

CBC: Where are we now - Where are we going?

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15 Years of CBC

Community Based Conservation (CBC) of wildlife in Tanzania is now more than 15 years old. The Wildlife Division and German Technical Assistance (GTZ) started the Selous Conservation Programme in 1987 and initiated the first pilot areas around the Selous Game Reserve, with more following in other parts of the country. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism released a new wildlife policy in 1998, and Regulations for the new Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) are now in place. A new Wildlife Conservation Act is in the making. Indeed much has been achieved.

However, the practical results on the ground are less impressive. To date not a single WMA is operational according to the formal procedures designated in the Regulations. All in all the whole WMA approach is moving forward - but at a "snails' pace" in terms of practical achievement.

Unfortunately, the Regulations are so complicated that people say you have to be a professor to understand them. Others complain that the Government requires more from the villagers than it provides itself in its own protected areas. How many Game Reserves have Management Plans as required now for the establishment of a WMA? Any investment in a WMA needs an Environmental Impact Assessment, but how many investments, like roads or game scout stations, have undergone such assessments in the Government's own Game Reserves? Additionally the WMA-villages are now required to produce a Certificate of Land, which is neither demanded in the Regulations nor has been granted to a single village in the whole of Tanzania.

Some observers have commented that all this does not sound like a wholehearted promotional strategy for the Government's policies. We do not agree with this: The Government is determined to implement its Wildlife Policy. The Government wants to empower rural communities as part of its poverty-reduction drive. However, too much bureaucracy slows down the process. These complex bureaucratic requirements also make target communities feel discouraged, and are contrary to what they were led to expect when the Regulations were launched.

Selous Pilot WMA

Let us have a look at the five WMA pilot areas in Liwale, Tunduru, Namtumbo, Rufiji and Morogoro districts. They have been supported jointly by the Tanzanian and German Governments since the late eighties through the Selous Conservation Programme. Where do they stand? What is the state of affairs in these areas?

- All participating villages have already prepared land use plans. The participatory process mitigates conflicts and misunderstandings between villages.
- The villages have set aside areas for wildlife conservation.

- District Natural Resources Advisory Bodies are in position and are functioning.
- Each pilot WMA around the Selous receives an annual hunting quota from the Wildlife Division. The revenue generated by the utilisation of the quotas is used for wildlife conservation and community development.
- On the job training of villagers and village leaders on management, accountability, awareness and sensitisation on CBC and WMA Regulations is on-going and making excellent progress. Formal training of village scouts has also been carried out.
- Crop protection has been improved in all areas due to increased involvement of villages and their scouts.
- Villages are holding transparent annual budget meetings to strengthen accountability.
- The concerned communities are well informed of the WMA concept and the conservation activities going on in their designated areas.
- There are material benefits from the quota and in the case of Jukumu from a hotel lease. Income would be increased more than tenfold, if the WMA would receive the full user rights and could tender or auction the hunting rights.
- Poaching has been significantly reduced and wildlife has come back to areas where it was absent before.

The Jukumu Society in Morogoro District is often affiliated with the CBC and WMA approach in Tanzania because Jukumu has advanced further than the rest of the pilot WMA in the country. Member villages have practiced community wildlife management since the late eighties. Eight years ago 22 villages formed a Community Based Organization (CBO) with the aim to introduce conservation and the sustainable utilization of natural resources. This was supported by the Wildlife Division, the District and GTZ under the Selous Conservation Programme. It was registered under the name "Jumuiya ya kuhifadhi na matumizi bora ya maliasili ukutu" after fulfilling all the requirements. It has met the requirements and became the first pilot WMA in the country to apply for Authorized Association status to the Director of Wildlife. Unfortunately, this application was rejected for technical reasons and Jukumu is now reapplying.

Tired of Waiting...

Another point is the decision by the Government to test their own approach in 16 so called "pilot areas" for three years. It is fully understandable that the Government wants to move carefully and avoid failures, when making such a major paradigm shift, although the villages around the Selous, in Iringa or Ikoma have already practiced wildlife use on a pilot basis for many years. Presently much money is being spent on developing a monitoring system in order to assess the progress of these WMA after the pilot phase. However, most of these "pilot WMA" are presently not operational and none has full user rights. Twatwawa WMA might even never come into existence, and those WMA in Game Controlled Areas can only start after this legal status has been removed, which may take a long time. It is a concern that there will not be much to evaluate after the pilot phase of three years.

Consequently there is already talk of extending the pilot phase. This would be most unfortunate, if further village would not be allowed to establish their own WMA. The pilot phase could therefore have the effect of a moratorium on the creation of new WMA. If the pilot phase would continue, then the full implementation of the Government's Wildlife Policy in the field of WMA could take decades. And many villages have meanwhile requested to be allowed to start WMA according to the Regulations, e.g. along the Rovuma River, in Kisarawe District or around Katavi and Saadani National Parks.

Villages have already waited for more than 15 years to see CBC become a reality in Tanzania. Within such a time span a child is born, is brought up and will have nearly completed its education. How far have the WMA "children" developed in those years? Has mother allowed them to take off their nappies? Has father allowed them to use their abilities and earn money for themselves?

One result of the slow progress in the field is that the communities have become frustrated. Many villages have given up waiting for CBC and the establishment of a WMA. They either turn potential wildlife areas into settlements and shambas or they allow outsiders to invest in tourism on their land and pay them directly without waiting for WMA status. Unfortunately village land is often sold for a few shillings to such investors and consequently the future income potential for a WMA is lost.

Let's Get Practical!

The most pressing issue is to allow the WMA to start earning money. The Wildlife Division deserves praise for having already negotiated "benefit sharing" with the Treasury for quite some time. It is now up to the Ministry of Finance to implement the Government's decision and allow the retention of revenues earned by WMA as dictated in the Wildlife Policy. "Benefit sharing" is actually not a very appropriate term. The communities must be allowed to keep all the income and all the fees from photographic tourism and tourist and resident hunting on their land. Why should a farmer be allowed to keep all the cash from selling a cow, but if he sells a buffalo, for which he has been given user rights, he has to share the proceeds with the Government? Instead of benefit sharing, the WMA should pay taxes so that the Government gets its appropriate share too.

The time is ripe to cut through the red tape and make Community Based Natural Resources Management in Tanzania a practical proposition. If wildlife remains a "public good" it will soon be exterminated outside the National Parks and Game Reserves. It is high time the following priorities are acted upon.

- Give all pilot WMA the necessary Authorized Association status as quickly as possible so that they can start operating,
- Give trained Village Scouts identification cards and recognition, and most importantly;
- Give user rights to the WMA so that they can start earning money.

Villagers should be given the right to conserve, manage and use the wildlife on their land. This will serve both poverty reduction and conservation. It is in the interest of the Government, the economy of the country and the rural people.

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Development Status of Pilot Wildlife Management Areas

Pilot WMA	Facilitator	Community decision for WMA.	Land use plan done	CBO formed and registered	Resource Management Plan done	Application for AA, recognition of WMA and user rights	Registration, Gazetting, Operating

Jukumu, Morogoro	GTZ	X	X	X	X	processing reapplicatio n	
Namtumbo (Songea)	GTZ	X	X	X	X		
Tunduru	GTZ	X	X	processin g registratio n	X		
Liwale	GTZ	X	X	- do -	X		
Ngarambe/ Tapica, Rufiji	WWF/GTZ	X	X	X	X	processing reapplicatio n	
Buruge, Babati	AWF	X	X	X			
Makame, Kiteto	AWF	X					
Enduimet, Monduli	AWF	?					
Ikoma, Serengeti	NORAD/F ZS	X	X				
Loliondo, Ngorongor o	FZS	?					
Tarime	NORAD	X					
Uyumbu, Urambo	AFRICAR E	X	X	processin g registratio n			
Ipole,Sikon ge	AFRICAR E	X	X	- do -			
Twatwatwa , Kilossa	none	no					
Wamimbik i, Bagamoyo	DANIDA	X					
Mbomipa, Iringa	none	X					