



Policy can give support and guidance without becoming overly regulatory. It is, for example, not the place of the policy and legislation to address the circumstances of each individual conservancy, but it may be useful to use policy to provide certain guidelines. For example, these should be explicit recognition in policy that traditional authorities play an important role in land and resource-use decisions, but without prescribing precisely what these roles are.

A strength of the legislation is that it gives communities rights over wildlife, and to a lesser extent tourism. This rights-based approach strengthens the position of conservancies and their communities considerably. However, although the legislation gives some rights to communities, these rights are limited. Local communities can make very few of the crucial management decisions over wildlife and tourism themselves, without obtaining the permission of the Government. This has had the effect of giving the responsibility to conservancies, but no authority to act. This has been described in relation to the role of conservancies in the context of HWC, in terms of their control and management of land and water, and in terms of issues relating to the utilisation of wildlife and protecting and controlling tourism.

There are a number of different sectoral policies and associated legislation leading to a series of community-level institutions for managing specific resources (for example, water, wildlife and forestry). Currently there is a lack of synergy and integration between these institutions at local and national levels. While the government policy of decentralisation will address this in part, there is a need for better integration within the legislation.

Recommendations:

1. MET should retain a rights-based approach to community-based wildlife management. Communities should have the legally entrenched right to take management decisions.
2. MET to conduct a review of communal area conservancy policy in the light of experience gained over the last 10 years through working with communal area conservancies – explicitly focused on the relationship between intent and outcomes and the current appropriateness of freehold conservancies as a model.
3. The rights over wildlife and tourism should be vested in the community as defined by local criteria of inclusion and exclusion. The conservancy committee should only be the body elected to act on behalf of the community.
4. MET should increase the rights of conservancies over wildlife and tourism so that they can take the most important management decisions (how the resource should be used, how much should be used, who may

or may not use the resource, and who should benefit from use). Support conservancies to develop their own rules and policies. These rights should be extended to all species.

5. Review regulations to remove interpretation of community as ‘registered members’. The principles relating to equity (i.e. no one to be excluded on the basis of ethnicity, gender or religion) must be retained, but conservancies should be supported in setting their own policies relating to beneficiaries. Where appropriate keep the membership registration process, if conservancies so desire.
6. Sectoral legislation (wildlife, water and forestry) should be streamlined so that a legally constituted community-based organisation such as a trust, meeting minimum criteria, can gain rights over different resources.

Final Remarks

WILD research focused on household livelihoods and the various ways in which they are affected (both positively and negatively) by CBNRM. A key conclusion of this research is that people’s livelihoods are essentially focused on income and food security. While there are few opportunities to diversify sources of income and food within the context of people’s current practices, there are a variety of ways in which improvements can be made to their overall productivity. CBNRM contributes in a number of ways to livelihoods and over the longer term offers further opportunities to provide incomes, access to well managed natural resources, and a focal point for combining sustainable natural resource use and management with other aspects of economic and social development in communal areas. Yet there is a clear need to support conservancies to create better links between existing livelihood practices and collective gains made through CBNRM.

Many of the findings and conclusions presented in this report point towards the need for more livelihoods-focused support to conservancies. A number of options as to how CBNRM can contribute to this were also presented. It is important to recognise, however, that CBNRM is but one way in which Namibia is addressing its national development plans and objectives, and that in addressing some of the recommendations present in this report, there is also a need for CBNRM to create strong strategic alliances with other government departments involved in meeting the national goals. The CBNRM programme has been fortunate to receive strong donor support, and has not been confined within the structures of the Government, being largely driven and coordinated through NGOs. To this extent it has been possible for CBNRM to developed much faster than other sectors. This is positive, but at the same time creates a



situation in which it can become difficult to work with those sectors in Government who lack the resources and in some cases the capacities needed. In the context of future funding opportunities for CBNRM there is a real need to carefully consider the optimum strategic use of resources to build strong alliances and not simply to produce quick results.

If we briefly revisit a number of national development objectives (reducing income inequalities, increasing the protection of vulnerable groups, improving community participation in planning, promoting on and off-farm livelihood opportunities), it is clear that CBNRM can make a contribution. CBNRM cannot achieve these nor – the overall objective of poverty reduction – alone, however, and other sectors continue to make a valuable contribution. The context of national development planning and visioning provides an important platform for shared goals and objectives to be addressed. Each sector can make a contribution, but it is the sum of these and the ways in which they are linked and coordinated that is important in the long run. CBNRM needs not only work closely with other sectors, but other government and non-government sectors need to recognise and to accept the value and contribution that CBNRM is making. Specifically, opportunities for better collaboration relate to future policy developments and practical interventions to improve land-use planning, decentralisation, employment creation, agriculture and livestock development, and tourism development.

The sustainable livelihoods framework that was used by WILD did not simply focus on the analysis of livelihoods from an economic and income point of view, rather it took a holistic perspective and also explored social, institutional and policy contexts and the various ways these affect livelihoods. The framework proved a useful tool in bringing

together these different components at an analytical level. If we were to apply the same analytical framework to CBNRM at a programme level, it would reveal that, in terms of assets and resources (financial, material and social), and the development of policy and institutions, and in terms of addressing vulnerability, CBNRM has contributed much. At the household level the contribution is more nuanced, yet there are a number of positive and potentially positive developments that have taken place. A strength of the livelihoods perspective is that it can provide the opportunity to identify entry points for development interventions that are not confined to a single sector or area of support. Rather, as the recommendations provided here and in the main body of the report illustrate, it is necessary to simultaneously address institutional, policy and practical livelihood development.

In terms of the contribution that CBNRM has made to poverty reduction, again there are a number of positive and potentially positive developments. These have taken place at a number of levels and in a number of different ways. The contribution to poverty reduction from the perspective of household livelihood security is but one dimension. It is widely accepted among development practitioners that poverty reduction is also about addressing human capital (health, education, and social empowerment), institutional development, and policy. To this extent and at the level of the conservancies themselves, CBNRM has made an important contribution. As a programme that can claim to address social empowerment and capacity building, CBNRM has laid some important foundations. It will be important for the livelihoods of households and communities in communal areas for CBNRM decision makers to build on these foundations by taking up the recommendations presented in the report.