers and Community Resource Monitors); and planning and financial management (for conservancy committee staff). Institutional development and the establishment of conservancies makes a valuable contribution to conservation and development. The interest in conservancy formation by communal area residents is shown by the growth in the number of registered conservancies since the passing of legislation in 1996 and the number of emerging conservancies.

In recent years, CBNRM in the wildlife sector has increasingly faced a number of challenges, not least of which is the exponential growth of registered conservancies. The logistical challenge of providing support to the huge number of communities actively involved at one stage or another in the development of conservancies exceeds the capacities of the Government and NGO organisations to provide the requisite support. Notwithstanding this formidable challenge there are other challenges relating to meeting the development objectives of CBNRM that are also pressing. The Government has expressed concerns over the extent to which CBNRM is able to support directly the livelihoods of rural communities and in so doing contribute directly to the national development targets of poverty reduction and rural economic growth. CBNRM has enjoyed the support of major international donors over the last 10 or more years, but the long-standing partnership with key donors (principally USAID and WWF) is now entering a new phase. Questions are being raised about the extent to which CBNRM has been able to address issues of governance and reduce poverty. Within the CBNRM programme some practitioners are also expressing concerns about the same issues, and at the community level people are concerned about the extent to which the benefits of CBNRM are being



widely distributed among the rural populations; in some cases the extent to which decision-making is dominated by local political and wealthy elites is also of concern. At the community level there are concerns relating to the effectiveness of CBNRM to deal with critical issues like HWC.

CBNRM and Livelihoods in Caprivi and Kunene

To contextualise the following discussion it is useful to provide a short summary of what we mean by livelihoods in reference to the two study areas. Livelihoods essentially involve combining different strategies and resources in a variety of ways. These are primarily based on livestock and cropping with natural resource use (including wildlife), a reliance on pensions and remittances (from kin) and access to informal employment. The combination of activities and options available to households varies between rich and poor. Livelihood activities and strategies are primarily aimed at meeting income and food security and are focused on these objectives at the household and inter-household level. There are few new opportunities available to people, and in many cases people live in a context of uncertainty and resource scarcity. Access to cash incomes is limited to a few sources (primarily crop and livestock sales, pensions, remittances and the sales of natural resources) and relatively few people have access to formal employment. Their livelihood activities, strategies and resources are vulnerable due to the vagaries of rainfall, to uncertainty about market access and pricing, and to the presence of wildlife (that damage crops, kill livestock and sometimes threaten life). For the majority, the contribution that wildlife and tourism makes is not seen as a priority or of central importance to livelihoods.

Current benefit streams and support for livelihoods

While there are opportunities for people to derive benefits from wildlife and tourism outside of the conservancy context, CBNRM provides a means to manage wildlife and tourism at a collective level in order for any benefits to accrue to the community and individuals. There are currently five primary ways in which people benefit from wildlife and tourism. These are:

- Employment through tourism and the conservancy
- Income generation through craft sales
- Access to meat from community harvesting
- The distribution of household cash dividends
- Addressing livelihood threats from living with wildlife and mitigating HWC

While these currently provide benefits, there are also a

number of constraints to maximising the effectiveness of these initiatives in terms of their significance to livelihoods. The following discussion addresses each of these activities in turn, providing a brief summary of the ways in which they contribute to livelihood security, a short discussion of the some of the constraints to improving their effectiveness, and a series of recommendations.

Tourism employment and income opportunities

Tourism in communal areas is currently benefiting the livelihoods of a limited number of people, by delivering income, employment, capacity building and career path development. While the number of people who can secure employment in this sector locally is small, the impact of these opportunities on their livelihoods is very positive. In Caprivi incomes from this form of employment are slightly less than average household incomes for the region; and in Kunene they are slightly higher than the average. Employment in lodges pays better than employment in campsites. While the income is particularly valued, working in tourism offers the advantage of being local employment. This is attractive since it provides a livelihood diversification opportunity. People can continue with other livelihood activities and supplement these by using family members or paying for their labour and other costs from wages. Local employment brings additional cash into the rural economy and other local businesses also benefit from employees' improved spending power. A further advantage is that it enables families to stay together and for local social support networks to remain intact. Many of the employees are women and this is known to have a beneficial impact on household livelihood security.

Of those who have accessed these forms of employment they tend to belong to the wealthier or more secure groups. In both Caprivi and Kunene, compared to regional averages, those employed tend to be better educated; have more livestock and larger crop areas; they are less reliant on pensions/remittances; and have a higher number of household members contributing to household incomes when compared to regional averages.

While there is potential to expand further tourism ventures in communal areas, there are a number of constraints to increase the opportunities available through tourism. Tourism ventures can bring site-specific costs to some members of local communities in terms of restricting access to resources resulting from changes in land use. Close consultation with community members in respect to land-use change is important. The planning, implementation and management of CBT enterprises has failed where there has not been good local governance (especially over ownership and distribution of benefits) and in some cases this has led to community conflict.



Local communities have few rights to control unregulated tourism in their areas and to negotiate for benefits from existing concessions. Conservancies have limited rights over wildlife and the *de jure* land rights remain in the hands of the central Government. This creates uncertainty in the negotiation process between communities and private enterprises, which increases the risks and reduces the returns, ultimately limiting opportunities for employment. Furthermore, the inability to exclude people from areas set aside for tourism reduces the communities' incentives for implementing and enforcing zonation plans necessary for tourism. Currently the tourism sector has a limited focus on PPT activities¹.

There appears to be insufficient guidance or support from the Government, other than broad legislation, with regard to tourism development. An example of this is the lack of clarity on the criteria and process for securing land (through the PTO system) for tourism developments within conservancy areas. There is a clear need for greater devolution of tourism rights and responsibilities to communities linked to rights of exclusion. The Communal Lands Act provides a potential mechanism for strengthening the rights of conservancies, through the communal lands boards. Conservancy and traditional authority representation on the lands boards offers one means by which better representation and therefore priority rights may be strengthened.

Tourism is also vulnerable to global economic conditions (e.g. war, terrorism, economic downturns) that affect the volume of international tourism. The recent political unrest within the Caprivi and Kavango Regions, due to the spill over of the Angolan war, and the instability in Zimbabwe caused an enormous drop in tourism numbers regionally as well as nationally. In Caprivi NGOs provided some financial support for the new community campsites in order to enable them to carry on operating and to protect investments over the period of unrest (2000 to mid-2002). This level of support was vital given the circumstances, but such subsidies would be unsustainable over the longer term.

Other income opportunities that result from tourism include the production of crafts. In the Caprivi Region, hundreds of women are involved in the production and sale of craft (principally baskets). The incomes they receive for these vary, and are rarely substantial. Despite this regular small injections of cash help to pay for household consumption items and food or to cover the costs of schooling and health care are an important addition to livelihood security. To expand this enterprise and income opportunity, marketing is central. To ensure the profitability of craft sales, appropriate markets within Namibia and the southern African region need to be identified.

Recommendations:

1. Clarity is needed on government policy that reflects community desires to benefit from existing and proposed concession and leasehold.
2. Establish an appropriate National Tourism Concession Framework to devolve rights and assist in the long-term financial viability of conservancies.
3. Government should adopt, develop and operationalise a PPT policy.
4. Good local governance/leadership must be encouraged to deal with tourism enterprises and address disputes. Guidelines relating to clarity over establishing ownership and the distribution of benefits arrangements should be produced to support leadership.
5. Conservancies need support to develop inclusive stakeholder integrated land-use planning processes and they should be encouraged to negotiate changes in land use.
6. Support entrepreneurial and enterprise skills development beyond tourism.

Community harvesting and meat distribution

The use of wildlife by conservancies through community hunts can provide a useful and immediate wildlife-related benefit for people. It has to date taken place in only four conservancies. Conservancy harvesting and meat distribution is limited to those conservancies where the ratio of available wildlife to the population of beneficiaries is high. The wildlife harvests provide a limited number of employment and training opportunities. Community hunts take place annually, and although the amount of meat distributed varies between conservancies, the amount received by households is still limited to a one-off annual distribution. The extent to which this can contribute to livelihood security more broadly is limited. Despite this, findings presented in this report indicate that the timing of the hunts and the species hunted are appropriate and desirable by local people. In addition creating a direct link between managing and benefiting from wildlife is important.

There are a number of practical and organisational issues associated with community hunts and meat distribution that affect the extent to which these hunts can provide meaningful benefits for conservancies. Key factors include, wildlife population densities and the number of households in a conservancy. Both these have an effect on the logistics of hunting and meat distribution. When distribution is well managed and is planned through a consultative process there is little discontent among the broader community. The opposite also holds true. It remains unclear the extent to which the receipt of harvested meat from the conservancies provides sufficient incentive to promote conservation behaviour and encourage people to stop hunting.

¹ PPT being an approach that focuses on opportunities to shift benefits to poor people e.g. providing secure tenure for the poor over tourism land or strengthening community organisations in the transparent management of any collective benefits.