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The evolution and impacts of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania

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1. Introduction

There are strong arguments in support of ecotourism playing a central role in conservation and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa. The growth of tourism in this region has been among the strongest in the global market during the past ten years, making it an increasingly important industry in many countries in East and Southern Africa (World Tourism Organization, 2001). Most tourism enterprises in the region are based on natural resources – wildlife, forests, deserts, and coral reefs – creating important economic incentives for local and national investments in conserving biodiversity (Emerton, 1997; African Wildlife Foundation, 2001a and 2001b). Tourism activities using natural attractions in remote rural areas can be an important source of economic diversification and livelihood opportunity (Ashley et al., 2001; World Tourism Organization, 2002). Thus tourism is increasingly a component of both economic development and biodiversity conservation strategies in sub-Saharan African countries.

Tanzania is simultaneously one of the most economically poor and biologically rich countries in Africa. Income from tourism has grown from US\$65 million in 1990 to US\$725 million in 2001, and now represents roughly 10 per cent of Tanzania's GDP (World Bank/MIGA, 2002). The president of Tanzania calls tourism a key weapon in *"a heightened onslaught on poverty"* (URT, 2002a), and the country's Rural Development Strategy states that a *"pro-poor tourism strategy will aim to unlock opportunities for economic gains and other livelihood benefits"* (URT, 2001).

Revenues from tourism enterprises are central to the conservation of Tanzania's natural resources and biodiversity. Tourism activities, including both photographic safaris and hunting, are vital to maintaining one of the world's largest protected-area estates (MNRT, 1998). Beyond the boundaries of national parks and reserves, tourism on community lands can provide essential incentives for maintaining wildlife and other resources in unprotected areas.

The rapid growth of tourism in northern Tanzania over the last 10 years has been accompanied by a proliferation of commercial ventures on

community lands located outside the traditional national park destinations. This has occurred primarily as a result of the industry's expansion and need to diversify its products beyond the core circuit of national parks. But government authorities have also supported the growth of community-based tourism, recognising its potential to both reduce rural poverty and conserve biodiversity.

This paper reviews how community-based ecotourism (see Box 1 for a definition of this term) in northern Tanzania has evolved and how it contributes to both conservation and rural development. A number of themes emerge which are relevant not only to development and conservation in northern Tanzania, but also more generally to natural resources governance and rural livelihoods in East Africa. First, an increasing number of rural communities in northern Tanzania are signing commercial agreements with private operators to develop ecotourism ventures on their land. These agreements offer important new economic opportunities. But the ability of local people to benefit from them is being compromised by other parties also wishing to develop and benefit from alternative forms of wildlife-based tourism on community lands. The struggles and conflicts that arise from this competition illustrate some of the fundamental governance challenges to community-based natural resource management and ecotourism in Tanzania.

In addition to the challenge of external groups trying to profit at the expense of local people, communities are highly variable in their capacity to manage effectively tourism ventures, revenues, and associated resources.

Growing financial opportunities from tourism, institutional challenges relating to the control of natural resources, and variable local capacity for managing ecotourism ventures are three themes which illustrate both the potential of and the challenges to community-based ecotourism in Tanzania. They also show how good governance is critical to achieving conservation and rural development objectives in the region

Three case studies from villages in northern Tanzania are presented in this paper to illustrate these issues.

Box 1. What is community-based ecotourism?

This paper defines **ecotourism** as “*responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people*” (The Ecotourism Society, 2004).

Community-based tourism refers more specifically to tourism activities or enterprises that involve local communities, occur on their lands, and are based on their cultural and natural assets and attractions. **Community-based ecotourism** is therefore community-based tourism which focuses on travel to areas with natural attractions (rather than, say, urban locales), and which contributes to environmental conservation and local livelihoods.

2. The evolution of community-based ecotourism in Tanzania

Tanzania's natural and cultural assets are a strong basis for the development of a tourism industry (World Bank/MIGA, 2002). The country contains the world's largest remaining populations of terrestrial large mammals, including the two million migratory wildebeest, zebra, and gazelle of the greater Serengeti ecosystem (Sinclair, 1995), and one of Africa's largest wildlife protected areas in the 50,000km² Selous Game Reserve. This biological abundance is situated in a spectacular and diverse landscape featuring the Rift Valley, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru, Lake Victoria, and a largely unspoiled Indian Ocean coastline.

Foreigners have been coming to Tanzania for much of the past 100 years to experience its wealth of natural attractions. Initially safari hunting was the main wildlife-related tourism activity.¹ At Tanzanian independence in 1961,² the African tourism market was beginning to shift towards less consumptive activities, and East Africa was becoming a leading destination for wildlife viewing rather than hunting. As a result of this new industry, wildlife seemed poised to become an important part of the new country's economy by generating tourism investments and revenues. President Julius Nyerere expected wildlife-based tourism to be one of the top foreign exchange earners and was persuaded by foreign conservationists to establish and support national parks largely for this reason (Hayes, 1977; Honey, 1999; Nelson et al., forthcoming).

But it was Nyerere's own policies of socialist development which largely undermined the ability of tourism to register the anticipated growth in the first 25 years of Tanzanian independence. Socialist policies led to the nationalisation of the industry and restrictions on private enterprise. Neighbouring Kenya, by contrast, adopted more capitalistic policies and saw its tourism industry flourish in the 1970s and 1980s (Honey, 1999). It was Kenya's success and Tanzania's failure to offer attractive and efficient tourism services, coupled with other conflicts between the two countries

1. Ernest Hemingway's non-fiction safari memoir, *Green Hills of Africa*, was set in the northern Tanzanian savannahs (Hemingway, 1936).

2. The territory of Tanganyika, which is now mainland Tanzania, gained independence from Britain in 1961. The United Republic of Tanzania was formed through the union of Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar in 1964.

and their generally divergent policies and ideologies, which led to the closing of the border between the two nations in 1977. A key reason for this action was Tanzanian resentment and frustration with foreign tourists arriving by airplane in Nairobi and using Kenyan travel services to visit Tanzanian parks³ (Honey, 1999). Closing the border to force tourists to fly into Tanzania directly and use Tanzanian companies to visit areas like the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater essentially stopped the inflow of tourists to Tanzania altogether, and the country's tourism industry reached its lowest point between 1977 and 1985.

Tourism was not the only industry stifled by Tanzania's socialist economic policies. During this same period the country's overall economy seriously declined due to ineffective policies and economic mismanagement exacerbated by a costly war with Uganda in 1978–79 and the OPEC oil crisis (Bigstein and Danielson, 2001). By 1986 Nyerere had stepped down and the new president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, had agreed to economic liberalisation reforms under a structural adjustment agreement with the International Monetary Fund. Since then Tanzania has experienced a macroeconomic recovery with per annum GDP growth reaching 4–6 per cent in recent years (URT, 2003).

Tourism has been an important component of this recovery. With changes in policies – including the promotion of foreign investment and the privatisation of parastatal companies – the country's natural tourism assets have finally enabled the industry to begin to realise its potential. During the 1990s national tourism earnings grew by over 10 per cent annually and by 2001 tourism comprised 12 per cent of GDP and 51.7 per cent of export earnings (World Bank/MIGA, 2002; World Bank, 2003).

The bulk of tourism investments have been concentrated in a small number of globally famous national parks and conservation areas in the northern part of the country: Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Tarangire, Lake Manyara, and Mount Kilimanjaro.⁴ Visitors to Tarangire National Park, for example, increased more than four-fold from 15,716 in 1989–90 to 63,031 in 2002–03, when they earned the park US\$1,528,215 (Tanzania National Parks, unpublished data).

3. Adding insult to economic injury, some Kenyan tour companies went so far as to advertise the Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro as being in Kenya.

4. Another concentration of tourism investment is in Zanzibar for coastal or beach holiday products.

By the mid-1990s this increase in tourism investments and visitor numbers had resulted in the over-crowding of top destinations in northern Tanzania, leading operators to begin looking for ways to diversify their products to other areas (MNRT, 2002b). Protected areas like Serengeti and Tarangire are surrounded by community lands which offer a tourism product that is in many ways more diverse than that within the parks (Nelson, 2003). In these and other areas where wildlife is highly mobile and migratory, the lands outside the parks may have just as much wildlife at certain times of year as the protected areas themselves (Foley, 2004), but because the community lands are less developed and have less in the way of tourism infrastructure, they may offer high-paying tourists a more exclusive, isolated wilderness experience than the increasingly congested national parks. In addition, activities such as walking, horseback riding, and night game drives (which are all prohibited or restricted in the national parks) can be carried out on community lands. Finally, community lands lend a cultural element to tourism that is absent from the parks, where local people are not allowed to live.

Based on these attractions and the need for diversification in the rapidly growing northern Tanzanian tourism industry,⁵ the initial community-based tourism ventures consisted of very expensive non-permanent camping and hiking activities for foreign tourists using Arusha-based tour operators. By the late 1990s perhaps 25 rural villages in northern Tanzania were hosting some form of permanent or temporary tourism activity, usually in partnership with one or several private companies.

The establishment of these initial agreements between private tour companies and local communities was made possible by laws governing how villages in Tanzania manage their affairs. According to Tanzania's local government legislation,⁶ villages are the basic unit of administration in rural areas. All the adult members of a community comprise the Village Assembly,⁷ and this Village Assembly in turn elects a Village Council of between 15 and 25 members, which is headed by a Village Chairman. Village Councils are corporate bodies capable of owning property, suing

5. At the time of writing Tanzania is experiencing what is likely to be its highest volume of visitors and tourism revenues in its history. Hotels and lodges in the northern circuit's parks are reportedly over-booked by 25–30 per cent and unable to cope with the numbers of tourists that have arrived in the region for this peak season of July–August.

6. Principally the Local Government (District Authorities) Act of 1982.

7. In terms of scale, Village Assemblies typically amount to between 2000 and 5000 people, representing several hundred households.

and being sued, and entering into contracts with other parties (Nshala, 2002). Local government legislation also gives villages the right to develop their own by-laws, subject to district approval, which can be used to create and enforce local rules and regulations (see Box 2). Tanzania's land laws also give the Village Council the authority and responsibility for managing the village's lands on behalf of the community⁸ (Wily, 2003).

These legal provisions allow tourism operators to work with a defined group of people (the village) living in a clearly defined area (the village land), and administered by a democratically elected corporate body capable of entering into legal contracts (the Village Council). These institutional arrangements were critical for the initial development of community-based tourism, and have since played an important role in facilitating the establishment of a range of community-based natural resource management efforts in Tanzania (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camp Ltd, 1996; Wily and Mbaya, 2001; Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming).

In crafting tourism agreements with local communities, companies were often acting not only in response to market opportunities, but also out of ecological foresight. Some of the initial investors in community-based ecotourism recognised the key role of tourism in conserving the landscape by channelling benefits to the rural communities living around protected areas (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camp Ltd, 1996). The Tanzanian government also recognised the importance of generating local benefits, and introduced tourism investments on community lands as a component of wildlife conservation and rural poverty reduction strategies. The Wildlife Policy of Tanzania (1998) specifically called for *"Locating future major tourist developments outside PAs [protected areas] in order to reduce negative impacts and enhance benefit sharing with local communities"* (MNRT, 1998). The Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, through its Wildlife Division, supported initial community-based ecotourism ventures in villages adjacent to the Serengeti and Tarangire National Parks, stating that they were in line with its policy for channelling benefits from wildlife to local communities (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camp Ltd, 1996; Wildlife Working Group, 2002).

Most community-based tourism ventures are located on the lands of pastoralist communities living next to protected areas like Serengeti and Tarangire. Poverty is endemic and rising in these areas. Per capita live-

8. The Land Act of 1999 and Village Land Act of 1999.

stock numbers have declined as a result of human population growth coupled with the loss of large areas of rangeland to national parks and outside investments (Mwalyosi, 1992; Igoe and Brockington, 1999). Agriculture is a marginal activity due to low and highly variable rainfall, while non-farm livelihood and employment options are scarce.

The development in the mid and late 1990s of village-level tourism in northern Tanzania as an actual and potential source of income was thus both economically important and historically ironic. Tourism was ready to diversify local livelihoods where livestock numbers were declining and there were few other alternatives, but it was wildlife-based tourism that first encouraged the establishment of state-protected areas like national parks that had led to the eviction of local people and loss of traditional lands, which had made many of the region's rural communities poorer. Now community-based ecotourism was about to enable villages to earn income directly from tourism ventures that they had contractual control over and that were on their lands.

So by the late 1990s a number of forces and factors had together led to the rise of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania. These included:

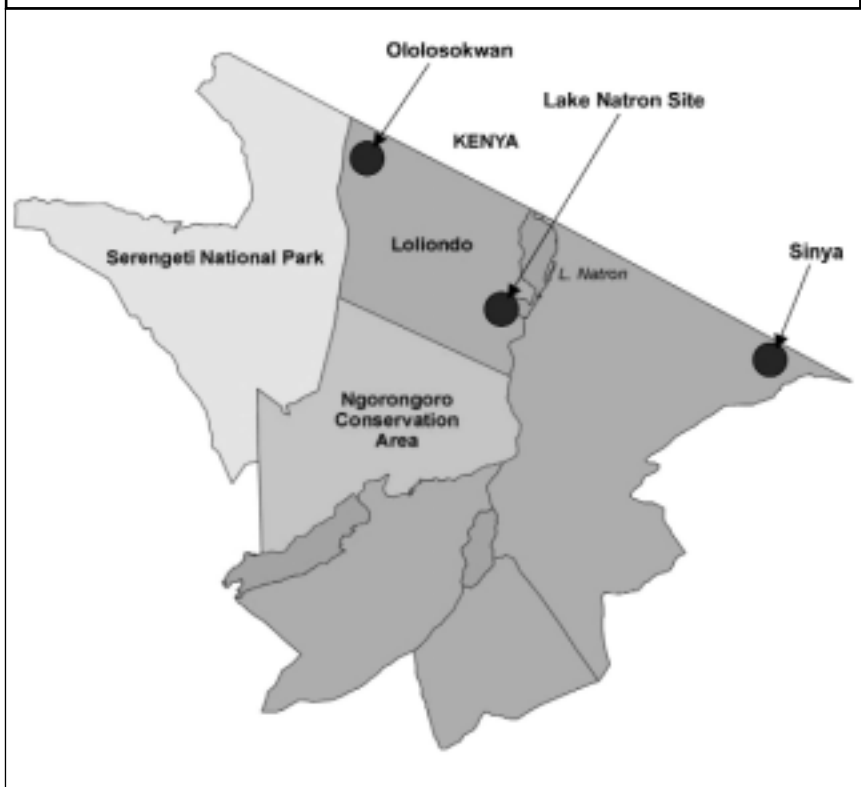
- the rapid expansion of the regional and national tourism industry and consequent need to diversify tourism beyond conventional national park products;
- economic pressures in northern Tanzania's rural areas that led to local support for alternative non-farm livelihood activities such as tourism;
- policy trends in both poverty alleviation and natural resource management that encouraged community-based tourism as a way of creating income and conservation incentives at the local level; and
- the existence of local government and land tenure institutions at the village level that enabled contractual agreements to be formed between private operators and rural communities.

By the turn of the century much of the policy dialogue on rural development and wildlife conservation in northern Tanzania was focused on community-based ecotourism. Situations where local people, tourism enterprises, and conservation all won seemed not only feasible but promising. Pastoralist communities had incentives to conserve and profit from the wildlife that had long co-existed with their cattle in savannah rangelands (Wøien and Lama, 1999). The on-the-ground realities of implementing these scenarios has both confirmed the promise of community-based ecotourism and revealed deeper challenges than were expected five years ago.

3. Local experiences: Three case studies from northern Tanzania

More than a decade has passed since village-level community-based ecotourism began in northern Tanzania (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camp Ltd, 1996; Wøien and Lama, 1999; AWF, 2001b). This section provides an overview of these experiences in three different pastoralist villages dispersed throughout northern Tanzania's savannah rangelands. It considers whether these efforts to link rural livelihoods and wildlife conservation through tourism investments at the village level have born fruit, and offers some key lessons.

Figure 1. Map of northern Tanzania with three case study villages indicated



3.1 Ololosokwan: Turning alienation into opportunity

The village of Ololosokwan is in Loliondo Division, Ngorongoro District, next to both the Serengeti National Park and the Maasai Mara National Reserve in Kenya (see Figure 2), and has some of the most wildlife-rich village lands anywhere in Tanzania. Hundreds of thousands of wildebeest pass through the village lands annually on their migration from the Maasai Mara to the Serengeti plains, and there is a resident population of large mammals and their attendant predators.

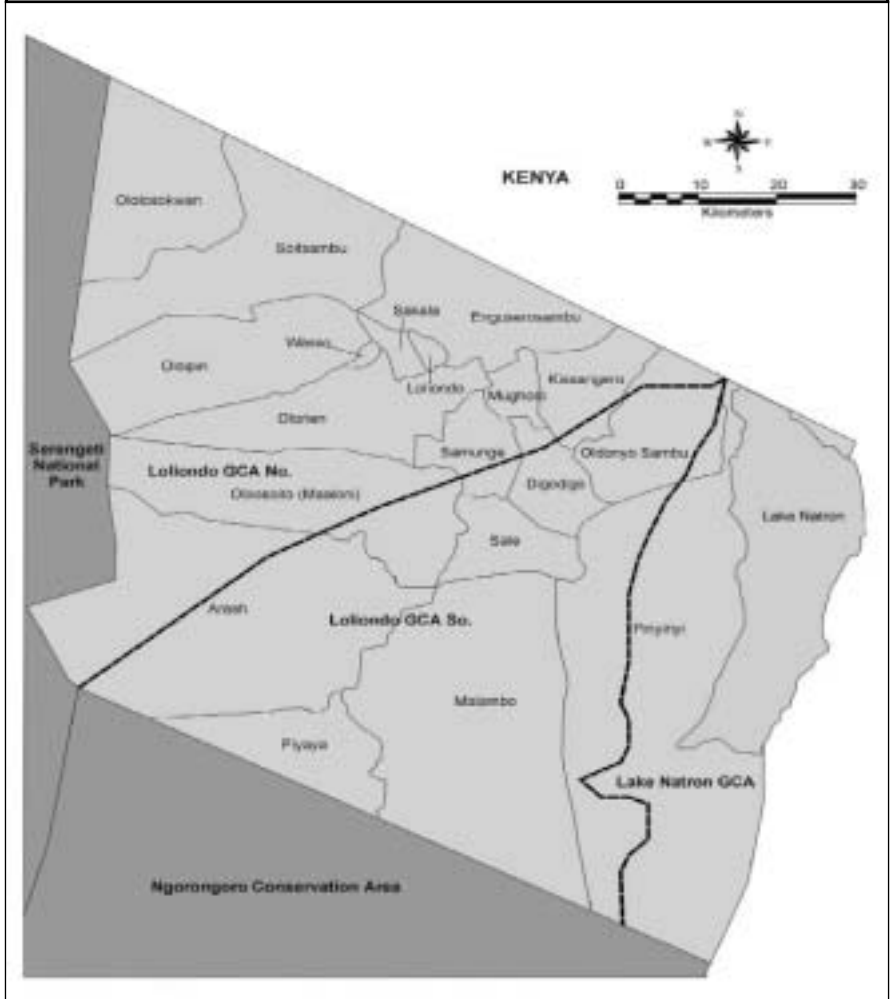
There are about 3,500–4,000 people in the community, more than 90 per cent of whom are agro-pastoralist Maasai of the Purko section. They are relatively wealthy compared to pastoralists elsewhere in northern Tanzania. For example their neighbours in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area have per capita livestock holdings which are less than a third than theirs (Galvin and Thornton, 2001).

The Maasai in Ngorongoro District have been involved in disagreements over local land rights and wildlife conservation during much of the past fifty years (Homewood and Rodgers, 1991; Lane, 1997; Shivji and Kapinga, 1998). In Ololosokwan pastoralists lost access to pasture when the adjacent Serengeti National Park was established in 1959. Disputes over issues such as village–park boundaries have continued for much of the past four decades, and, as in many parts of East Africa, relations between local communities and park management authorities have been tense. These experiences have made the community suspicious of formal wildlife conservation interests (KIHACHA, 2002; Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming). Compounding these historical conflicts, in the late 1980s Loliondo was the subject of state proposals to appropriate large tracts of pastoralist rangelands for outside agricultural investments. Such moves were widespread at the time in other parts of northern Tanzania, such as the Simanjiro, but in Loliondo effective community activism was able to fend off this threatened alienation (Igoe and Brockington, 1999; Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming).

Against this background, Loliondo was among the first areas in northern Tanzania to offer ecotourism on community lands. By the mid-1990s a number of tour companies were using Loliondo's high-quality 'wilderness' while helping conserve the Serengeti by channelling ecotourism revenues to local villages (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camp Ltd, 1996). Village-

level revenue was initially modest, but these initiatives pioneered community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania and the nation as a whole.

Figure 2. Ololosokwan village is in the northwest corner of Ngorongoro District, next to the Serengeti National Park and the Maasai Mara National Reserve (in Kenya)



Solid lines show approximate village boundaries and dotted lines show how Game Controlled Areas cut across and overlap with village lands. Source: O'Malley, 2000.

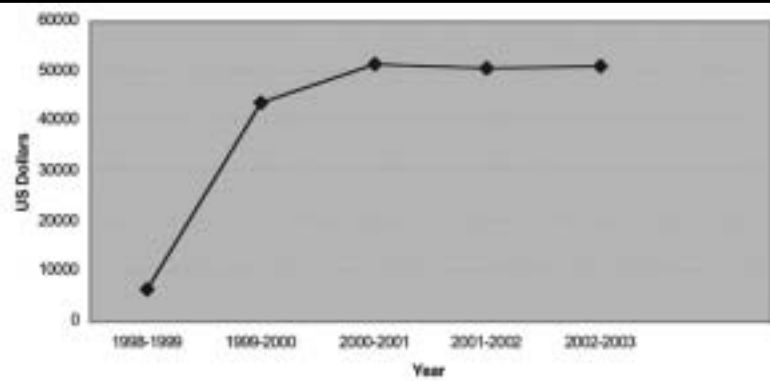
Ecotourism's origins in Ololosokwan village are cloaked in subterfuge, intrigue, and controversy. In the early 1990's, an investor posing as a cattle rancher was able – by various convoluted means, the precise details of which remain disputed to this day – to obtain title to 25,000 acres of land wedged in the north-western corner of Ololosokwan, next to Serengeti National Park and Maasai Mara National Reserve. Once the community realised that this investor's interest was not in fact cattle but tourism and that there was a dispute on the amount of land sold and the procedures used in the transfer, the community took him to court. They lost their lawsuit to recover the property, but following the court ruling the president of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa, responded to local protests and transferred the land back to the village, revoking the investor's title. In the meantime, however, the lease had been purchased from the original investor by a major South African ecotourism company that aimed to develop a lodge on this prime location as part of their northern Tanzanian portfolio. When the land was returned to Ololosokwan village by presidential transfer, the company was forced to either relinquish its holding or negotiate a deal for access with the village. It chose the latter, and the first major commercial ecotourism development in Loliondo was created.

The 1999 contract between the village and the company provides Ololosokwan with a substantial income: an annual rent of US\$25,000, increasing at 5 per cent annually, for access to the 25,000-acre parcel of land.⁹ There is also a bed-night fee of US\$3.15 per person per night for guests staying at the small luxury ecolodge, and fees for landing charter aircraft on the strip built adjacent to the lodge. Between 1999 and 2003 Ololosokwan village's income increased from US\$31,600 to US\$37,640.98 (Wildlife Working Group, unpublished data).

By the time this venture was firmly established in the late 1990s, Ololosokwan had also developed an additional source of ecotourism revenue. They built a very simple campsite not far from Klein's Gate, the north-eastern entrance to Serengeti National Park. With help from the African Wildlife Foundation and the Serengeti National Park's management, Ololosokwan had begun hosting tour companies at this campsite. These operators paid the village US\$20 per tourist per night, in addition to a US\$10 entrance fee paid to Ngorongoro District Council. By 2003, this

9. About 22 per cent of the village's total land area of approximately 115,000 acres.

Figure 3. Tourism revenues to Ololosokwan village council from operator lease fees and bed-night payments, 1998–2003



Source: Wildlife Working Group, unpublished data.

campsite earned the community an additional US\$18,066.53¹⁰ (Wildlife Working Group, unpublished data).

Ololosokwan is the leading example of community-based ecotourism in Tanzania in terms of income for the village. This success stemmed from two key factors: the increasing international demand for wildlife tourism in Tanzania, and the village's ability to use political processes to reclaim the land that it had lost.

The increase in tourism revenues from the late 1990s to the present has resulted in the village council's annual budget increasing from only about US\$2,500 in 1995–97 to an average of US\$57,000 between 2000 and 2002 (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming). By 2002 tourism revenues comprised more than 90 per cent of the council's income (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming). This income has funded an array of communal and individual livelihood benefits, ranging from social services such as schools, dispensaries, and the village office to individual grants for healthcare and secondary school and university tuition fees. Local perception, according to Masara (2000), is that villagers in Ololosokwan now *“think that wildlife and non-consumptive tourism in particular can make a significant contribution to their economy and social change”*.

10. This figure includes US\$13,593.21 paid as bed night fees to the village council's bank account, US\$2,723.32 paid to individual villagers for wage labour, and US\$1,750 in in-kind voluntary donations from the companies to the village.

Village resources have also been reinvested in conserving their natural resources. Four village game scouts are each paid approximately US\$50 per month to police resource use in the area in collaboration with the management of the lodge. A village land-use plan has been prepared and passed which sets aside about 80 per cent of the village land as livestock pasture, a land use compatible with wildlife¹¹ and tourism activities. The entire western portion of the village's land next to the Serengeti National Park is allocated to traditional dry season grazing, effectively providing a

Box 2. Village by-laws and land-use planning in Tanzania

The Local Government Act of 1982 authorises village councils to create by-laws to manage the village better. By-laws must be approved by both the village assembly and the district council and must not conflict with any existing national or district by-laws. Provided they meet those prerequisites and follow procedures, village by-laws become part of the legal code and are enforceable in court.

During the past decade village by-laws have become a central component of community natural resource management in Tanzania. They have been used to develop community-based forest management across the country and are formally included in the Forestry and Beekeeping Division's guidelines for community-based forest management (MNRT, 2001). Likewise, the Wildlife Division's guidelines include the development of village by-laws as a part of the process of forming community-managed Wildlife Management Areas (Wildlife Division, 2003).

By-laws are valuable because they can be used to increase local control over community resources, as well as to foster participatory decision-making and planning processes within the village. Some by-laws, for example, have been used in community forest initiatives to end the open-access exploitation of local forests by establishing regulations for forest users and punitive measures for violators (Wily et al., 2000). They often amount to land-use plans enshrined in local law. This 'zoning' of village lands is potentially important in preventing conflict between agricultural expansion and maintenance of grazing lands in agropastoralist areas. Such zoning of individual land uses (e.g. agriculture) and communal uses (e.g. forests, grazing) is now required by Tanzanian land legislation.

By-laws have proven important in the development of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania for a number of other reasons. They provide legally binding mechanisms for the use and management of tourism revenues. Reporting and accounting by-laws can be important in institutionalising transparency and enabling the village assembly to hold their leaders accountable. Land-use zoning can also ensure that relevant lands are used only for tourism and grazing and not converted to agriculture.

11. The compatibility of wildlife with transhumant Maasai pastoralism is one of the reasons for wildlife's persistence in Olosockwan and surrounding villages. Campbell and Borner (1995) note that in contrast to areas west of Serengeti National Park, "a pastoral land use to the east of the national park [in Loliondo] has resulted in significant wildlife populations and no marked changes in density on either side of the protected area boundaries."

community-managed buffer zone to the park which safeguards the wildebeest migration route through the village. Village by-laws have been passed (see Box 2) which make these land-use plans legally binding (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming). The by-laws also cover revenue management, and require the village council to report on a quarterly basis to the village assembly, who authorise expenditure.

Reporting requirements and other clauses in the by-laws can strengthen the village's capacity to manage tourism income. For example, Ololosokwan Village Assembly audited the village's accounts in 2003 to ensure that funds were being allocated and spent properly and by-laws adhered to. The audit provided a detailed breakdown of village funds received and spent as well as recommendations for improving accounting and reporting procedures. This shows both how able Ololosokwan is to manage tourism enterprises and how the internal governance of institutions has been encouraged by the growth of local tourism.

Community-based ecotourism has clearly benefited Ololosokwan. Both villagers and the village council have more money, which has created new development options. The process of developing ecotourism has helped to improve the community's capacity to manage its natural resources, as shown by their by-laws and land-use plans. These developments have also benefited for wildlife conservation generally, by encouraging land-use planning that preserves most of the community lands for integrated live-stock-wildlife uses. Finally, community-based ecotourism's evolution in Ololosokwan has helped diversify northern Tanzania's tourism industry, which improves the region's prosperity and resilience.

The main obstacles to Ololosokwan's tourism ventures have come from conflicting external interests to this otherwise positive local scenario. These interests revolve around the value of the village's wildlife and other resources to tourism and other commercial activities, and the challenges have come from both district and central governments.

The central government, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), leases out all of the Loliondo area as a tourist hunting concession (see Box 3 for an explanation of tourist hunting management in Tanzania). The current concession dates from 1993, when it was granted to an individual from the United Arab Emirates in a deal that was controversial at the time (MERC, 2002). All of Ololosokwan's village land

is within this hunting concession, and there have been periodic conflicts between hunting and other tourism activities (Masara, 2000). Regulations to manage tourist hunting have been passed by the MNRT which attempt to prohibit tourism activities on any land – whether state conservation areas or village lands – where hunting is carried out (Masara, 2000; Nshala, 2002). Section 16.5 of these regulations states that:

“No person shall conduct tourist hunting, game viewing, photographic safari, walking safari or any wildlife based tourist safari within a hunting block or within any wildlife protected area outside Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and National park, except by and in accordance with the written authority of the Director of Wildlife previously sought and obtained” (MNRT, 2000).

The purpose of these regulations was to prevent conflicts between tourism and tourist hunting which were on the rise following the increase of community-based tourism in areas such as Loliondo. Although they have not been enforced,¹² they are a clear attempt by the wildlife authorities to increase central control over the tourism activities being carried out on village lands in partnership with rural communities (Nelson et al., forthcoming). The Loliondo hunting concession is a lucrative business for to the central government (MNRT, 2002a), so they want to ensure that this arrangement continues in Ololosokwan and surrounding villages.

Ngorongoro District Council¹³ has also challenged Ololosokwan’s community-based tourism enterprises by arguing that revenues from operators or lodges should be paid to it instead of directly to the village (Masara, 2000). The village received a letter from the Ngorongoro District Council (NDC) on April 14, 2000 stating that their contract with the South African lodge company was inoperative and outside the law (ibid), and Ndoinyo

12. A reason for this lack of enforcement of the regulations is that, as Nshala (2002) argues, the attempt to regulate non-consumptive tourism is outside of the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974.

13. Districts are the administrative level of government between the local (village) and national. District councils are made up of elected councilors from local wards, which are made up of several villages. Districts are responsible for administering service provision to local people as well as matters such as security and tax collection. In terms of natural resources, districts manage Local Authority Forest Reserves, often in collaboration with local villages, and also administer wildlife use through a national system of ‘resident hunting’. Districts do not, however, have a major role in land management except to help villages to carry out land-use planning and boundary demarcation, and to issue appropriate certificates and approve village plans and by-laws.

Box 3. The management of tourist hunting in Tanzania

Tanzania has one of Africa's largest safari hunting industries (Leader-Williams et al., 1996), generating important revenues for maintaining many protected areas such as the Selous Game Reserve (Baldus and Cauldwell, 2004). Estimates of safari hunting's annual value to Tanzania vary widely and there is little transparency in data on hunting concession earnings, but Baldus and Cauldwell (ibid) calculate the annual gross value of the industry at about US\$27 million, with revenues to the Wildlife Division of about US\$10 million.

Tourist hunting is managed by the Wildlife Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism according to a system of 'hunting blocks' – which are concession areas leased to private companies for five-year terms (although a lease can be revoked on the basis of annual review). These blocks occur both in game reserves, where people do not live, and in the village lands inhabited by rural communities. Local communities living in areas leased for hunting do not have any formal role in choosing the leaseholder for their area and are not paid any fees for the hunting that takes place on their lands, although about 20 per cent of hunting revenues are returned to the district government.

The system of local land tenure and management established by Tanzania's land legislation and the central control of wildlife and its uses through the tourist hunting concession system has created a conflict of jurisdictions in village lands as locals and central authorities compete for control over land-use decisions (Masara, 2000; Jones, 2001; Nshala, 2002). During the past five years these conflicts have become an entrenched and widespread feature of land-use and natural resource management dynamics in northern Tanzania.

(2002) observes that the lodge–village joint venture *“was strongly opposed by the district and regional officials”*. Although this attempt by the district to prevent or capture the village's tourism revenues has not succeeded, it is another case where the community has effectively resisted outside pressure to control the local resource base. Even in the case of the centrally managed tourist hunting concession, Ololosokwan has been relatively effective in overcoming adverse effects from the conflict and maintaining tourism activities despite substantial external political and legal pressures. The village's effectiveness in preventing outsiders from expropriating local resources and the revenues they generate has been one of the most important lessons from Ololosokwan's experiences with community-based ecotourism during the past decade (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming).

Although the village has progressed despite these pressures, the conflicts have not been harmless. The village's income rose rapidly when major tourism investments began in 1998–99, but appears to have levelled out at about US\$51,000 per year (see Figure 3). The conflicts with the

Loliondo safari hunting concession are a constraint on the further growth of tourism in the area and a likely reason for this ceiling in village earnings. The annual hunting season is July–December, and for parts of this period, particularly July–September, many tour operators avoid the entire Loliondo area. (This is most relevant to the operators who use Ololosokwan’s campsite – the permanent lodge does business throughout the year, hunting or no hunting.) More generally, the conflict between safari hunting and ecotourism in Loliondo has now existed for more than a decade, and beyond direct conflicts on the ground in Ololosokwan, the general development of Loliondo as a tourism destination has been greatly constrained by these conflicts (Wildlife Working Group, 2002).

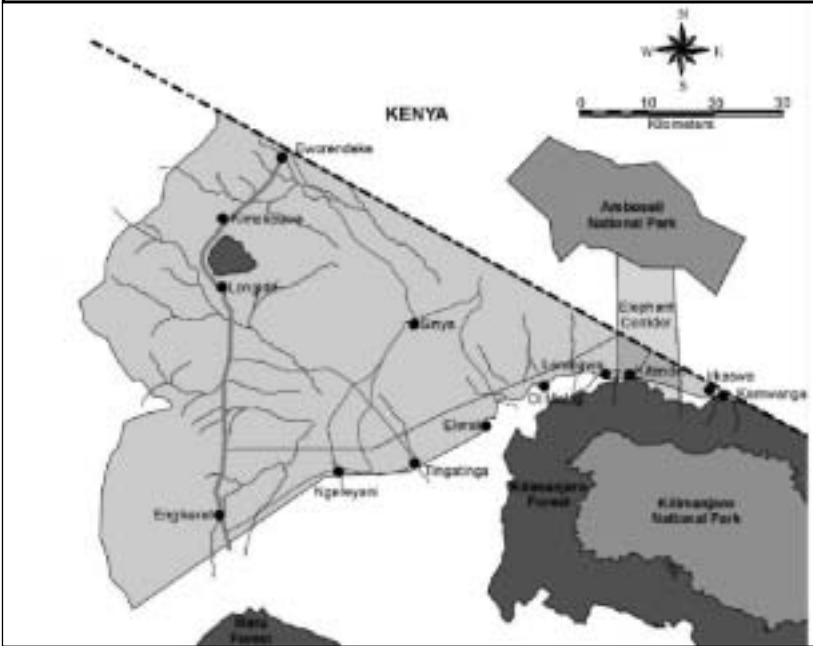
3.2 Sinya: Conflicts within, conflicts without

Sinya village, in Monduli District Council, is another Maasai pastoralist community in northern Tanzania, like Ololosokwan it is on the border with Kenya, but in this case next to Mount Kilimanjaro. Sinya comprises a large part of the Tanzanian side of the greater Amboseli ecosystem, which overall totals about 5,000 km² and is centred on Kenya’s Amboseli National Park.¹⁴ The Tanzanian portion of this ecosystem is commonly referred to as West Kilimanjaro, and covers a roughly triangular area defined by Kilimanjaro to the east, Mount Longido to the west, and Mount Meru to the south (see Figure 4).

Sinya’s approximately 600km² of land is among the more arid areas in northern Tanzania because it is in Mount Kilimanjaro’s rain shadow. With only about 200–400mm of annual rainfall, even the most marginal drylands cultivation is unsuitable and pastoralism is the only traditional land use. As in Ololosokwan, Sinya’s lands contain important migratory routes and dispersal areas for wildlife, as wildebeest and zebra move from Amboseli National Park south through Sinya to the Ngasurai plains during the wet season. During the past decade the area has become increasingly important for the Amboseli elephant population, which now numbers about 1,200 animals (Blanc et al., 2003). Since the ivory poaching situation was brought under control in northern Tanzania in the late 1980s and early 1990s, elephants have gradually moved back into the area from their stronghold in Amboseli. By the late 1990s around fifty elephants were regularly using the Sinya area, and more recently over 150 have been seen on a single day (Poole and Reuling, 1997; J. Teigell, *pers. comm.*).

14. Kiunsi (1993) estimates that the Tanzanian portion of the greater Amboseli ecosystem comprises 1440km² of the 5200km² ecosystem.

Figure 4. Location of Sinya village relative to surroundings including Mount Kilimanjaro and Amboseli National Park



Source: Poole and Reuling, 199.

The area's proximity to Amboseli National Park across the border, the recovery of local elephant populations, and the national tourism boom of the 1990s all created a growing demand for tourism in Sinya. At first this was mainly mobile, small-scale, and high-priced bush camping activities, and by 1998–99 the village was earning perhaps US\$1,000–3,000 annually from tourist visits. By 2000, the volume of tourists coming to Sinya was slowly increasing and more permanent investments were being considered by a number of Arusha-based operators.

As in Ololosokwan, initial ecotourism ventures in Sinya and the rest of the West Kilimanjaro basin were supported by government authorities at a number of levels. The Wildlife Division supported the establishment of West Kilimanjaro as a 'pilot' community-based conservation initiative (Community Conservation Services Centre, 1997). Monduli District Council commissioned a Tourism Master Plan which recommended developing the West Kilimanjaro area as a community-based ecotourism site through

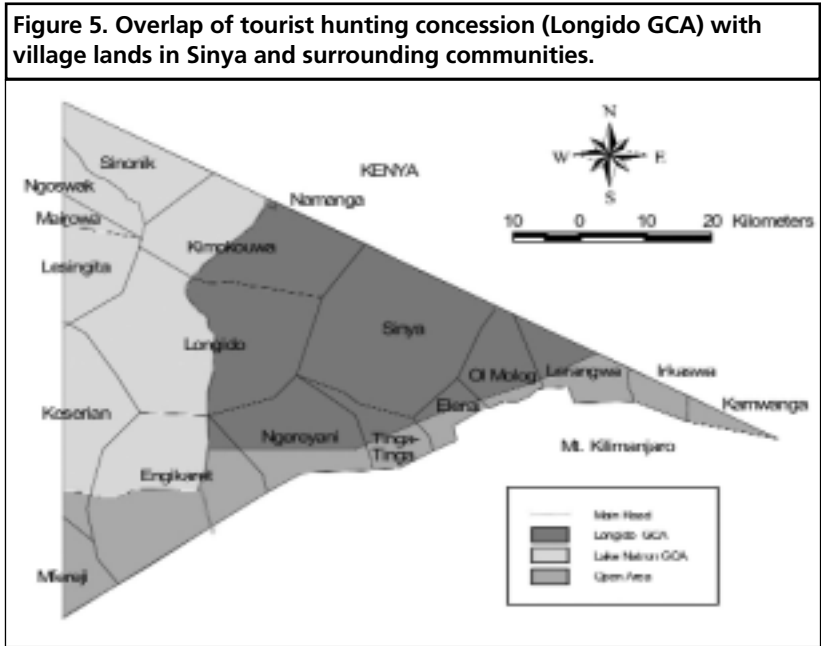


**Mount
Kilimanjaro**

collaboration with the local villages (Robford Tourism, 1999). Additional support came from conservation organisations who were concerned about the depletion of wildlife in West Kilimanjaro from bushmeat poaching and supported community participation in wildlife management as a remedy (Community Conservation Services Centre, 1997; Poole and Reuling, 1997). Two people each from Sinya and six other nearby villages were trained as village game scouts, and a number of conservation organisations worked to raise awareness and build capacity for natural resource management at the village level in 1998–2000. In Sinya a natural resource committee was formed as part of the village council and numerous meetings were held on the subjects of tourism development and wildlife management.

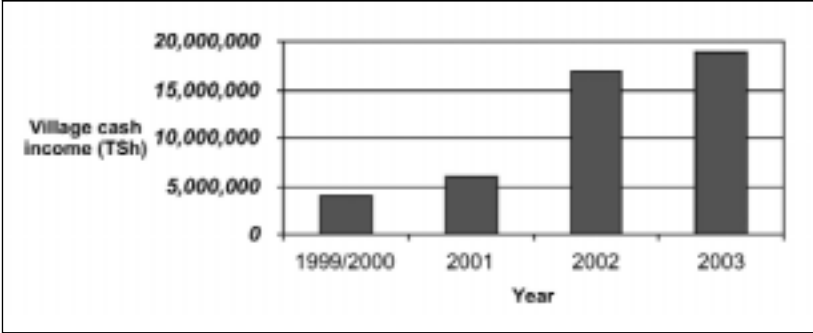
But just as community-based ecotourism began to become established in West Kilimanjaro, the local and national policy environment suddenly changed, with the release of the Tourist Hunting Regulations of 2000 (see above section on Ololosokwan). Like Ololosokwan, all of Sinya's village

lands fall within the boundaries of a tourist hunting concession (see Figure 5) which claims exclusive access to the wildlife therein, and conflicts emerged between tour operators in West Kilimanjaro and the hunting concession holder (Masara, 2000). The combination of these conflicts on the ground and the Tourist Hunting Regulations' nominal prohibition on tourism in hunting blocks discouraged investments in ecotourism in Sinya and surrounding villages around 2000–01.



Despite this institutional confusion and the apparent reversal of policy from one that supported to one that prohibited community-based ecotourism in village lands, one operator came forward and began formulating a commercial agreement with Sinya. Formal approval for the initiative was obtained at the national level from the Tanzania Investment Centre (despite the nominal illegality of such ventures according to the Tourist Hunting Regulations), and by 2002 a contract had been signed that provides the village with a US\$20 bed-night fee. The village's tourism income has increased rapidly during the past five years (Figure 6). Individual income opportunities from tourism operations – which has evolved into a permanent luxury camp – have also developed through employment and purchase of local crafts.

Figure 6. Sinya village income from tourism, 1999–2003 (in 2004 US\$1 = TSh1100).



As in Ololosokwan, tourism income has created important village-level incentives for wildlife conservation in Sinya. In just a few years, the area's large mammals have gone from being a costly resource¹⁵ that the community had co-existed with over the years to a source of valuable collective income and individual employment. The income has been used for conventional social service infrastructure priorities in Sinya, most notably construction of the primary school dormitory and maintenance of water supply machinery.

Sinya has struggled to meet the demands of administering this new source of revenue, however. While some revenue has clearly been invested in socially valuable community projects, much of the revenue has not been used well. During the past five years three different village council chairmen – who normally serve five-year terms – have been thrown out of office because of controversies relating to the use of tourism funds and natural resource management decision-making. As a result, throughout much of 2002–03 the village had no chairman as the community wrangled over its leadership, and village governance was in disarray. The village has not passed by-laws to regulate its reporting or accounting procedures or promote transparent management. One of the major limitations in Sinya is a low level of literacy among the entire pastoralist community.

15. The main source of human–wildlife conflicts in Sinya are livestock predation by lions, leopards, and spotted hyenas, and conflicts with elephants arising from destruction of village water pipes and tanks.



Sinya is located in the West Kili basin

With instability in the village council, limited capacity for financial management due to low literacy, and weak mechanisms for ensuring accountability in the use of funds due to the absence of village by-laws, Sinya's tourism income has been misused in recent years. So tourism income has provided economic benefits, but is also a source of division and conflict within the community, and internal conflicts relating to the mismanagement of revenues have been a main characteristic of community-based ecotourism in Sinya thus far.

These conflicts have not been due solely to local problems of capacity and accountability, however. As in Ololosokwan, the situation in Sinya has been profoundly influenced by external efforts to control the area's valuable natural resource base. These conflicts culminated in with the 2002 arrest of the tour operator's management for allegedly violating the Tourist Hunting Regulations' provisions banning tourism activities in hunting blocks (Mbaria, 2002). Nevertheless, tourism in Sinya has grown despite this legal challenge, and the prosecution failed to secure an injunction against tourism operations in Sinya while the case is in process.

Thus like in Ololosokwan, in Sinya there have been conflicts amongst parties struggling to secure control over the local wildlife resource. This has been exacerbated by the increasing scarcity of wildlife in parts of the West Kilimanjaro area. The growth of tourism in the Sinya area in the late 1990s coincided with the depletion of wildlife in much of the Longido hunting block (in which Sinya falls) due to bushmeat poaching (Poole and Reuling, 1997; Barnett, 2000; Nelson, 2000). These were probably important contributing factors in bringing tourism and tourist hunting activities in the area into conflict.

As in Loliondo, Sinya has thus far been able to maintain its ecotourism ventures despite aggressive legal challenges by central authorities and outside interests. The private tourism investor in Sinya has effectively used the leverage of official approval from the Tanzania Investment Centre to counter the decrees of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism through the Tourist Hunting Regulations. That different central government bodies can hold directly conflicting positions on tourism investments in village lands highlights the institutional confusion surrounding tourism development and wildlife management in northern Tanzania at present. This confusion fuels the conflicts on the ground. Although community-based ecotourism in Sinya has flourished, such conflicts impose significant but unquantifiable costs on the time and resources of both private sector and local community actors. Ultimately the conflicts in Sinya represent not only the severity of competition for access to valuable resources but the insecurity of local and private sector investments in community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania as a result of policy reversals and institutional contradictions.

3.3 Lake Natron: Missing the boat

Located about halfway between the Serengeti to the west and Kilimanjaro to the east is Lake Natron, a vast inland basin lying below the Rift Valley escarpment. The 55km-long soda lake is the breeding site for roughly 80 per cent of the world's lesser flamingos, and was one of Tanzania's first two wetlands to be listed as a Ramsar Site¹⁶ (Baker and Baker, 2002). The area is among the most arid in northern Tanzania and supports few people. Two demarcated villages, Pinyinyi and Engare Sero,

16. Under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance signed at the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971.

run along the lake's western shore in Ngorongoro District (the eastern side of the lake is in Monduli District). Land use there is almost entirely for pastoralism as the area's aridity precludes any significant farming from taking place.

Tourism has been slower to develop at Lake Natron than in either Loliondo or West Kilimanjaro due to the area's remoteness (until recently a six to eight-hour drive from Arusha over rough dirt tracks), often scorching climate, and lower wildlife density. In addition, during 1998–2000 there were a number of incidents involving banditry by Somali *shifita*¹⁷, making the security situation unfavourable for any significant tourism investment.

But compensating for some of those difficulties in access and amenities, the Natron area contains some of the most scenically spectacular stretches of northern Tanzania. The active volcano Oldoinyo Lengai (Maasai for "Mountain of God") is the most striking, and is also a popular climbing destination among tourists. The spectacle of several million flamingos on the lake, accompanied by numerous other water birds, also provides Natron with a unique natural attraction and distinguishes it from other areas on the northern circuit. These assets, coupled with the improving infrastructure and security situation, have made Lake Natron one of the current focal areas for diversifying and expanding the northern Tanzanian tourism circuit (Tourism Development Programme, 2002).

The existing, limited investment is concentrated in Engare Sero village, at the southern end of the lake, where access is easiest. Engare Sero hosts two campsites belonging to one tour operator and a modest tented lodge belonging to another. But unlike in Sinya or Ololosokwan, neither of these developments had a contractual agreement between the tourism company and the village. Land for the lodge was purchased outright by a company granted title by the village, and the land for the two campsites was apparently settled on and developed without any local authorisation. The owner of the two campsites pays nothing to the village while the tented camp pays a US\$5 bed-night fee, considerably less than most villages in the region earn.

17. *Shifita* is a term used in East Africa for semi-nomadic armed bandits, often Somalis coming from eastern Kenya or the former Somalia.



**Tourists at
waterfall,
Engare Sero
village**

The result is that Engare Sero has little stake in the income produced by increasing numbers of tourists coming onto its lands and staying at these sites. A gate has been set up at the southern end of Engare Sero and tourists entering the area pay US\$15 per person,¹⁸ but these fees go to Ngorongoro District Council and not the village. Because it has not put itself in a position to control and manage the tourism enterprises carried out in the area, Engare Sero village estimates its earnings at only about US\$2,500 annually from payments made by the lodge, only 5–10 per cent of that earned through tourism by Sinya or Ololosokwan (Ujamaa–Community Resource Trust and Sand County Foundation –Tanzania, 2004).

18. The operation of this gate was recently suspended by the District due to concerns about administering this fee collection (M. Ngoitiko, *pers. comm.*).

Thus despite an increasing volume of tourists coming to the Lake Natron area (Oldoinyo Lengai is also on Engare Sero's village lands), the community is not the proprietor of the existing ventures and has been largely excluded from benefiting from these enterprises. Unlike in Ololosokwan and Sinya, Engare Sero's natural assets have not translated into substantial economic benefits through community-based ecotourism.

The reasons for this discrepancy and the community's failure to control the ecotourism on its lands largely relate to the remoteness of the Natron area and a lack of information and empowerment at the village level. The community, including its village council, had limited knowledge of tourism, village governance responsibilities and land rights, and even of nearby community tourism ventures such as those in Ololosokwan (Ujamaa–Community Resource Trust and Sand County Foundation – Tanzania, 2004).

Connected to this remoteness has been the absence of skilled facilitation for tourism development and community resource management in Engare Sero. Both Ololosokwan and Sinya have been the focus of numerous capacity-building and outreach efforts by conservation groups, local civil society organisations, and protected area wildlife authorities. Engare Sero has had virtually none of this support, which has greatly curtailed its access to information and support services.

Private sector aims and intentions matter as well. In both Sinya and Ololosokwan, the high-end tourism companies investing in the community areas recognised from the outset that village revenue and wildlife conservation were linked, and that wildlife's ability to earn income for the local communities was central to its ability to survive outside protected areas (e.g. Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camps Ltd, 1996). The lower end operators who have invested in Engare Sero have either not recognised the importance of community-based tourism in creating incentives for sustainable natural resource management, or have been pursuing short-term economic gains at the expense of longer term social and ecological sustainability.

4. Discussion: Impacts of and challenges to community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania

The experiences of the three villages reviewed here illustrate both the potential of community-based ecotourism to improve rural livelihoods and conservation, as well as many of the stumbling blocks to translating promise into practice.

In Sinya and Ololosokwan, village revenues increased rapidly during the past five years and led to socio-economic benefits. While in both areas local economies remain firmly based on pastoralist livestock production, tourism has contributed an important and growing source of diversification. The change in the capacity of Ololosokwan village council to invest in the community's social infrastructure and in individual livelihoods (e.g. education) has been dramatic, with the village budget increasing more than 20-fold in this short period of time.

But Sinya and Ololosokwan reveal very different levels of ability in internal governance and the capacity of villages to manage tourism revenues and turn this income into social benefits and investments. Wildlife-based tourism has created substantial benefits and value in Sinya, and this has resulted in village council revenue and individual employment opportunities, but at the same time internal conflicts have increased, resulting in instability in local governance and decision-making.

This variance in internal governance capacities also reveals itself in the differing levels of reinvestment in natural resource management by the two communities. Ololosokwan has passed by-laws which provide a range of statutory controls on natural resource uses in the village and a land-use plan designating the bulk of village lands to integrated pastoralism and wildlife-based tourism. The community is one of the very few villages in all of Tanzania, that has its own paid game scouts for policing resource uses in the village. Sinya's investments in conserving wildlife are less visible. It has no by-laws, no land-use zoning plan, and only recently revived its village game scout system through the initiative of an outside conservation organisation and with support from its resident tour operator. Any improved conditions for wildlife in the village – in terms of

reductions in illegal use – are probably due as much or more to the presence of the tourism company than to village-driven improvements in stewardship.

In Engare Sero village, commercial tourism is increasing but thus far has not been under the control of the community. Local people have been excluded from the benefits that other villages in northern Tanzania have been able to generate. Tourism in the village has consequently produced minimal social or economic benefit for the community. The lesson from Engare Sero is that market opportunities and village land rights are not enough; local people need to be actively empowered through knowledge of their rights to manage lands and resources and to enter into commercial agreements in order to take advantage of commercial interests in their resources and to avoid being by-passed by outsiders. Engare Sero shows the importance of skilled facilitation if communities are to be empowered to take advantage of emerging commercial opportunities.

By contrast, Ololosokwan has benefited throughout this period from both the Loliondo area's history of local land rights advocacy and activism, as well as the skilled and dedicated support of local civil society organisations, assets which few communities in Tanzania have (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming). This experience is largely a result of the pressures put on the resource-rich Loliondo pastoralist communities from outside interests – including their powerful neighbours, the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Civil society organisations have played a key role in both building the capacity of villages such as Ololosokwan to manage tourism and the natural resources it depends on, and supporting them in the on-going process of defending local initiatives (Nelson and Ole Makko, forthcoming).

Local variance in the outcome of ecotourism's evolution and management is, in all three cases, a function not only of local capacities but of external dynamics. In Engare Sero tourism companies have taken advantage of the lack of local knowledge and capacity to circumvent the community. But in Ololosokwan and Sinya the central struggle during the past five years over land, wildlife, and tourism has been between village-based ecotourism and centrally managed safari hunting concessions.

These tensions have been exacerbated and prolonged by institutional confusion. Local government and land tenure legislation provided the

initial legal basis and framework for developing tourism activities at the village level (Dorobo Tours and Safaris and Oliver's Camps Ltd, 1996; Nshala, 2002). The Wildlife Policy specifically sought to promote community-based tourism investments in the mid and late 1990s, but subsequent hunting regulations conflict with the policy by prohibiting tourism in village lands where hunting concessions exist. Meanwhile, the national Rural Development Strategy and related poverty reduction documents promote community-based tourism without any apparent recognition that internal contradictions exist. Sinya exemplifies how this confusion can play out on the ground, with the Tanzania Investment Centre, operating under Investment Policy and legislation, supporting community-based tourism while the Wildlife Division supports the prosecution of the local tour company for violation of hunting regulations.

It is a testament to the strength and resilience of local institutions that community interests and tourism activities have been able to coexist in these villages throughout this period despite this confused institutional environment. Ololosokwan's ventures were developed only after it successfully challenged outside efforts to seize its prime tourism lands. This local resilience in the face of considerable central political and economic pressure is a reminder that, as Murphree (2000) states: "Once in place...devolution is difficult to retract. Given a degree of autonomy, local jurisdictions become more aggressive in asserting their rights." By defending their right to manage and benefit from ecotourism, communities such as Ololosokwan are playing an important role in the broader contests over natural resource use, management, and tenure that are central to the future of livelihood and democratisation in rural Tanzania, and indeed much of East and Southern Africa (Shivji, 1998; Gibson, 1999; Barrow et al., 2000; Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Ribot, 2002).

However, while villages with existing tourism ventures may have prevented a substantial 'roll-back' or removal of those established ventures as attempted by wildlife authorities, the on-going resource use conflicts have probably inhibited the broader spread of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania. The conflicts over land, wildlife, and tourism in the region represent costs imposed on both rural communities and the private sector, inhibiting commerce and investment. These reflect a national business environment for community-based ecotourism which is generally unsupportive and restrictive despite policy statements to the contrary (e.g. URT, 2002b). These experiences serve as a reminder that

economic development and growth does not flow smoothly from master plans and policy statements, but from the often chaotic interplay of political and economic forces in a rapidly changing society.

In drawing lessons from her survey of ecotourism's early evolution not only in sub-Saharan Africa but across the globe, Honey (1999) concludes that *"at its core, ecotourism is about power relationships and on-the-ground struggles"*. The experiences of rural communities in northern Tanzania during the past ten years reinforce the centrality of such struggles in fulfilling the conceptual promise of ecotourism. Creating local economic opportunities from tourism is fundamentally a governance issue at local, regional, and national levels.

5. Conclusion

The evolution of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania during the past decade has important implications for local economies and regional natural resource management, particularly with respect to wildlife outside of protected areas in savannah rangelands. Ecotourism has spread into rural pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities, including many with limited livelihood options and declining per capita livestock holdings. These developments are highly significant in a regional and national context where (1) poverty reduction is highly dependent on rural economic diversification, and (2) biodiversity conservation must involve a high degree of local management of natural resources. But while community-based ecotourism is increasingly front-and-centre in discussions of how to address both rural development and landscape-level wildlife conservation challenges in northern Tanzanian rangelands, ecotourism is far from realising its potential in the region.

The overarching themes in community-based ecotourism's evolution in Tanzania are rights and capacity, themes which are all fundamentally about governance at the local and national levels. The ability of ecotourism to realise its promise for linking rural livelihoods with biodiversity conservation depends largely on the future of local rights and decision-making authority. These fundamental issues of authority and devolution have followed a rather erratic evolutionary path during the past decade in northern Tanzania. Initially wildlife authorities supported community management of ecotourism ventures on village lands, but once it became clear that these ventures might conflict with the established system of centralised management of tourist hunting concessions this support eroded and was officially reversed with the release of new hunting regulations prohibiting such tourism activities. But other government policies and administrative practices – such as those for tourism, rural development, and investment – remain supportive of community-based ecotourism.

Will more secure local authority for wildlife and land uses develop, or will central efforts to control economic activity, investments, and valuable natural resources overwhelm local opportunities? Will villages develop

their capacity through trial and error, emerging from internal conflicts with stronger management institutions, or will these internal differences serve to increase local divisions and contribute to the breakdown of village institutions and traditional social relationships? The answers to these questions are closely tied to the evolution of governance dynamics within Tanzania in general. These outcomes depend on the understanding of these political economy dynamics among an array of parties including local communities, the private sector, government bureaucrats at many levels, and external interests in the policy realms of both conservation and rural development, and how that understanding is used to support local rights and opportunities to manage tourism and natural resources. Ecotourism's ability to contribute to local livelihoods and conservation objectives in northern Tanzania will largely be determined by these evolving dynamics.

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