Conjunctions of Governance:
The State and the Conservation-development Nexus in Southern Africa

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Abstract: *From the fortress conservation paradigm in the 1960s and 1970s to the community based conservation paradigm of the 1980s and 1990s, the ideological linkage of people and conservation of natural resources in Africa seemed to have progressed towards local ownership and local management. At present, however, it looks as though the limits of community ownership over natural resources have been reached. According to powerful actors on the conservation scene, local people in Africa have not been able to effectively conserve their wildlife and biodiversity and thus – in their view - a more enforcing style of conservation, separated from local people, is needed again. Although this trend is still in its infancy, it is promoted with rigour and backed by substantial financial means. In this paper, we use the changing discourse in the environment-development nexus as a starting point to examine issues of governance and power over the conjunction of natural resources management and development in Southern Africa, with a special focus on the role of the state. By drawing on a case study whereby different states jointly try to manage the conservation-development nexus, here the case of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, we are able to better situate the role of the Southern African state within this nexus. We conclude that the way states are trying to govern transfrontier parks is not in par with the way processes of governance unfold themselves nowadays under the influence of the forces of globalisation and localisation. If Southern African states are to retain any control over the direction that the conservation-development nexus in Southern Africa will take in practice, they need to adapt to the current international governance climate, and they need to adapt fast. With Southern Africa's history of enormous social disadvantages in relation to conservation, states just cannot afford to be bypassed by a resurgence of that same history.*

1. Introduction

The debate on the development-environment nexus in Africa has been raging for decades and shows no signs of fatigue. On the contrary, it looks as though the debate is escalating, as the discourse seems to be taking a U-turn. From the fortress conservation (FC) paradigm in the 1960s and 1970s to the community based conservation (CBC) paradigm of the 1980s and 1990s, the ideological linkage of people and conservation of natural resources in Africa seemed to have progressed towards local ownership and local management. At present, however, it looks as though the limits of community ownership over natural resources have been reached. Local people in Africa have not been able to effectively conserve their wildlife and biodiversity according to powerful actors on the conservation scene, and thus – in their view - a more enforcing style of conservation, separated from local people and replete with fences and fines, is needed again. This so called 'back-to-the-barriers' movement[2] goes back to the basic argument that economic development and conservation are inherently incompatible, leaving no choice but to return to old colonial style conservation methods, which now should be implemented with more rigour and conviction than four decades ago.

This current debate has attracted a wide range of actors scrutinizing the assumptions behind and implementation of both FC and CBC. Little research, however, has been done on the political governance side of the debate (Gibson 1999). Often, reference is made to the importance of governance, power or politics in the process of implementing CBC policies, without attempting to understand the intricacies of how these actually work out in a political discourse, such as the link between conservation and development. Hence, we will, after briefly discussing the history of conservation-development discourse, limit ourselves to using the discourse as a starting point to delve deeper into issues surrounding governance and power within the development-environment nexus in Southern Africa, with a special emphasis on the role of the state. These will then be applied to a case whereby three Southern African states jointly attempt to achieve the twin goals of conservation and development: the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The emphasis hereby is on the latest developments: what implications do the latest critical developments in the conservation-development discourse have on the role

of the state in such a project, and how does this link in with current trends in governance in Africa?

2. From Fortress Conservation to Community Based Conservation and Back?

The roots of the discourse on conservation and development in Africa lie in the 19th century when the first ideas and policies emerged on actively managing or governing wildlife and natural resources. Alarmed by declining hunting possibilities due to declining wildlife populations, colonial administrators in Africa sought to find the solution by establishing nature reserves after the North American model, which propagated separation of people and nature (Adams and Hulme 2001). Besides this inherently elitist and colonial reasoning, a more emotive argument also played a role. African wild nature was revered as having an almost mythical status because of its aesthetic value and grandeur (Adams and McShane 1996, Draper and Wels 2002) and therefore needed protection at all cost. Taken together, these arguments fed into protectionist and coercive conservation policies in the 1950s and 1960s, later to be known as "Fortress Conservation" (Wells et al 1992, Brockington 2002). The core elements of FC consisted of the establishment of protected areas, excluding people and limiting or forbidding their rights for consumptive use, together with strict enforcement of these rules through a 'fences and fines' approach (Songorwa 1999; Adams and Hulme 2001). Often, this included relocating communities out of areas they had lived in for generations, creating many protected areas with adjacent 'border communities' living in poverty (Hulme and Murphree 2001).

From the late 1970s, in congruence with the international development climate, a counter paradigm emerged, that of "Community Based Conservation" (CBC). The exclusion of people from the resources they often depended on for the major part of their livelihoods had proved unattainable and even counterproductive. African states did not have the resources or capacity to effectively enforce protectionist conservation principles and neither had the moral justification, or will, to do so (Duffy 2000). Moreover, wildlife numbers continued dwindling during FC domination, principally due to continued traditional hunting – 'poaching' as it was phrased by colonial administrators and European hunters - lead-

ing to the argument that protectionist conservation policies were ineffective (Gibson and Marks 1995). Critics of FC argued that involving rural African communities in conservation would not only right the social wrongs of the past, it would also lead to improved conservation of natural resources.

Community Based Conservation, according to Hackle (1999, p. 727), adheres to three basic principles: "(1) allowing people living near protected lands to participate in land-use policy and management decisions; (2) giving people proprietorship or ownership over wildlife resources; and (3) giving local people economic benefit from wildlife conservation". From a governance perspective, this implies decentralisation of authority and decision-making and the empowerment of local people. Whether this can be achieved depends on two contextualising variables, according to Barrow and Murphree (2001, p. 28-31): tenure and objective. Tenure relates to the system defining the rights of people to access and own land and natural resources and reap the benefits from them. In many African countries, these systems are still remnants of the colonial past in which tenure rights are generally not very conducive to community ownership or proprietorship of land and resources. Government policies to change this into tenure systems more sensitive to the needs and circumstances of local communities have proved difficult or even counter-productive, even when nicely phrased as 'new environmental management partnerships' (Dzingirai 2003).

The second contextual variable, that of objective, refers to the 'core motivational direction behind policy, planning and action' of Community Based Conservation (Barrow and Murphree 2001, p. 28). Objectives, naturally, pre-determine how CBC will work in practice and for CBC to be effective it is thus crucial for all involved stakeholders in CBC to have at least partially shared objectives. However, CBC in Africa has predominantly been shaped and operationalised by western notions and values of conservation that emphasise "the intrinsic and aesthetic values of wildlife, (…) define conservation in terms of abstract concepts such as biodiversity and ecosystem maintenance and (…) emphasise such goals as species preservation and the maintenance of micro-habitats for aesthetic and recreational use", whereas communities see conservation more economically as having to serve the "maintenance or enhancement of their livelihoods" (idem, p 29)[3].

While these variables have been espoused by CBC oriented scholars seeking to test the limitations of CBC, since the mid 1990s more fundamental critique on the viability and validity of CBC emerged. This is so tenacious that Jon Hutton and Dilys Roe were wondering whether the conservation-development discourse in Africa was not making a U-turn 'back-to-the-barriers' (Hutton and Roe 2003, see also: Wilshusen et al 2002). In the back-to-the-barriers literature, led mostly by US conservationists, they distinguish five themes, which we elaborate on below: 1) the imperative for biodiversity conservation, 2) the critical importance of protected areas, 3) the ineffectiveness of CBC and Integreted Conservation Development Projects (ICDP) 4) the mythical status of ecologically friendly locals and 5) the immediacy of the need for strict protection.

The baseline from which most back-to-the-barriers proponents depart is the absolute imperative of biodiversity conservation for its intrinsic value. John Oates (1999, p. xvi) argues that "substantial parts of wild nature (…) will be lost if those involved in conservation planning do not rethink their approach and return to the principles on which many conservation organisations were founded: that nature is worthy of protection for its intrinsic value and for the aesthetic pleasure it can bring to many people". From there, the argument proceeds to the critical importance of protected areas. It claims that, as humans and their activities are encroaching into every corner of the globe, protected areas are the last bastions for biodiversity and wildlife conservation, and hence should be protected at all cost and focus on preservation, the strictest form of conservation (Terborgh and van Schaik 2002).

The third theme on which the back-to-the-barriers literature leans is the ineffectiveness of CBC and ICDPs. So far, neither has yet shown either the conservation or development results they were justified by. Most disturbing to conservationists is the conclusion of many case studies[4] that wild natural areas, wildlife and tropical rainforests are still disappearing with great speed and CBC and ICDPs have not been able to curb this. Van Schaik and Rijksen (2002, pp. 23-25) attribute this failure to three major flaws in ICDPs. First, high levels of corruption in most developing countries prohibit the control over and effective

management of ICDP processes while ICDPs have no means to counter this. Second, the overtly technical design of ICDPs and their emphasis on sustainable use are not realistic in a context that is inherently political and managerial. Finally, the assumption that local people are interested in biodiversity conservation is a fallacy. This last point is something that weighs heavily on back-to-the-barriers proponents and is therefore treated as a separate fourth theme by Hutton and Roe. If given the chance, local people living near or in wild natural or protected areas will, like all other people, exploit the resources for their own economic development (Terborgh 1999, Oates 1999). Therefore, there can be no such idea as an ecologically friendly local. All these four arguments lead to the conclusion that nature must be protected now. If the last remnants of wild nature are to be saved for their intrinsic value and future generations, the world must act now and make way for strict enforcement of protected areas, according to FC proponents.

With these latest critical developments in the environment-development discourse in Africa advocating for a return to more fortress conservation type conservation policies, does this automatically also mean that there is a crisis in Community Based Conservation or Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)? Turner (2004) addresses this question in the Southern African context and concludes that although there might a crisis in CBC in some parts of the region, the true crisis lies elsewhere. As CBNRM, defined by Turner as being broader than CBC, is a central part of economic activity and viable institutional structures in communal areas, it must be able to rely on 'effective and equitable local governance', for it also to be 'effective and equitable' (Turner 2004, p 14). At the moment, he argues that these institutional structures in communal areas are in a very poor shape, making the (local) governance crisis "the crisis of CBNRM, a crisis compounded by being largely ignored" (idem, p. 14). Although complete and convincing evidence for this statement seems yet to be forthcoming, Turner does touch on the crucial, yet problematic linkage between governance and conservation-development (Murphree 1997, Magome and Murombedzi 2003). Drawing on this line of reasoning, it can be argued that the critical attack on the dominant narrative of community-based conservation will not contribute to creating a clearer 'enabling' macro-conceptual governance framework for tackling the issues and challenges the field of the

environment-development nexus currently faces. The next section shall further discuss and explicate this line of thought.

3. Governing the Conservation-Development Nexus in Southern Africa

The concept of governance has been defined many times and in many different ways, but here we follow Rosenau (2001, p 1) in that governance "consists of rule systems, of steering mechanisms through which authority is exercised in order to enable the governed to preserve their coherence and move towards desired goals". This definition could both include governance and government, but the former according to Rosenau distinguishes itself from the latter by its emphasis on "any collectivity – private or public – that employs *informal as well as formal* steering mechanisms to make demands, frame goals, issue directives, pursue policies and generate compliance" (idem, p 1, emphasis added), whereas government consists of *formal* systems of rule or steering mechanisms, usually at either local, regional, national or international levels. Under the influence of forces such as globalisation, regionalisation and localisation, it is evident in the literature that, from the early 1990s, there has been a shift in thinking from formal government, with the state as the central actor, to more informal governance where a plethora of actors, in constantly differing alliances and with different levels of power, are centre stage (Rosenau 1990, 1997, 2001, Falkner 2003, Nuijten et al. 2003), and this is no different in Africa (Callaghy et al. 2001).

This shift in thinking from government to governance has had tremendous implications for the role of the state, the relation between state and society and the role of the state versus other actors involved in the governing process, especially in Africa. Migdal (1988) already pointed towards the fundamental problem of the weak colonial African state being opposed by strong local actors in society, preventing the state from carrying out strong governance. These actors exert such great influence on the local economic, social, cultural and political state of affairs that the ability of the central state to establish a formal system of rule and have their citizens comply with it was, and still is, very limited in Africa (see also: Doornbos 1990).

Since Migdal's writing in the late 1980s, the processes responsible for the shift in thinking from government to governance such as globalisation and localisation have accelerated. One of the most characteristic elements of globalisation is the exponential growth of trade, communication and technology across the globe, which has rendered political, economic, but also cultural and religious boundaries more 'virtual' and permeable than ever. All of this has increased the reach and capability of a multitude of actors to such an extent that they can intervene in and influence a wide range of processes all over the globe whenever they choose (Dietz 1996). This of course often leads to conflicts when many powerful local actors, in the wake of the opposing force of localisation, yearn for a revival of cultural, religious and historical traditions in a localised setting, preferably as untouched by outsiders as possible[5]. Hence, one of the most fundamental consequences of the last 15 years for the governing of common goods is the explosion of the amount of actors, whether they are global or local, to rival the state's centrality in governance and the collusion between all these actors, including the state (Rosenau 1997).

Logically reasoning from the foregoing, there are two ways for the state to cope with or react to the current trends. On the one hand, as post-modern political science would argue, the formal Westphalian idea of the state has always been and still is irrelevant to Africa, so the already tacit acceptance of the switch from government to governance by African states 'just needs to be done' in a more conscious way by the most important stakeholders in state institutions (Forrest 1998). The difficult task for the state then is to find new ways in which many different conjunctions of governance could be stimulated to form come kind of coherent and coordinated system that fulfils the demands and needs of society. On the other hand, African states can continue to focus their attention on trying to establish or expand effective authority through formal rule mechanisms within the boundaries bestowed upon them by colonial rule (Van der Veen 2002), something which has succeeded to some extent in some cases (Clapham 2001). In either case it is important to note that the state is of course not becoming irrelevant. And although in this article we clearly adhere to the view apparent in the first option that different sorts of power are becoming more and more diffused over a wide range of actors, we want to stress that the state

remains an important one. South Africa especially should be mentioned in this respect, since for long it has had a very strong state for African standards.

To say that modern governance processes under the influence of globalisation and localisation are characterised by the continuous exponentially growing multitude of actors involved, does not yet say anything about the relationships and power balance between these actors[6]. In the end, this is what will determine how the governance process works out. We therefore need to examine actors and power relations in regard to the governance of the conservation-development nexus in Southern Africa. In an elaborate discussion of power and non-state actors in global governance, Arts comes to a model of three interdependent faces of power that seems to link well with the purposes of this article: "1) decisional power, related to policy making and political influence; 2) discursive power, related to the framing of discourses; and 3) regulatory power, related to rule-making and institution building" (Arts 2003, p 13). Traditionally, one would attribute decisional and regulatory powers in a society to the state - although the state can also have great discursive powers[7] - but with the shift from government to governance these powers have also shifted more and more towards non-state actors. Some examples in the sphere of the conservation-development nexus in Southern Africa might help to illustrate this point.

Decisional power relates to the ability to influence decisions that determine actions and outcomes in the public sphere (Arts 2003). A striking example in this case is the Peace Parks Foundation. The Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) is an NGO, founded in 1997 with the sole purpose of promoting the establishment of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs, also known as 'Peace Parks') in Southern Africa. In order to aid the establishment of Peace Parks, the PPF have offered human, financial and technical resources to almost all the departments dealing with the environment of Southern African states, and most of them accepted. In this way, not only has the PPF direct political access by contributing a wide variety of resources, they also have an edge in directing policy because they can influence part of the content, as the resources they offer are directly being used by 'their' officers in the various departments to make decisions in the policy process.

Regulatory power relates to "standard setting, whereby a standard is defined as an expertise-based voluntary rule on organisational regulations, structures and/or procedures" (Arts 2003, p 27). Regulatory power by non-state actors is often not as enforcing as state regulation, but in absence of the latter can impose standards to which non-compliance can be hard. This whole tendency is not new, but received a boost after the end of the cold war, even to such an extent that Strange (1988, 1996) talked about the 'hollow state'. In Africa, this is especially relevant, as most states have always had heavier obligations than they could handle, and thus it is not surprising that non-state actors started developing their own sets of rules or standards to fill 'institutional voids' where rules to guide behaviour are needed but not provided by the state (Arts 2003). Non-state actors in this sense can mean anything from private actors and NGOs to social movements and virtual cyber communities (Smith 2003).

An example of regulatory power is the recent initiative of 'African Parks Conservation' (APC), a "foundation that enters into public-private partnerships with African governments to manage and finance national parks"[8], founded, among others, by the Dutch business tycoon Paul Fentener Van Vlissingen. In line with the Back-to-the-Barriers proponents, APC departs from the premise that "most of Africa's national parks are in rapid decline and if nothing is done, within a few years they will be lost to Africa and the world forever". Therefore they "work with a strong sense of urgency that something must be done now - before it is too late" (African Parks Conservation website). Thus, the institutional void according to APC lies in the inadequate regulations with respect to the sustainability of Africa's wildlife parks or the enforcement thereof, and therefore they felt the need to establish regulations and standards themselves. And because they are capable of doing so, many actors bestow upon themselves the *right to intervene* in another locale, especially when finite natural resources are involved (Dietz 1996). That in a region beset by a history of conflicts over land (Lahiff 2003), developments of this sort are sensitive issues, seems not to deter them. In reaction to this, states often try to balance out the objectives of outside actors according to state policy, but with little resources and capacity, this does not always lead to outcomes they or local populations would necessarily adhere to.

While Angola and Mozambique only decolonised in the mid-seventies, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa Espoused apartheid until the 1980s (Zimbabwe) and 1990s (Namibia and South Africa.) This had a fundamental impact on the practice of conservation in the region. Only in the wake of decolonisation and the shift from white minority rule to black majority rule, did the region's official focus in the conservation-development nexus radically shift away from the fortress conservation approach to include those other crucial actors: the socially disadvantaged local communities living in and around or expelled from the resources to be protected. Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), a broader form of Community Based Conservation (Adams and Hulme 2001, Turner 2004), became the buzzword, and was exemplified by such projects as Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources), Namibia's LIFE (Living in a Finite Environment) and Botswana's CBNRM programmes.

Despite the advent of these programmes, this of course did not automatically also mean that all power and governance in Southern Africa shifted simultaneously in the same direction. The Southern Africa states have at least in their rhetoric adopted a CBC approach, but many powerful actors in the governance process have retained their fortress conservation orientation (Barrow and Murphree 2001). This statement is compounded by the influence of conservation oriented transnational networks that through self-entitlement gained more and more regulatory, decisional and discursive power over conservation policies in Southern Africa under the advent of the process of globalisation. For a power and governance analysis, this adds complexity to the fact that, throughout the whole world, contestations over resources are linked to historical social identities and the cultural politics of place. In Southern Africa especially, the nation-states have taken it upon themselves to deal with these contestations in a way that, above all, puts the emphasis on historical social justification in relation to conservation of natural resources. This of course clashes with the increasingly stronger back-to-the-barriers appeals in the literature that we described above. How does this work out in practice, and what can we say about the role of the state in this process?

4. The Case of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park

We have selected the case study of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Area between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as it illustrates and scrutinizes the above question very well for three reasons: Firstly, a Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) is a conservation area that straddles international boundaries and as such is managed by two or more states together. This has led the nation-states in the region to exclaim that they are the only legitimate negotiating actors[9] and as such suggests a primacy of official structures of 'government' over more informal 'governance'. Secondly, considering all the issues involved in the link between conservation and development in national parks or protected areas, the complexities involved in a transboundary conservation park are all the more challenging and hence interesting for political analysis. Finally, among existing TFCAs, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Area (GLTA) was chosen because it is generally seen as the 'make it or break it case' (Collins pers. com., Amerom and Büscher 2005). In other words, if the GLTA does not succeed, it could be a major blow for the progress of other TFCAs as well.

The main focus of TFCAs is on transboundary conservation of biodiversity and wildlife through an ecosystem approach, with the explicit aim of improving transnational collaboration and cooperation between the involved states (hence, the alternative term 'Peace Parks'). Other main stated objectives include community development through sustainable use of natural resources that occur in TFCAs and the promotion of trans-border ecotourism (Jones and Chonguiça 2001). TFCAs are not a new concept. Early last century, there were already transfrontier conservation agreements in North America, Europe and central Africa. However, in Southern Africa it was not until the 1980s that interest in TFCAs burgeoned, and it was Dr. Anton Rupert, a South African businessman, who really brought the concept of TFCAs to the fore when he met President Chissano of Mozambique in 1990 to discuss the possibilities for a linkage between the South African Kruger Park and Mozambique's controlled hunting area Coutada 16. These plans, however, were not to come to fruition until after the end of the civil war in Mozambique in 1992 and South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994.

From 1994 onwards, the development of TFCAs started moving with great speed. In 1997, Dr. Rupert, together with Nelson Mandela and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, founded the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF). The main objectives of the PPF are to raise and allocate funds for TFCA development and establishment, identify and purchase land for TFCAs and to promote TFCA development on a commercial basis (Hanks 1997). To aid them in their objectives, the PPF have gained strong political support, including the heads of state of eight involved Southern African nations, who are all honorary patrons. Dr. Rupert and the PPF were also instrumental in getting donors, such as the World Bank, the German Development Bank (KfW) and USAID, interested in the concept (idem). In 1996, the World Bank gave a US$5 million grant to Mozambique for a 'Transfrontier Conservation Area Pilot and Institutional Strengthening Project", with the objective to 'test new approaches to exploit the synergies between conservation and community development in very poor areas where income earning opportunities are limited' (World Bank 1996, p. 14). Although the same document states that poverty reduction in Mozambique has the highest priority, Wolmer (2003), sees the above quote as a rationalisation for the World Bank to extend their mandate to include conservation. This in turn gives them a ticket to jump on the fashionable 'political bandwagon' that TFCAs have become in recent years (Magome and Murombedzi 2003).

The negotiating process around the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Area started in 1996, when Mozambican and South African provincial officials discussed linkages between the Kruger Park and Coutada 16. As Zimbabwe also joined, officials from relevant departments and organisations of the three involved states met several times in 1998 and 1999 to discuss the GLTA idea in an Interim International Technical Committee (IITC), until they had a basic agreement in 1999. The proposed agreement suggested the establishment of a TFCA of a staggering 99,000 km², including South Africa's Kruger national park, Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou national park and Sengwe communal area and Mozambique's Coutada 16 controlled hunting area (now transformed into Limpopo National Park), the Banhine and Zinave national parks and much of the land between and around them[10].
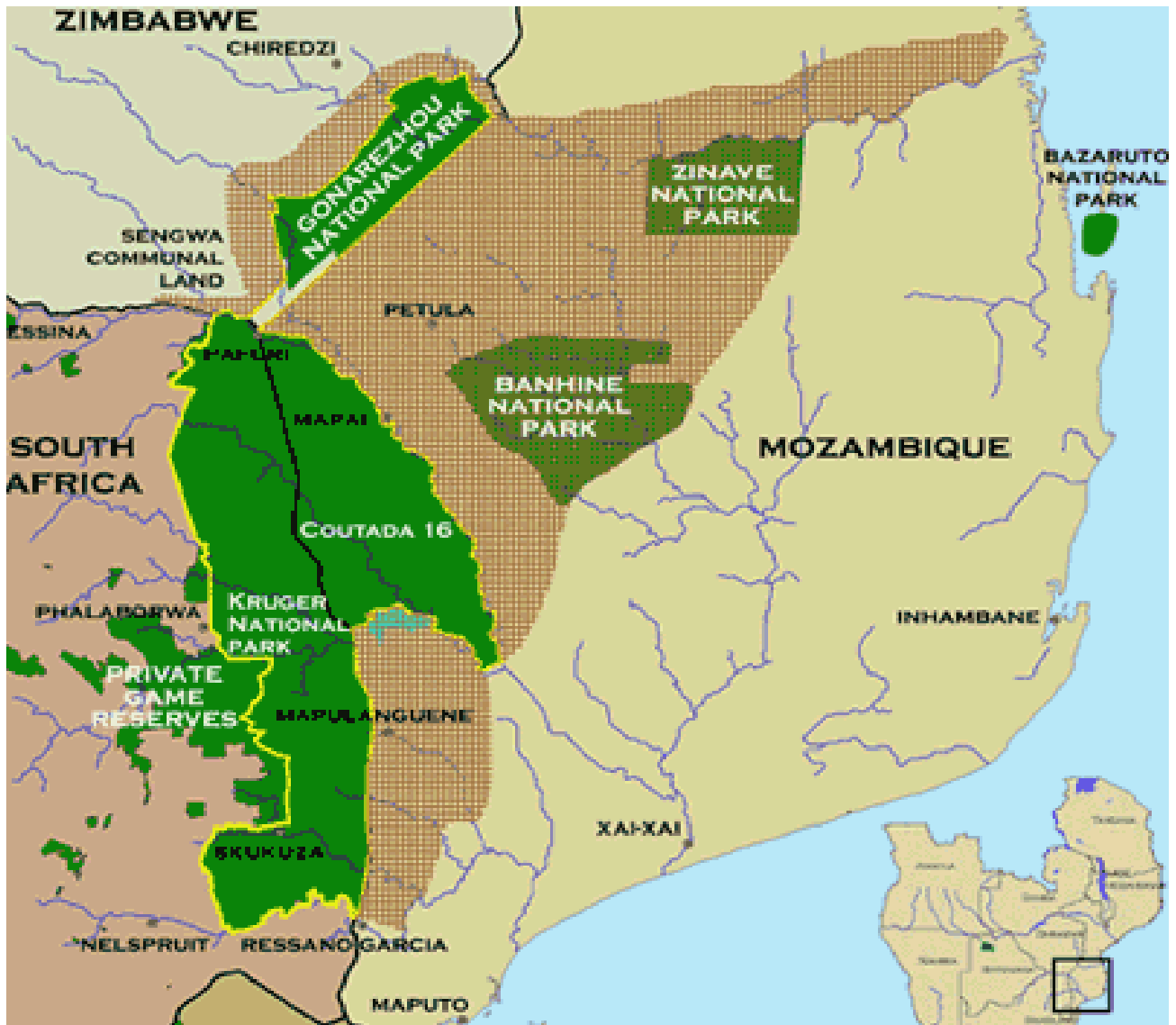
Figure 1: the Great Limpopo TFCA. Source: Peace Parks Foundation Website: www.peaceparks.org.

Next, the respective ministers for the environment entered the stage. They formed a ministerial committee and met for the first time in Maputo on October 23rd, 1999. There, they established an International Technical Committee (ITC) to which they gave the assignment to develop a Draft conceptual plan, a Draft action plan and a Draft trilateral agreement for the Great Limpopo TFCA under their strict supervision. According to Munthali and Soto (2001, p 9) this set-up already "negated the possibility of undertaking thorough consultations with all stakeholders, particularly those that will be most affected, such as the Sengwe and Coutada 16 communities". Moreover, not all the elements of the IITC proposal were taken over by the ministers. Instead of the huge transfrontier conservation *area*, which included multiple land-use options ranging from conservation and private conservancies to ecotourism development areas and communal agricultural land, the ministerial meeting under pressure of South African minister Vali Moosa changed the focus to a much smaller transfrontier conservation *park* (GLTP) of 35,000 km², with a focus on one land-use option: strictly conservation (Braack pers. com.). This led to friction between South Africa and Mozambique, as Mozambique was very keen on 'using' its communities in order to attract more donor funding from the World Bank (Grossman pers. com.). These frictions, compounded by the severe floods of 1999/2000 in the Limpopo area, caused a delay in the process and instead of May 2000 as planned, the next ministerial meeting took place in November 2000.

At that ministerial meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed, which approved the plan for the establishment of the GLTP. The action plan proposed to install several working groups, all dealing with specific issues, including wildlife conservation, community involvement, tourism, customs and immigration, security and intelligence and finance, and laid out how they would be working towards the actual treaty. The Technical Committee advised the ministers to take (at least) two years for the action plan, but South African Minister Moosa refused: he wanted it to be done in one year (Braack pers. com.; African Eye News Service 2002). Possible reasons for this position of minister Moosa are the amount of 'public relations' that had gone into the Great Limpopo already and to which minister Moosa had attached his name, the pressure from donors and other organisations, most notably the

Peace Parks Foundation, and minister Moosa's urge to attach his name to a big prestige project before his retirement as minister after the South African elections in April 2004 (Grossman pers. com.).

Problems arose immediately after Moosa had cut the time for the action plan in half, especially for the Communities Working Group. 'There being no special counters for communities at the national departments that the working group could go to', it was very hard to come up with concrete community based policy advice (Braack pers. com.). Furthermore, although South Africa chaired the ITC it could not outright 'order' the other states to take the agreed technical action, as special emphasis had been laid on the fact that all three involved states remained sovereign actors, no matter what. Mozambique in particular lacked the capacity and experience to do their part of the action plan, which kept the ITC to go back to Minister Moosa to try to convince him, in vain, that two years should be the absolute minimum[11]. Another way by which the ITC tried to raise community interests was by asking permission for community members to participate in part of a ministerial meeting. Minister Moosa refused this, because he did not want to lose face and saw no reason to permit community members to have their say (Braack pers. com.). Although it can be argued that Mozambique and Zimbabwe did not have the capacity for meaningful community participation, it has been accepted that the ministers gave only their minimum efforts, not recognising the advantages of community involvement, and making the whole situation look very much as though conservation was much higher on the agenda than community development (Collins pers. com.; Grossman pers. com.; Rozemeijer pers. com.).

In the end, however, the process did take longer than the one year that minister Moosa so badly wanted. Above all because of technical problems with respect to security and border issues between the three countries, the international treaty to establish the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park could not be signed by the three heads of state earlier then 9 December 2002 in Xai-Xai, Mozambique. In the treaty, it was agreed that first the GLT Park would be created, and after that, the countries would investigate the possibilities for the greater GLT Area. This was basically a political compromise by Minister Moosa. Moosa believed the idea of a greater TFCA would

not work, but Mozambique was under great pressure to include *at least reference* to the TFCA in the MoU and Treaty for political and financial reasons: Mozambique had received millions of World Bank dollars based on the objective of a TFCA being pursued, and they obviously did not want to lose this funding (Braack pers. com.).

Two days after the signing of the treaty, the ministers symbolically cut a piece of the fence between Kruger and Mozambique and several elephants were translocated. Yet, until now, animal translocations remain the only tangible outputs of the treaty and a de facto TFC park has not yet been established. Generally, this is ascribed to the way the Great Limpopo has been managed so far, which had led to several points of critique (Munthali and Soto 2001). First, critics believe that South Africa is mostly interested in the GLTP because it wants to find an area to relocate excess Kruger elephants, as South Africa is too afraid of a public outcry if they have to resort to culling (African Eye News Service 2002). In itself this does not have to be negative. However, the argument goes that the focus on animal relocations takes time and resources away from other policy priorities, such as community consultation. Second, the elephant relocations have taken place without prior consultation of the communities living in the Mozambican Limpopo National Park, which has caused aggravation for the communities who have to live with the risks of human-elephants conflicts (AllAfrica.com 2003). Third, as the preferred dominant land-use option for the whole of the GLTP is the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity, critics fear the expelling of communities from the park (Mayoral-Philips 2002, Trouw 2004). In fact, many South African proponents of the GLTP, such as the PPF, have already suggested that, because of the dangers involved in the elephant translocations, the communities might be better off if they would settle outside the park area (University of the Witwatersrand 2002). A final point of critique considers the distrust among the three states in each other's capabilities and fear for hidden agendas (Amerom and Büscher 2005). With the experience of the process up to the signing of the treaty, Mozambique and Zimbabwe fear that the South African domination of the policy process will not stop once the GLTP is established and they will then lose out on sovereignty (Duffy 1997, Van Amerom 2004), fair sharing of ecotourism revenues

and their cattle industries because of the risk of wild animals carrying diseases that could infect livestock.

It is clear from the above that the various ministries and ministers of the three countries involved seem to be the key decision makers in the GLTP process. Because TFCAs concern cross-border engagement, the only viable actors involved in the process according to the states, are the states themselves (Braack pers. com.). This does not only include the ministries of environment, but also the departments of foreign affairs, the departments of land affairs and agriculture, the relevant provincials departments and, very critical, the departments of defence, the police and the national security agencies. A transfrontier park means that border crossing by people and wildlife increases and that countries have to loosen control over their borders. It is imperative that these departments are intimately involved in the process leading up to the TFCA, especially so because ministers of the environment are often ranked lower then most other cabinet colleagues. A direct implication of this is that out of the four representatives of each country sitting in the management board of the GLTP – who are only from state agencies - one must be from the security agencies. South Africa has been particularly sensitive about this issue, as it fears an even larger influx of immigrants and increase in smuggling from Mozambique and Zimbabwe if it loosens its grip on the borders. All in all, it is the state agencies that seem to keep a tight grip on the whole process leading up to the GLTP. Munthali and Soto (2001, p. 12) even conclude that "besides the government, none of these stakeholders [communities, NGOs, private sector organisations] effectively participated in the process leading to the establishment of the GLTP". Does this mean that other actors were not involved, or did not matter in the process?

The answer to this question is not straightforward. The Peace Parks Foundation has been, and still is, another major actor, but in its operations, it has been very state-oriented. Because it knows that the states see themselves centre stage of the TFCA process, the PPF is constantly 'supplying' the states in every possible way to expedite the political process, specifically those supplies the national state would need in order to make policy – maps, human and financial resources and policy documents. Other more global actors, such as donors, have taken exactly this position of situating themselves close to the national states

and doing everything possible to establish the Great Limpopo on paper.

However, for matters to change on the ground, other important actors need to be taken into account. The most important of these are the communities living in and around the GLTP. The communities in the Sengwe corridor and the former Coutada 16 area are most directly affected. As there was no time for proper community consultation and many communities are threatened with resettlement, it cannot easily be defended that the GLTP is helping them develop through sustainable use of the natural resources in the TFCA. Thus, the uncooperative or even obstructive behaviour they have been displaying with respect to the GLTP is hardly surprising (Mail and Guardian 2002). Then there is the case of the Makuleke Community, who own the far northern part of the Kruger Park. This part of the Kruger Park is vital if there is to be a direct linkage between South Africa and Zimbabwe in the GLTP. However, the Makuleke, as owners of the land, have not been taken seriously as a discussion partner by the national states, for instance by taking them up in the management board, and as a consequence, they have threatened not to allow their land to be included in the GLTP (Collins pers. com.). Other important actors on the ground include grassroots NGOs, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and private sector companies. NGOs and CBOs could aid communities in the park with capacity building, in order for them to be able to contribute more effectively to the GLTP process. So far, these NGOs have not been supported in the GLTP (Magweregwede pers. com.). Furthermore, small to medium private sector organisations, especially those related to tourism and those from Zimbabwe and Mozambique have not had a say in the GLTP, even though some held specific hunting or tourism concessions dating from the time before the development of the GLTP started (Munthali and Soto 2001).

All in all, evidence from the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Park strongly indicates a focus by the national states on a formal 'government' style of governing, instead of a more 'governance mode', dealing with multiple actors in a flexible way. States consider themselves as the principal actors in the GLTP process and they exclude the actors from decisional and regulatory powers that are most crucial to what will eventually happen on the ground. In the meantime though, the implementation of the GLTP contrasts starkly with state CBC rhetoric, as it is clear from the above that especially local communities in and around the GLTP could have been better consulted and taken up in the process. Instead of doing so, the state has been engaging more with actors like the PPF, who have far better access to important people in government circles than do most communities in and around the GLTP. Referring back to the history of Southern Africa, this 'disenfranchisement at large' (Dzingirai 2004), could have serious negative impacts on the already feeble social fabric in and around the GLTP, as it is the question how long communities accept not being taken seriously.

5. Conclusion

In this article we have argued that the current practices of governing the development-environment nexus in Southern Africa are not very receptive and sensitive to the current globalisation climate that seems to be more compatible with a 'governance mode' than a 'government mode'. This has been shown in the case study of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, a prime and recent example of a project trying to link conservation and development in Southern Africa. The three involved states, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, are still trying to steer the TFCA process in a 'government mode', while the power dynamics determining the course of the GLTA clearly adhere to a need for a 'governance mode'. Unless state officials start recognising this and start adjusting their tactics accordingly, they could loose more than just their ability of steering and balancing the achievement of both development and conservation objectives in processes such as TFCAs. With the upsurge in back-to-the-barriers thinking in the conservation-development nexus, they also risk a resurgence of sentiments related to colonial conservation histories of social disadvantages and upheavals. The same history which the current administrations so clearly say they want to undo.

As the back-to-the-barriers movement lays great emphasis on formal (state) enforced structures of regulation and authority in conserving nature, it makes the difference between governance and government even more profound. Where states

try to adhere to community based conservation policies in front of the public, they fail to recognise that back-to-the-barriers thinking is becoming stronger and stronger, further complicating and influencing the course of governing the development-conservation nexus in Southern Africa, as the example of African Parks Conservation also showed. As this is not common knowledge, it also shows that the concept of power and its meaning in processes of natural resource governance is not sufficiently addressed in the current approaches and not sufficiently thought through by involved actors, especially state actors. If Southern African states do not want to be bypassed by a resurgence of colonial conservation sentiments and the potential social upheaval that could be involved, they need to delve into these issues and adapt to the current international governance climate, fast.

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Notes

1 * With valuable contributions from Munyaradzi Saruchera, PLAAS, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

2 So termed by Jon Hutton and Dilys Roe at the inaugural workshop of Phase II of the CASS/PLAAS regional programme of analysis and communication on CBNRM in Southern Africa, Benoni, South Africa on 24-25 November 2003.

3 Of course, this statement varies from community to community.

4 See for instance: Barret and Arcese 1995; Wunder 2001.

5 See Friedman, 2000, for a vivid analysis of these opposing forces in the processes of globalisation and localisation.

6 This is of course not to say that multi-stakeholder processes are only of modern times. The point we want to stress is that the recognition for the need for multi-stakeholder processes has grown strongly in the last two decades due to the explosion of organisations.

7 See for example Van Amerom and Büscher, forthcoming

8 See the African Parks Conservation Website: www.africanparks-conservation.com.

9 And from an international judicial point of view justifiably so, but, so we argue in this article, not from a governance perspective.

10 See figure 1 for a map of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area

11 Dr. Grossman, involved in the GLTP process as a consultant, even advised 5-7 years for proper community consultation.

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