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# Emergent or illusory? Community wildlife management in Tanzania

Fred Nelson

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# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>2. From 'fences and fines' to new paradigms: The emergence of CWM in Tanzania</b> .....	3
<b>3. From paradigm to practice: Outcomes and impacts of Wildlife Management Areas</b> .....	9
<b>4. Enabling the emergence of CWM in Tanzania?</b> .....	13
<b>5. New models for CWM: From log frames to the long haul</b> .....	16
<b>6. Conclusion</b> .....	20
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	21

## Acronyms

AA	Authorised Associations
CBO	Community-based organisation
CBNRM	Community-based natural resource management
CWM	Community Wildlife Management
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GCA	Game Controlled Areas
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
KFWG	Kenya Forests Working Group
MBOMIPA	<i>Matumizi bora ya malihai Idodi na Pawaga</i> (Sustainable Use of Wildlife Resources in Idodi and Pawaga)
MNRT	Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
NACSO	Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations
NGO	Non governmental organisation
NRM	Natural resource management
PA	Protected area
TANAPA	Tanzania National Parks
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WMA	Wildlife Management Areas
WRI	World Resources Institute
WSRTF	Wildlife Sector Review Task Force
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

# 1. Introduction

As the country known around the world as the home of the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater, few natural resources are more closely associated with Tanzania than its wildlife populations. Tanzania has the second highest population of elephants in Africa, the largest national population of lions in Africa, and its migratory herds of several million wildebeest, gazelle, and zebra are unmatched. Wildlife underpins a tourism industry which has grown rapidly during the past two decades, from annual revenues of \$60 million in 1990 to nearly \$750 million in 2004, providing around 5-10% of the country's GDP (WTO, 2006).

Centralised state control over wildlife in Tanzania began gradually in the colonial era and was well-established by the beginning of the post-independence years (Neumann, 1998; Nelson *et al.*, forthcoming). Today, Tanzania has a large proportion of its land area – over 25% – set aside as exclusive protected areas in the form of National Parks, Game Reserves, and Forest Reserves (URT, 1998).

By the 1980s, Tanzania's wildlife management practices were under increasing pressure from a set of internal and external forces, largely linked with the broad economic and political changes occurring in the country at that time. This led to support for greater local community involvement in wildlife management as a means of pursuing both conservation and rural development goals. These emergent community wildlife management (CWM) strategies feature prominently in Tanzania's 1998 Wildlife Policy, which calls for devolving wildlife management to local communities (MNRT, 1998). The policy calls for the establishment of community-run Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), which are portions of community land set aside for conservation where locals are granted usufruct rights to wildlife and manage the areas accordingly. Broader development policies, such as Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, also support these reforms by calling for improved macro-micro linkages in the country's economy and greater local income-earning opportunities from tourism and wildlife management (URT, 2005).

As with natural resource management reform processes elsewhere in East Africa, Tanzanian CWM has become highly contested terrain, both physically and conceptually. The linear, centrally-led, devolutionary reform processes that were conceptualised by donor and NGO supporters of CWM in the mid-1990s have not materialised. Rather, multi-faceted political and institutional conflicts over the control of valuable land and wildlife resources characterise CWM in Tanzania today (Nelson *et al.*, forthcoming). Local jurisdictions for wildlife management have not emerged, and while a considerable amount of land has been set aside by rural villages for wildlife conservation through the work of various pilot initiatives, this has not resulted in an increase in local revenues from wildlife or new commercial opportunities.

The outcomes of over a decade of CWM in Tanzania reflect broader internal political struggles over land rights, resource governance, and participation in policy formula-



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tion, as well as challenges facing efforts to devolve natural resource management to local communities throughout the tropics (see Ribot, 2004). One implication of these outcomes is that the strategies and assumptions used by international aid donors, conservation and development NGOs, and local activists for promoting greater local control over valuable natural resources such as wildlife in Tanzania need to be rethought. CWM needs to be approached as part of a broader social process of building local rights and access to resources through institutional reforms, rather than as a project-based or technical assistance strategy with short time horizons. The paper concludes with some suggestions for how practitioners in Tanzania and elsewhere might foster more effective and adaptive CWM approaches in light of these outcomes and experiences.

## 2. From 'fences and fines' to new paradigms: The emergence of CWM in Tanzania

The history of wildlife conservation in Tanzania is characterised by the gradual accumulation of authority in the hands of centralised state management agencies. When the German colonial administration took over what is now mainland Tanzania in 1891, it quickly established regulations for controlling wildlife utilisation by both Europeans and native people (Koponen, 1994). Throughout the colonial era wildlife management emphasised the dual strategies of propagating legal restrictions on hunting wildlife and the establishment of protected areas to preserve habitats.

After independence, wildlife conservation's motivations changed from the aesthetic aspirations of Europeans to the economic development priorities of the Tanzania state, and an increased focus on wildlife's potential to contribute to national income through tourism (Honey, 1999). Tanzania's socialist development policies were also influential. In 1974, at the height of Tanzania's socialist collectivisation efforts, the government passed the Wildlife Conservation Act, which served mainly to further consolidate central control over wildlife in state organs.

The basic administrative and governing structures for wildlife management have changed little – at least in legal terms – since the 1970s. The main authority is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT); within the Ministry is the Wildlife Division, which has authority for wildlife in Game Reserves, Game Controlled Areas, and unprotected areas. National Parks are managed by a semi-autonomous parastatal agency, Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA).

### **Box 1. Land administrative categories and protected areas in Tanzania**

In 1999, Tanzania reformed its national land tenure framework with passage of the Village Land Act and Land Act (Wily, 2003). This legislation creates three basic categories of land in Tanzania: reserved land, general land, and village land.

Reserved land is any land set aside by government according to sectoral legislation, and includes protected areas such as Marine Parks, National Parks, and Forest Reserves. This also includes the areas established under the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974, which are Game Reserves, Partial Game Reserves, and Game Controlled Areas (GCAs). Game Reserves, like National Parks, generally do not allow people to live in them, but in GCAs only killing wildlife is restricted, not human use or habitation. Many GCAs are thus extensively settled and managed as local village lands accordingly (WSRTF, 1995a).

According to the Land Act, village land is land falling under the jurisdiction of a legally formed village (Tanzania's rural areas are divided up into about 11,000 villages created through local government legislation in the 1970s and 1980s), and these lands are held through customary rights of occupancy. General land is land which is neither reserved nor village land, including land allocated by the government for investment purposes.

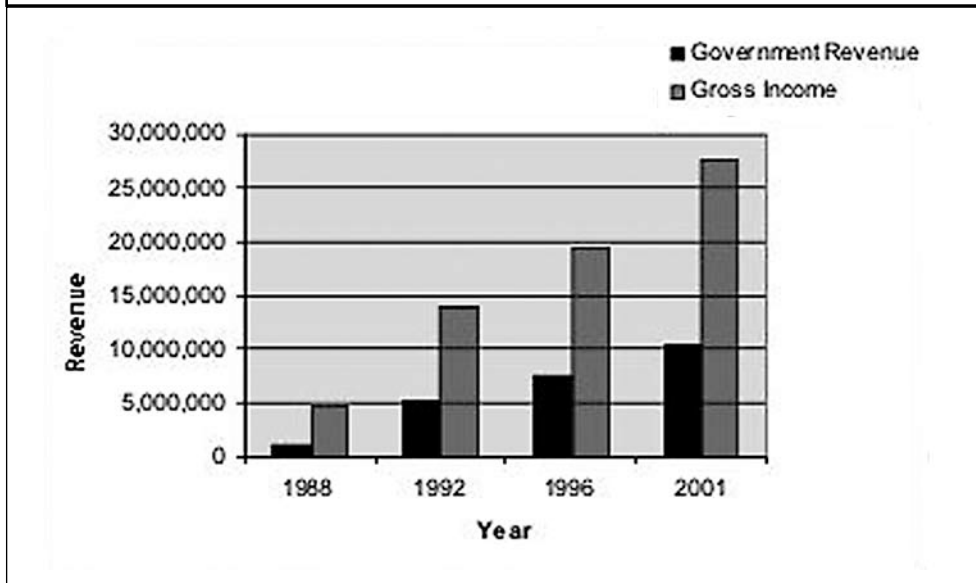
Wildlife management in Tanzania has long had a significant impact on rural land rights, particularly through the creation of protected areas and eviction of resident people (Neumann, 1998; Igoe, 2004). Today the issue of protected area expansion, the use of community lands for hunting concessions, and the overlap of village lands and GCAs remain prominent land tenure issues for many rural communities.





In National Parks, the sole use of wildlife is through non-consumptive (eco-) tourism, and these areas have driven Tanzania's tourism boom. In other areas, including Game Reserves and most wildlife-rich village lands, the principal activity is tourist hunting, which is managed by the Wildlife Division. Today there are about 140 concessions and over forty different hunting companies holding them, with the total area used for hunting about 250,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Baldus and Cauldwell, 2004). Since the industry's liberalisation, the total annual value of hunting concessions has increased dramatically in terms of direct government income and overall revenues generated (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Government revenue and total revenue from tourist hunting in Tanzania, 1988-2001



Figures in US\$.

Source: Baldus and Cauldwell, 2004.

The liberalisation of the hunting industry in the late 1980s was symptomatic of much broader economic and political changes taking place in Tanzania at that time. In the early 1980s the country underwent a financial crisis as a result of its socialist policies, coupled with external shocks and declining commodity prices, and topped off by an extremely costly war with Uganda in 1978/79 (Bigstein *et al.*, 2001). The wildlife sector underwent a crisis in the 1970s and 1980s, as poaching increased dramatically for both commercial and subsistence uses of wildlife. As ivory and rhino horn prices soared and government management resources declined, the country lost half of its elephants and nearly all of its black rhinos (WSRTF, 1995a).

These crises drove a range of changes and new approaches. New donor-government partnerships were forged to increase investment in the wildlife sector and to reduce poaching. An important partnership between the German and Tanzanian government, the Selous Conservation Programme, arose in the late 1980s and soon became a lead

promoter of CWM (Baldus *et al.*, 2003). A range of other local projects seeking to improve local participation and benefit-sharing in wildlife management emerged, supported by donors such as the Norwegian and British governments (Leader-Williams *et al.*, 1996) TANAPA began a formal programme of sharing revenues from parks with surrounding communities as a way to improve relations and enlist their support in stopping poaching (Bergin, 1996). All of these programmes reflected the greatly enhanced influence of foreign donors in Tanzania in the 1990s, as well as the enthusiasm donor agencies had during this period for projects combining wildlife conservation and rural development goals (IIED, 1994).

The government also began a review of the country's wildlife management policies and institutions in order to develop a policy that would address existing challenges and adapt to Tanzania's changing political and economic environment. By 1995, a Ministerial task force supported through this planning project called for wide reforms of the country's wildlife management institutions, and in particular to devolve wildlife management outside protected areas to local communities (WSRTF, 1995b; Leader-Williams *et al.*, 1996). The task force's recommendations included creating village-based Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) as the institutional mechanism for devolving management to the community level and creating local incentives for conservation. The consensus developed in this policy dialogue amongst government agencies, aid donors, and international conservation NGOs, was that conservation had to benefit local communities economically if wildlife was to survive outside of protected areas (WSRTF, 1995a).

Subsequently, the Wildlife Policy of Tanzania was issued in 1998, giving CWM a central and prominent role. Although the policy states clearly that the state will maintain ownership of wildlife, and that National Parks and Game Reserves, as the 'core protected areas', will continue to be the foundation for conservation, it calls for a new approach on village lands. The policy states its aim *"to allow rural communities and private land holders to manage wildlife on their land for their own benefit"* (MNRT, 1998). The strategy described for creating local incentives to conserve wildlife is *"conferring user rights of wildlife to the landholders to allow rural communities and private land holders to manage wildlife...with the aim of ensuring that wildlife can compete with other forms of land use"* (Ibid.). The policy describes Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) as the mechanism for CWM: *"The Government will facilitate the establishment of a new category of PA [protected area] known as WMA, where local people will have full mandate of managing and benefiting from their conservation efforts"* (Ibid.)

By the time of the Wildlife Policy's release, many localities had provisional WMAs mapped out as a result of work carried out already by government/donor CWM projects. Villages participating in the Selous Conservation Programme, for example, had been granted a wildlife quota and were carrying out local game meat sales (Baldus *et al.*, 1994). A pilot WMA in Morogoro District had demarcated its WMA and zoned the villages' land uses accordingly as early as 1998. Similar developments occurred in the MBOMIPA project to the southeast of Ruaha National Park in central Tanzania, where the Wildlife Division allowed a pilot WMA consisting of nineteen villages to earn income by selling an annual wildlife quota to resident hunters (Walsh, 2000). By



using a public auction to sell their quota, the MBOMIPA villages increased their earnings from 3.7 million Tshs in 1997, the first year the quota was granted, to over 20 million Tshs. In 2003, producing about 1 million Tshs (~US\$1000) per village (Gardner *et al.*, 2004).

The late 1990s were thus a time of considerable movement in Tanzania towards developing new approaches to conservation outside protected areas. The hopes of many local and national actors and interests was that these emerging CWM strategies would lead to wildlife recoveries, support local economies, and benefit the growing tourism industry. Some observers questioned this narrative, though. Shauri (1999) asked if the Wildlife Policy was merely “old wine in a new bottle” because it stopped short of giving communities full ownership over wildlife, and questioned if the country’s management agencies were really prepared to reform the way the policy described. Nshala *et al.* (1998) reviewed benefit-sharing and community outreach efforts around two National Parks and found that conflicts between local people and protected area authorities remained a significant issue. Although pilot projects around Serengeti and the Selous had worked to organise village game scouts and grant communities a legal game quota for them to hunt and consume, some studies questioned whether these projects were really responding to local interests and providing meaningful benefits (Songorwa, 1999; Ashley *et al.*, 2002). The communities had limited influence over the design of these early CWM projects, which were generally developed as part of a broader set of donor and government conservation objectives and investments.

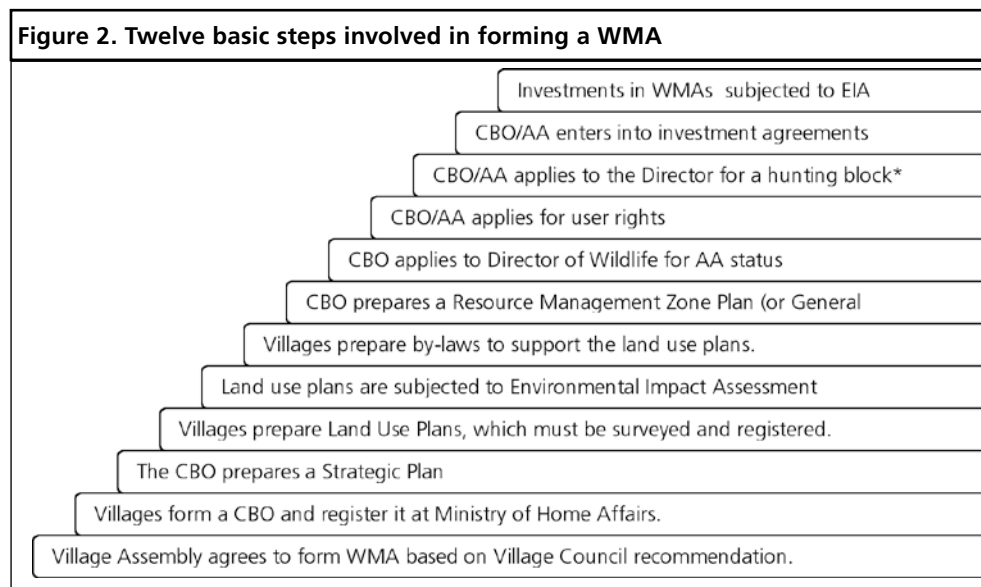
Ultimately, the impact of the new policy and the many nascent CWM projects were contingent on further legal reforms to transfer statutory powers over wildlife to the village level. Such devolution was the key to enabling local communities to capture more substantial economic benefits from wildlife, particularly from financially lucrative tourist hunting enterprises.

The basic framework for WMAs was envisioned as one whereby villages would zone a portion of their land as a wildlife conservation area where agriculture and settlement, and perhaps livestock grazing as well, would be excluded through village land use plans. In return, the Wildlife Division would grant the villages a quota of animals which they could either hunt themselves or sell to a tourist hunting operator. Because tourist hunting was central to the economic potential of WMAs, many pilot areas were planned at a scale sufficient to provide sufficiently large and high quality concessions. Consequently, WMAs are usually much larger than the land contained within a single village’s boundaries; some WMAs include up to two dozen villages with contiguous land areas.

In January, 2003, the government formally launched the WMAs process following the release of new regulations created according to the Wildlife Conservation Act’s provisions for transferring wildlife user rights to delegated ‘Authorised Associations’. The WMA Regulations included a list of sixteen pilot areas where the WMA initiative would be tried and evaluated over a three year period. The sixteen pilot areas include over 135 villages in 16 districts, and a cumulative land area set aside for wildlife by the participating communities estimated at about 16,000 km<sup>2</sup> (URT, n.d.).

Creating WMAs involves extensive investment of time and resources in fulfilling a set of requirements provided in the WMA Regulations (see Figure 2 below). Villages must form and register a representative 'community-based organisation' (CBO) which will serve as the delegated management authority (the 'Authorised Association' (AA)) for the WMA. The communities must create a strategic plan, individual village land use plans, and a general management or zoning plan for the proposed WMA. Once the planning requirements are fulfilled, the CBO can apply to the Director of Wildlife and the Minister to become an Authorised Association (AA), which means that the WMA will be formally gazetted. After the WMA is gazetted, the following steps remain for the WMA to develop benefit flows from the wildlife there:

- The AA applies to the Director for user rights to the wildlife
- The AA may apply to the Director to have a hunting block designated in the WMA
- The AA enters into investment agreements, which the Director of Wildlife must approve, with private sector actors for commercial activities in the WMA. All investment activities should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)s.



Source: MNRT, 2002; 2003).

\*This step is only required if the CBO/AA wishes to conduct tourist hunting in the WMA

While the Wildlife Policy calls for giving the communities full mandate for managing wildlife, in a number of areas the rights of the CBO for making management decisions in a formally gazetted WMA are restricted. User rights to wildlife granted to the CBO are limited to three-year terms. With respect to commercial uses of wildlife, the CBO does not have authority for granting hunting block concessions in the WMAs, which remains under the authority of the Director of Wildlife. All investment agreements in WMAs must be approved by the Director of Wildlife. For some communities, which have historically developed local village-operator tourism agreements without this

degree of central control, the WMA would reduce the authority of the community over investments in the village (see Nelson, 2004).

A final notable provision of the WMA Regulations is that they do not legally define the proportion of revenues generated from wildlife in a WMA that will be kept by the community and what proportion will be returned to higher levels of government. Rather, the regulations leave this important revenue-sharing issue ambiguous, stating that it will be determined by Ministerial circulars issued "from time to time" (MNRT, 2002).

### 3. From paradigm to practice: Outcomes and impacts of Wildlife Management Areas

#### Ipole WMA

Ipole WMA is located in Tabora Region in western Tanzania, and comprises four villages containing about 9,000 residents (Strinning, 2006). The bulk of the population are Nyamwezi farmers, with peanuts, cassava, and tobacco being prominent local crops. The WMA contains about 2,500 km<sup>2</sup> of village land, much of which was formerly Ugunda Game Controlled Area, and lies adjacent to Ugalla Game Reserve. Ugalla GR is divided into two tourist hunting concessions, and Ugunda GCA is also a hunting concession. The area is characterised by extensive Miombo (*Brachystegia* sp.) woodland, transected by various rivers and floodplains. Wildlife in the area includes elephant, lion, and buffalo, and antelope such as topi, sable, and roan. Tsetse flies are locally abundant and livestock are primarily owned by Sukuma agro-pastoralists, who are relatively recent immigrants to the area.

The Ipole WMA is part of the Ugalla Community Conservation Project, which is administered by an American development NGO, Africare, and supported by USAID. Africare began working with communities to develop WMAs in this area in 1999. By 2001, the Ipole area villages had formed and registered their CBO, which is called JUHIWAI. Over the next several years the WMA completed land use plans, which were duly surveyed and registered with the Ministry of Lands. Experts from the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute and University of Dar es Salaam were contracted to carry out a natural resources inventory and prepare a basic resource management zone plan. The WMA



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Ipole area, western Tanzania

has 36 voluntary village game scouts, who are supervised by the District Game Officer, and locals report a recovery of wildlife in the WMA although bushmeat poaching remains fairly widespread (Strinning, 2006).

The Ipole WMA was legally formed through a gazettelement order issued on March 31, 2006, conferring Authorised Association status on JUHIWAI. As part of the process of creating this WMA, the Uganda GCA was degazetted and the area formally transferred to village lands.

Although the WMA has been gazetted, the community is not yet earning any income from wildlife there. Ipole is a remote area and the main revenue-earning option in the near term is tourist hunting, and a concession currently operates in the WMA based on prior allocation. In order for the community to capitalise on these activities, JUHIWAI must apply for a hunting block to be designated in their WMA, and the Director of Wildlife must allocate it to an operator before the community can enter into an agreement with that operator.

While the Ipole WMA is a relatively successful pilot area by virtue of being one of the first pilot areas to have been gazetted, and has high potential because of its large land area and relatively small human population, it is yet to generate any income from wildlife. Benefits received have mainly been in the form of project-related assistance, such as JUHIWAI's new office built with USAID funds. The communities express some confusion regarding their status as an Authorised Association that still lacks any clear formal authority over wildlife in the WMA. Much of confusion appears to stem from the reality of having a gazetted WMA, but the continuing utilisation of the wildlife in the WMA by a hunting operator based on a pre-existing lease with the Wildlife Division. Notably, such a situation contravenes the WMA Regulations, which prohibit any business activities in a gazetted WMA except where provided for by an agreement between the AA and the investor (MNRT, 2002).

Another prominent issue in this WMA is the integration of different types of natural resource use. Ipole WMA contains a diverse range of natural resources besides wildlife, including timber and riverine fisheries. In fact, given the extensive woodlands and high regenerative potential of Miombo tree species, the commercial potential of the Ipole WMA from sustainable timber production may be considerably higher than the commercial potential of wildlife. The way for the communities to maximise the value of the resources in their WMA will undoubtedly be to integrate different activities and uses from the different resources. But thus far there has been little effort on the part of either government agencies or donor and NGO facilitators to promote this kind of integration. Local CWM projects and community-based forestry projects tend to be developed in isolation, by different donors, different government agencies (even though forestry and wildlife divisions are housed in a single Ministry), and different NGOs, with little cross-sectoral pollination of ideas or practices.

A final note on Ipole WMA is that there remains significant confusion at the community level as to who is responsible for managing the WMA; the majority of people in the area are unclear as to who the management authority of their WMA is (Strinning,

2006). It should be noted, however, that the complex WMA Regulations makes it very difficult to say, as a point of law or administrative certainty, who is in fact responsible for the WMA; the CBO, village councils, and Wildlife Division all hold key elements of authority over the WMA. Nevertheless it is apparent that the lines of accountability in Ipole WMA are unclear to the local community. This is most likely a result of both the recent genesis of the WMA and the CBO, coupled with the complexity of the management framework created by the WMA Regulations.



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JUHIWAI office in Ipole WMA

## Enduimet WMA

Enduimet WMA lies in the West Kilimanjaro Basin of northeastern Monduli District, adjacent to the Kenyan border and east of the Namanga border post. The area falls within the semi-arid Somali-Maasai biome and is populated primarily by Maasai pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, with farming the predominant land use only on a narrow belt of land along the western slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. The original plan for the Enduimet WMA contained nine villages, and was originally conceived in stakeholder workshops held in 1997 following a wildlife survey conducted in the area which documented locally recovering elephant populations but also widespread bushmeat poaching (Poole and Reuling, 1997). Plans for a WMA were based on the perceived need to increase local responsibility and authority for wildlife in the villages, and the historic co-existence of local pastoralists with large mammal populations. However, a CBO was not formed until after the release of the WMA Regulations in late 2002, and the villages were still attempting to satisfy land use planning and zoning requirements by 2006.

In addition to the time-consuming nature of the WMA regulatory requirements, several additional challenges to the Enduimet WMA emerged during the 2003-2006 pilot



phase. Sinya village is the largest village (by land area) in the WMA and is located adjacent to the Kenyan border. This village has an abundant population of large mammals such as elephant, giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, impala, and gazelle, much of which moves back and forth between Sinya and Amboseli National Park in Kenya (Poole and Reuling, 1997). Sinya developed photographic tourism enterprises in the village based on contractual arrangements with a high-end tourism company and by 2004 was earning around \$30,000 per annum from these activities (see Nelson, 2004). This area, however, is also a hunting concession granted by the Wildlife Division over Longido Game Controlled Area, and hunting and tourism came into conflict in the village (Masara, 2000; Nelson, 2004). Partly because the village was already earning substantial revenues from non-consumptive tourism, and partly because the community claims not to have understood the purpose and land tenure implications of WMA gazettement, Sinya refused to participate in the WMA after the process was launched in 2004.

Since that time the eight other villages have proceeded despite losing the participation of the most wildlife-rich village in the WMA. By 2006, though, further internal conflicts emerged, centering on two linked problems. First, people in several villages became concerned by the lack of information they were receiving from the CBO since its formation. Questions were also raised at the local level about how community representatives on the CBO's board were chosen, noting that in some cases public elections were not held. As a result of the limited transparency regarding the CBO's activities, community support for the WMA process began to erode.

The other problem that emerged was a result of the placement of beacons used to demarcate the boundaries of the WMA. In several villages, the response of the community to the placement of these beacons led to concerns about restrictions on local land use patterns, and fear of land alienation. These concerns stem from a general lack of understanding of the legal land tenure implications of creating the WMA, and led a number of community members to deface the beacons and call for the withdrawal of their villages from the WMA.

By the end of 2006 it was unclear how these conflicts would impact the on-going effort to prepare a WMA gazettement application for submission to the Wildlife Division. In the meantime, Sinya and two other villages in the area continued to earn income from wildlife-based tourism through village-private operator contracts formed independent of the WMA process. Although those arrangements faced some level of conflict with the area's tourist hunting concession, they continued to earn substantial amounts of income for the involved villages.

The two WMA case studies above illustrate several important outcomes and issues related to efforts to establish these CWM initiatives. Both cases reflect the difficulty communities face in trying to fulfil all the pre-requisites to forming a statutory WMA which captures the value of local wildlife populations for the participating communities (Baldus *et al.*, 2004). By the end of 2006, only four of the sixteen pilot WMAs had been legally gazetted, and even the four gazetted WMAs had not obtained user rights over wildlife in the WMA or access to tourist hunting revenues. Thus no WMAs are earning income as a result of their WMA status, because none of the pilot WMAs have



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obtained wildlife user rights or established approved investment agreements. This results in some confusion among local communities as to what the real meaning of having a gazetted WMA is, or what rights it confers.

In terms of conservation impact, most communities targeted for WMA establishment have set aside large areas of village land for wildlife. However, there have been some concerns about the land tenure implications of WMAs from the local perspective. For example, one of the pilot areas slotted for WMA establishment, in the Loliondo area to the east of Serengeti National Park, refused to participate because the communities viewed the WMA as a strategy for appropriation of communal lands in a locality with a long history of land lost to state conservation areas (Gardner *et al.*, 2004). In all the pilot areas, unless WMAs can become a more meaningful avenue for local economic gains and revenue generation, the lands currently set aside will likely be allocated to alternative uses.

Rural communities have invested substantial resources in establishing the WMAs, but up until the present they have not benefited commensurately. Communities have set aside village lands that could be used for other purposes, and they have protected wildlife populations, which can lead to an increase in animal numbers and consequent human-wildlife conflict. These are all substantial net costs at the local level. Thus one interpretation of WMAs is that they have served as a mechanism for state conservation agencies and their donor and NGO partners to persuade communities to support conservation, using a rhetorical narrative of devolved CWM, but without providing an equitable level of socioeconomic benefits in return. While this was clearly not the intent of the WMA concept as laid out in the Wildlife Policy, this is effectively the way it has evolved during the past decade.

## 4. Enabling the emergence of CWM in Tanzania?

CWM is at root based on a certain set of assumptions about collective management of communal lands and resources. Effective local jurisdictions for managing communal resources depend on the ability of the community to determine and enforce rules over the resource's uses and to capture benefits arising from those uses (Murphree, 2000).

The characteristics of effective community resource management systems have been employed in the design of CWM elsewhere in Africa. For example, Namibia possesses perhaps the most successful national CWM programme in east and southern Africa. Between 1996, when legislation allowing for the formation of communal conservancies was passed, and 2004, 29 local wildlife conservancies were created containing approximately 71,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land and including 95,460 resident community members (NACSO, 2004). Revenue generated amounted to roughly US\$1 million in direct conservancy income in 2003, and has increased rapidly since 1998 (NACSO, 2004). Table 1 summarises some of the basic characteristics of Namibian communal conservancies and provides a comparison with Tanzanian WMAs.

	<b>Namibian Conservancies</b>	<b>Tanzanian WMAs</b>
<b>Pre-requisite conditions</b>	Four basic steps: -Define and agree to boundaries -Register membership -Create a management committee -Prepare a constitution providing for equitable distribution of benefits	-At least 12 steps as illustrated in Figure 2.
<b>Utilisation Rights</b>	-Conservancies given exclusive user rights over wildlife which are not term-limited -Conservancies must apply to government for an annual quota of animals	-User rights to wildlife limited to 3 year terms -Wildlife Division determines all quotas
<b>Control of Revenues</b>	-Conservancies retain 100% of revenue earned from wildlife utilisation or joint venture agreements. -Conservancies determine private sector investors for all activities	-Revenue divided between CBO and government; proportions never formally defined to date. - Wildlife Division determines hunting block concession allocations -All investments in WMAs require Wildlife Division approval

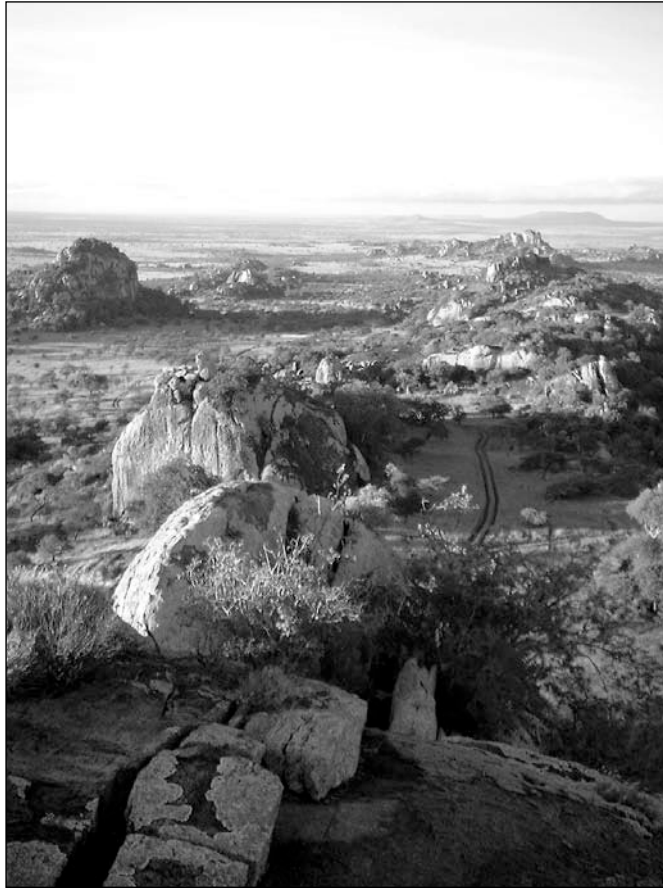
Sources: NACSO, 2004; MNRT, 2002; 2003.

Table 1 demonstrates that Tanzania’s CWM framework has many more pre-requisites, but that the user rights granted to communities are considerably more limited than in Namibia. Some of the pre-requisites of the WMA gazettement process, such as strategic planning and resource zoning, are included in the Namibian process not as pre-requisites but as management issues to address *after* establishment of the conservancy and devolution of wildlife user rights to the community (NACSO, 2004). While Namibia’s framework is less prescriptive and more empowering, in Tanzania the nature of the rights granted to communities and the pre-requisites to WMA formation serve as significant constraints on the implementation of CWM. The differential impacts of CWM in the two countries in terms of local benefits and conservation outcomes during the past decade are self-evident.

Another useful comparison to Tanzania’s CWM framework comes from Tanzania’s own forestry sector, which has emerged as a leader within Africa in decentralised community-based forest management. In comparison with the WMA procedural framework, the requirements for establishing Village Land Forest Reserves are relatively simple and the rights granted relatively strong (see Table 2). Once villages have determined the boundaries of the forest they wish to manage, they formulate a basic forest management plan, pass village by-laws, and demarcate and declare the reserved area after a short trial period (MNRT, 2001). Management of forests on village lands requires virtually no formal sanctions from the Forestry Division, in contrast to WMAs, which must apply at least four times to the Director of Wildlife for approval of different items.

	<b>Wildlife</b>	<b>Forestry</b>
<b>Management Authority</b>	Community based organisation	Village Natural Resource Committee of the Village Council
<b>Benefit Sharing</b>	Revenue divided between CBO and government; proportions never formally defined to date.	Villages retain 100% of revenue earned.
<b>Utilisation Rights</b>	- User rights limited to 3 year terms - Government grants hunting concession allocations	Utilisation of all forest products according to village management plans and by-laws.

Another important difference between Tanzania’s community-based forestry and wildlife management frameworks lies in how authority over resources is devolved. The forestry sector explicitly empowers existing village governance organs- the village councils and their committees (MNRT, 2001). This establishes community forest management as accountable to the village assembly, which includes the entire local community of forest users. This framework also reinforces local land tenure institutions, which make village councils and village assemblies the key management organs of vil-



© Fred Nelson

Savannah landscape in Serengeti ecosystem, northern Tanzania

lage lands (Wily, 2003). Rather than empowering existing village governance organs, WMA formation requires the creation of a new institution in the form of the CBO. While the CBO is supposed to report to the village councils, its governing membership is distinct from the village council and village assembly structures.

Creating new institutions is inevitably difficult, time-consuming, and laden with risks. Relationships governed by accountability take time to evolve – village councils and village assemblies have been evolving in Tanzania for over thirty years now, but remain weak in many cases. The formation of CBOs is thus an inherently challenging element of the WMA process because it represents the creation of an entirely new and powerful local institution. Because of the prescriptive nature of the WMA Regulations, the CBO is in many respects upwardly accountable to central authorities, while downward accountability will take time to evolve. While the village-based framework for community-based forestry has led to the rapid emergence of numerous local jurisdictions for forest management, progress in the wildlife sector has been minimal. Today there are 382 Village Land Forest Reserves collectively covering over 20,000 km<sup>2</sup>, compared to four gazetted WMAs (URT, 2006).

An environment conducive to the emergence of CWM based on local incentives has not been created by Tanzania's WMA initiatives. The conditions that communities must fulfil in order to establish a WMA are highly prescriptive and represent a considerable barrier. The rights to manage wildlife and capture revenue are limited and central government maintains key discretionary powers, particularly over the main form of commercial wildlife utilisation, tourist hunting. Indeed, the centralised nature of Tanzania's lucrative tourist hunting industry is a major disincentive for government authorities to implement the reforms described in the Wildlife Policy (Baldus and Cauldwell, 2004). These central disincentives to devolution are an important variable in the observed outcomes of the WMA process.

A number of studies of community-based natural resource management in Africa, Asia, and Latin America describe how ostensible decentralisation reforms can be designed to maintain or even extend state power (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Ribot, 2004). Two of the central characteristics of WMAs – the decentralisation of power to new institutions rather than pre-existing elected local governance organs, and the use of complex pre-requisite requirements- are widely observed strategies used by central agencies to resist or undermine reform (Ribot, 2004). The outcome of CWM in Tanzania is thus reflective of a much broader set of experiences with community-based natural resource management reform in the tropics. Examples such as Namibia's community conservancies and Tanzanian village forest management, where relatively clear resource rights are devolved to downwardly accountable and locally elected community institutions, appear as exceptions to the norm. The broader experience is one whereby, as Ribot (2004) states, the lack of real devolution of authority over resources turns "most decentralisation reforms into charades."

## 5. New models for CWM: From log frames to the long haul

Because the objective of CWM is the transfer of control over valuable resources from central agencies to local communities, these reforms often face significant political and institutional obstacles. In sub-Saharan Africa, governing structures largely comprise informal patron-client networks, and public resources are regularly privatised by state agents in pursuit of patronage objectives (Chabal and Daloz, 1999). In Tanzania, following the abandonment of the country's socialist policies in the late 1980s, there has been an increasing 'privatisation' of public resources by elites engaging in economic activities and a resultant blurring of the lines between public institutions and private enterprise (Kelsall, 2002). CWM requires state agencies to undertake reforms which will transfer a significant amount of control over wildlife from central to local jurisdictions. This renders CWM, in Tanzania and in other places where wildlife has a high value, a clear challenge to the patron-client interests and relationships that characterise governance institutions.

The interests and strategic choices of other groups are also important for understanding CWM outcomes, however. CWM in Tanzania has been promoted primarily by a small group of influential donor agencies and international conservation organisations, which collectively fund about 90% of conservation activities in Tanzania (URT, 1998). These groups played the key role in the adoption of CWM in Tanzanian policy, and they have been the main supporters and facilitators of the pilot WMAs.

These international donors and NGOs operate in Tanzania according to country agreements or memoranda of understanding with central government agencies, and their activities thus represent the mainstream 'development partnership' model that of international development aid. Donor agencies have a number of basic organisational incentives which are important to CWM initiatives. Donor agencies have strong incentives to spend large amounts of money in relatively short periods of time, while minimising their informational costs in terms of monitoring, evaluation, and processes of learning and adaptation (Gibson *et al.*, 2005). These incentives, coupled with their institutional relationships with host governments, encourage aid agencies to cast political problems in technical terms, and to prioritise large-scale and short-term projects (see Ferguson, 1994; Sayer and Campbell, 2004; Gibson *et al.*, 2005; Easterly, 2006).

For their part, international conservation NGOs have similar incentives in terms of needing to maintain close relationships with government; supporting state conservation initiatives has always been a *raison d'être* of these organisations. For example, the Frankfurt Zoological Society has underwritten many essential management activities in Serengeti National Park since its creation nearly 50 years ago. In investing in protected areas, the close relationship between these organisations and central wildlife agencies is an important component of effective operations. But with CWM, where there is frequently an incongruity between the interests of central actors and local resource users, this operational model is not practicable. International NGOs with close central relations seem unwilling or unable to effectively support local resource claims

or interests which conflict with those of the political centre; this has undermined the efforts of these organisations to facilitate CWM in parts of Tanzania (Igoe, 2004). A number of contemporary observers document the problem of large international conservation NGOs tending not to support local or indigenous land and resource rights at the global scale (Chapin, 2004; Romero and Andrade, 2004; Dowie, 2006).

Because of their organisational incentives and relationships, there is a general dissonance between the institutional interests of CWM's key supporters, in the form of donor agencies and NGOs, and the actions required to effectively support CWM on the ground. CWM, like many development processes, is often portrayed as a linear cause-and-effect process of building community capacity, transferring power, and producing developmental and conservation gains. In reality these initiatives are inherently non-linear efforts to transform existing power relations and resource governance institutions in fundamental ways. Murphree (2000) captures the incongruity between conventional CWM project-based approaches and the institutional nature of resource devolution:

This brings us to...politics, in this instance the ability of the local to significantly influence the allocative decisions of the political centre...local jurisdictions must become a significant political constituency of the state, a constituency strong enough to counterbalance expropriative interests at the centre and one to which the state is accountable. All this takes time and evolution, and renders the typical project image of the stand-alone, local jurisdiction developed within a short time frame ludicrous.

CWM as a political process thus requires adaptability, flexibility, and opportunism; efforts to design and implement CWM through rigid log-frame type projects are unlikely to succeed in many contexts (cf. Ruitenbeek and Cartier, 2001; Sayer and Campbell, 2004; Jones and Murphree, 2004). As a result, conventional donor 'technical assistance' often is not an effective framework for addressing CWM (see Box 2).

### **Box 2. Is 'Technical Support' an effective framework for supporting CWM?**

Tanzanian CWM initiatives have been supported primarily by bilateral donor agencies and international conservation NGOs in partnership with government agencies through the mechanism of donor technical support projects (e.g. Baldus *et al.*, 2003). For example, USAID's long-running support to the wildlife sector has been structured as capacity-building support "to assist the Government of Tanzania in increasing environmental protection, natural resource conservation, and sustainable development by devolving natural resource management responsibility to lower levels of government and to communities" (NRIC, 2007).

The problem with these technical models for supporting CWM is that, like many developmental problems which are institutionally rooted, supporting local wildlife management is more a political objective than a technical one. Casting CWM in terms of technical support to central management agencies obscures a clear understanding of the institutional dynamics surrounding the issue and may prevent the development of more analytically grounded approaches to reform.

In some contexts conventional technical assistance may provide important support to CWM. For example, USAID's Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) programme in Namibia has provided valuable support to one of sub-Saharan Africa's most successful CWM programmes for over a decade (NACSO, 2004). But it is important to note that the effectiveness of this investment has resulted from, rather than caused, strong central government leadership for devolutionary CWM. But where such leadership is absent, it is unlikely that any amount of donor technical support will encourage its emergence. Other strategies and aid models are needed in such settings.





In Tanzania, it is notable that of the many millions of dollars invested in CWM during the past two decades, very little has been directed towards enhancing the ability of local communities to influence the 'decisions of the political centre.' CWM initiatives have not sought to explicitly build the capacity of local actors and civil society groups to shape institutional reforms in a way that supports their interests. One result has been limited grassroots participation in the design of important institutional instruments such as the WMA Regulations. This, in turn, leads to the WMA framework failing to reflect important local objectives and interests, such as concerns about transferring power over village resources to the CBOs and the various land tenure conflicts in pastoralist areas related to WMA establishment (Gardner *et al.*, 2004).

New approaches and principles for promoting CWM are needed if improved economic and environmental outcomes are to be achieved. Supporting the capacity of domestic constituencies and civil society organisations to influence CWM processes needs to be prioritised. But such investments must be long-term, flexible and adaptive, and may require smaller amounts of money than typical donor projects. A strong argument can be made that CWM should be supported not through donors' environment programmes, but through governance programmes. This also suggests that when selecting NGO partners for CWM, local organisations with strong experience in policy advocacy and governance issues may be the most suitable. In Tanzania there is evidence that non-conservation organisations have important advantages in terms of their experience, skill sets, and perspectives on CWM. For example, it is Africare, a development organisation, that has facilitated two out of the total of four gazetted WMAs that existed by the end of 2006. In northern Tanzania, the most effective community-based natural resource management organisations are a few groups that recognise the importance of land rights to pastoralist communities, and which approach CWM from the perspective of those local rights and interests.

Another fundamental principle for making effective investments in CWM is to support collaboration among different interest groups- another characteristic that has been absent in Tanzania, as few development or human rights organisations have had significant involvement in wildlife issues during most of the past two decades. One prominent example of this type of collaboration is the Kenya Forests Working Group, a body that has emerged since the mid-1990s to promote collaboration among diverse interests for improving the country's forestry institutions (KFWG, 2006).

It is much easier to describe new strategies for promoting CWM than to adopt them. Indeed, the history of development aid is characterised by cyclical patterns of problem analysis, nominal strategic changes, and the recurrence of the same problems (Easterly, 2002). There are important barriers to the adoption of the types of approaches to CWM described here. Notable among these are donor agency incentives to maximise spending while minimizing investments in change, adaptation, and learning (Gibson *et al.*, 2005), and the relationships that both donor agencies and international NGOs have with central governments. Creative ways of matching the institutional objectives of donors and international NGOs to the realities of CWM are needed. Box 3 describes some innovative models for doing this in East Africa; more examples of effective investments in the ability of local interests to influence natural resource management

would be a valuable contribution to improving the next generation of CWM efforts in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Box 3. Examples of innovative donor/NGO models for supporting institutional change in East African natural resource management**

While there may be organisational barriers to adaptive, long-term approaches to CWM, a number of initiatives provide potential models for how to pursue such processes.

The World Resources Institute (WRI) runs a governance programme<sup>1</sup> which supports a range of civil society organisations working to promote accountable and transparent natural resource management institutions in different African countries. In Tanzania, this programme has provided long-term support to several organisations involved in wildlife policy advocacy, including the Legal and Human Rights Centre and the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team. Indeed, these organisations have been among the few Tanzanian organisations, as opposed to international NGOs, that have focused on wildlife management as an important development and human rights issues (see Nshala, 1999; LHRC, 2003).

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) has also developed a long-term approach to strengthening local land and resource rights in eastern Africa through its pastoral civil society programme. This programme is highly notable in being designed from the outset using a generational timeframe (15-20 years) for investing in the capacity of pastoralist civil society organisations. Although shorter timeframes for effectively supporting the growth of civil society are inherently problematic, it is rare for organisations to formally adopt such long-term commitments.

Kenya is an example of a country where new collaborative civil society initiatives have emerged which directly address the institutional roots of natural resource degradation. The Kenya Forests Working Group (KFWG) has, since the mid-1990s, grown into a locus of collaborative advocacy for improved forest management and governance (see KFWG, 2006). It has used litigation, research, and advocacy, and has forged partnerships with both conservation and human rights groups as well as government agencies over the issue of forest governance. Key strategies used by KFWG, such as litigation and media campaigns, are difficult or impossible activities for international NGOs to undertake due to the nature of their relationships with host governments.

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1. See <http://www.wri.org/governance/>



## 6. Conclusion

CWM emerged in Tanzania in the 1990s as a result of challenges facing state wildlife management agencies and broader political economic changes in the country occurring at the time. International donors were key actors behind wildlife sector reforms and have used their influence to promote CWM in Tanzania's formal wildlife policy and in an array of local pilot initiatives. By the late 1990s CWM had been formally adopted as the strategy for conserving wildlife outside protected areas.

Since then, efforts have focused on implementing these devolutionary strategies and transferring statutory control over wildlife to local institutions through formation of Wildlife Management Areas. WMA Regulations provide for the formation of these locally managed entities, but the regulations maintain many important controls over wildlife in the hands of central authorities. The regulations also provide a time-consuming and complex set of procedural pre-requisites which few communities have been able to fulfil. As a result, only four WMAs were gazetted by the end of 2006 and of those, none had yet been granted user rights over wildlife or been able to develop any commercial wildlife-based activities that could create new sources of income.

New institutional models are needed if CWM is to emerge in Tanzania in a more effective and robust manner. Efforts to support CWM need to take greater account of the institutional incentives that influence reform outcomes, and recognise that in most instances enabling CWM will require long-term negotiations between local and central interests over resource rights and uses. Long-term and adaptive strategies for moving the institutional balance of power towards the local level are thus fundamental to CWM. Such strategies rely critically on the emergence of domestic constituencies and collaborations for influencing these processes, which notably have not characterised CWM in Tanzania during the past two decades. Development aid agencies and international conservation organisations need to find innovative ways of supporting these institutional processes if they are to make more productive investments in CWM. Ultimately it is these processes that will determine the ability of wildlife to contribute to local livelihoods and of rural communities to invest in conservation.

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