Chapter 15
Socio-ecological Coviability Confronted with the Neoliberal System: The Peace Parks Experience (Southern Africa)

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Contents

15.1 Introduction

Southern Africa is developing an innovative tool for transfrontier cooperation by creating conservation areas with the objective of biodiversity conservation, socio-economic development and the promotion of a culture of peace (Hanks 2003). Consequently, these peace parks appear as privileged sites of observation for the reconstructions underway in southern Africa, while giving consideration to the integration of environmental issues into the public policies of emerging states. From this viewpoint, they present a double interest.

On the one hand, peace parks constitute vectors for social bond (re)creation in all of its socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions. They are consequently privileged sites permitting the analysis of the politico-legal mutations that are occurring in this geographical space, underlining the originality of such an experiment. On the other hand, these parks are also initiators of biodiversity conservation projects

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along with a reorganization process for transfrontier social groups. This positions the sustainable development perspective in relation to its environmental, ecological, regional and social aspects, through the changing game of identities.

In this context, we are particularly interested in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KaZa TFCA), located at the meeting point of the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe (see map below).

Through these objectives, as emphasized by the Peace Parks Foundation – the initial promoter of these transfrontier areas in southern Africa – peace parks aim to achieve a co-existence between humans and nature.[1]

In this case, peace symbolizes the social cohesion and political co-operation dynamic sought in these formerly conflicted zones, during the period of apartheid. Social cohesion is determined by the social link. As a minimum, this link allows populations to live together. It targets all of the relationships that unite individuals who are part of a social group: collective solidarity mechanisms, norms, rules, the values that give this group a minimum sense of collective belonging (Cusset 2007). However, as a framework for the social link, ecosystems and their dynamics influence the type of social relationships that are established (Belaidi and Koubi 2015): for example, fishing societies significantly differ in their social relations from nomadic breeding societies or farming societies. In fact, in 2005, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA)[2] confirmed this relationship even going so far as to consider that the damage done to the ecosystem violated the principle of equity and justice (See Fig. A, MEA 2005, pg VI).

Consequently, by recreating bonds through the transfrontier approach, peace parks seem to tend towards coviability by suggesting that human beings are an integral part of ecosystems and that a dynamic interaction exists between these human beings and other elements of these ecosystems. However, by subjecting Zambeze-

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[1]"Peace parks are about co-existence between humans and nature, about promoting regional peace and stability, conserving biodiversity and stimulating job creation by developing nature conservation as a land-use option", Peace Parks – TFCAs, http://www.peaceparks.org

[2]The concept of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) was developed in 1998 and 1999 on the invitation of the World Resources Institute, the United Nations Environment Program, the United Nations Development Program, and the World Bank. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment synthesizes information from the scientific literature and relevant datasets and models that have undergone the test of counter review. It incorporates knowledge held by the private sector, practitioners, local communities and indigenous peoples. More than 1360 authors from 95 countries participated in it. The evaluation focuses on the bonds between ecosystems and Man's well-being. It particularly targets "ecosystem services." The MEA deals with the full range of ecosystems (a dynamic complex composed of plants, animals, microorganisms, and the surrounding dead nature interacting as a functional unit). It extends from relatively intact ecosystems such as forests, landscapes controlled by human exploitation, to ecosystems under intensive human control and undergoing modifications due to man's actions affecting, such as agricultural lands and urban landscapes for example. The services that ecosystems provide consist in the benefits that humans derive from them. These include sampling services such as food, water, timber, and fiber. They also include regulatory services that affect climate, flooding, disease, waste, and water quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; self-maintenance services such as soil formation, photosynthesis, and the nutrient cycle.

Kavango's ecosystem, heritage and cultural resources management objective to the "best models of conservation and tourism", as planned by the Treaty establishing the KaZa TFCA (art. 6.1 a-j), we can wonder whether the very idea of coviability is not corrupted.

In effect, whilst the notion of coviability can designate the creation of operating system pathways that maintain both the viability of ecosystems in the long-term and the viability of the lifestyles they support (Weber 2013; see also Washington 2013), the submission of the latter to a model of production and consumption that largely depends on the dominant politico-economic apparatus, advocating a *micro* and individualistic vision of the social bond, makes them responsible for the viability crisis (Norgard 1994). In our example, this signifies that the coviability of lifestyles and socio-ecological systems, far from favoring *peace*, would ultimately contribute, through the destruction of the Man-Nature bond, to fueling conflict.

15.2   The Transfrontier Area, a Tool to Reconstruct Links

The transfrontier approach is introduced as an antidote to the inefficiency and/or absurdity of borders drawn by the colonizer. In many cases, these frontiers have in effect severed not only the unity and integrity of ecosystems but also the cultural and social relationships they underpin. Consequently, the new geographical framework introduced by transfrontier logic serves to rationalize the management of ecosystems by the public authorities while stimulating social relations (Sect. 15.2.1), transforming marginalized zones into new centers advocating the social link (Sect.15.2.2) and alternatives to the commodification of the *living environment* (Sect. 15.2.3).

15.2.1   A Renewed Geographical Framework

Transfrontier conservation has the advantage of preserving nature, of (re)creating a bond in the area concerned. It is also a driving force for development firstly thanks to the ecological and cultural integrity it helps to reconstruct and secondly, through the promotion of ecotourism.

Based on an inclusive method, the transfrontier approach advocates an integrated and adaptive management of land, water and natural resources on the scale of the ecosystem, consequently preserving the ecological and evolutionary processes that create and sustain biodiversity (Mace and Purvis 2007). Transfrontier areas as large-scale conservation initiatives therefore facilitate exchanges between populations and enable complete ecosystems to be studied. Similarly, the capacity of transfrontier areas to open borders, given that they often overlap, promotes exchanges between human communities separated by political frontiers. These frontiers have often been established under political and historical pressure regardless of population groups.

The transfrontier approach can therefore serve to rebuild cultural integrity. Moreover, the vast parks created offer tourists free and easy access to a region, which presents an investment opportunity. In fact, most transfrontier areas have been developed with well-defined ecotourism development objectives that represent strong economic justifications in favor of their establishment (Wolmer 2003b; Duffy 2007).

The transfrontier approach has the particular feature of creating a new space dedicated to safeguarding socio-ecological dynamics. This means that it takes into account interactions between social systems and ecological systems from the sustainability viewpoint, understood as a dynamic process and not a final objective. Within this context, the development sought corresponds to the needs of populations and local communities.

This vision is composed of socio-ecological logics which invite us to remember that the physical and chemical cycles of nature are important to sustain human and non-human life. Within this context, development and the ability to live take on a new dimension: it is (the maintaining of) all living systems which make them possible. The relationship to nature is defined not only by an environmental relationship but also by a relationship to a (complex) environment, summoning the notion of alterity. This is what synthesizes the concept of "social-ecological systems" (SES) by designating integrated systems linking societies and nature. This ultimately aims to redefine ecosystems by explicitly considering all of the actors, by integrating man as an active component of the system (Liu et al. 2007; Folke 2007; Lagadeuc and Chenorkian 2009).

This geographical approach also results in a specific management mode: bioregionalism (Wolmer 2003b). *A bioregion is a geographical space forming a homogeneous natural whole, whether for soil, hydrography, climate, fauna or flora. The population is also part of the bioregion insofar as it lives in harmony with these natural data and is sustained by it in the long term*.[3] It differs from an ecoregion which, whilst also corresponding to a geographical space that brings together different biological and geological criteria, does not refer to human societies (WWF 2009). The population is therefore an integral part of a bioregion, but on the condition that it protects and maintains its natural balances. This "*re-inhabitation*" consists in a relationship of interdependence and exchange with the ecosystem of the bioregion. It requires knowing the particular ecological relationships of and between each place in order to establish a socially and environmentally sustainable

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[3]Berg P., 2001, "Aux sources du biorégionalisme" interview by A. de Benoist and M. Marmin, *Elément,* n°100; Berg P. and Dasmann R.,1977, "Reinhabiting California", *The Ecologist*, vol. 7, n°10, pp. 399–401; SALE K., 1985, *Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision,* Sierra Club, San Francisco; ALEXANDER D., 1990, "Bioregionalism: Science or Sensibility", *Environmental Ethics*, 12, 2, pp. 161–173; M. McGinnis (ed), 1999, *Bioregionalism,* Routledge, London and New York. For a review, S. Frenkel, 1994, "Old Theories in new Places? Environmental Determinism and Bioregionalism", A*ssociation of American Geographers*, 46, 3, pp. 289–295; Meredith D., 2005, "The Bioregion as a Communitarian Micro-region (and its limitations)", *Ethics Place and Environment*, Vol. 8, n°1, pp. 83–94.

system (*Living-in-place*). In this sense, a bioregion has a unique cultural identity (a bioregional identity), whilst also constituting an area within which local populations can determine their own development.

Bioregionalism consequently pleads in favor of popular power and the decentralization of governance. Given that they are defined according to criteria of ecological, cultural and social coherence, bioregions form the basis of political organization.

15.2.2   A Space Based on a Dialectic of Law/Justice/Peace/Development

Considering transfrontier spaces as fully-fledged geographical entities superimposed on political frontiers opens up a new aspect of transfrontier conservation. In effect, these spaces could allow the gradual restoration of ecological, cultural and social bonds. However, protected areas are neither socially nor politically neutral (Hammill and Besançon 2007). This approach consequently constitutes a veritable challenge. Protected areas can take on different roles (for environmentalists, protected areas are an effective measure to protect biodiversity. For tour operators, they constitute a basis for the development of ecotourism. For neighboring local communities, protected areas can limit access to subsistence resources, or lead to relocations or generate income through tourism, etc.). All of these roles make protected areas political objects able to result in resistance and conflict.

This means that it is important to find the common denominator that would allow all groups to dialogue and reach an agreement in order to avoid or overcome potential conflicts. It is on the basis of the idea that nature conservation represents a common value to all countries, actors and populations involved that the concept of environmental peacemaking was born (Conca and Dabelko 2002; Ali 2007). The theory of environmental peacemaking is essentially based on the idea that cooperation with respect to a stake of common interest which nature represents, opens the door to a political dialogue around more contentious issues (political tensions, regional security, cultural diversity etc.) (Carius 2007) by fostering the trust of the parties involved.

Building on this trust, which would then help address more sensitive issues, requires the joint development and application of rules for environmental protection and natural resource preservation. Mutually negotiated environmental management policies and programs tend to be based on harmonized legislation. This legislation aims to maintain interactions between social systems and ecological systems in order to ensure ecological bonds and to maintain and/or re-establish the cultural and social link. This orientation of legislation underlines that inequalities are largely linked to the socio-economic structure and the socio-political organization of various societies (and more broadly to contemporary world order).

A legislation which focuses on ecological and socio-cultural bonds opens the way for social, environmental and ecological justice (Belaidi 2015a). This means that

the benefits provided by the environment, as well as its constraints and nuisances, would be shared and distributed among populations (for an environmental social justice) irrespective of the racial, ethnic or social origin of groups and individuals. In addition, there is a rebalancing of the relationships between humans and the rest of the environment (defining ecological justice) with a view to ensuring the sustainability of life support systems and access to resources within the sustainable limits of the planet. (Low and Gleeson 1998; Kutting 2004). *Environmental justice* therefore encompasses *social environmental justice* (Sperber 2003).

Defined here as "*the ultimate objective that legal norms must reach*" (Shelton 2012, p. 20), *environmental justice* would articulate redistribution, social recognition, the sharing of environments and the maintaining of ecological processes (Low and Gleeson 1998; Shrader-Frechette 2002; Sperber 2003; Kutting 2004; Schlosberg 2007; Pezullo and Sandler 2007; Westra 2008). This presupposes two major changes: firstly, in the relationship to nature and secondly, in the relationship to others. On the one hand, the environment must be understood as the physical, chemical, biological set of bonds that exist in ecosystems between the various elements and processes that act within it. On the other hand, solidarity must extend to humanity as a whole, at the present time and in the future, so that everyone can benefit from fundamental human rights without suffering from exclusion or discrimination. On this basis, beyond simple procedural aspect (Jolivet 2012), it is a Law that could legitimize a worldview where the environment is understood in its complexity in order to give more thought to social relations (Belaidi 2014).[4]

The idea of "living together" consequently highlights the fact that the environment in which we live allows us to grasp and understand with whom – natural and human – we live. This conception is based on a holistic vision of man, social relations and the world (where man's survival depends on the survival of the social group and the environment in which he lives).

The transfrontier approach suggests a geographical framework that emphasizes the ability to cooperate not only across borders, but also between different stakeholders from governments, civil society and the private sector. This approach consequently favors other forms of normative, political and social production that would allow, as suggested by the IUCN (Sandwith et al. 2001), to aim for peace. It is a dialogue, or even better, a set of conditions for interactions that favor or even reinforce bonds between countries and/or groups of populations which are

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[4]For a transfrontier application, Belaïdi N., 2009. "Le Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park: une gestion régionalisée de la biodiversité au service du développement?", Echogéo, n° 7/2008, décembre 2008-février 2009, "Les nouveaux enjeux régionaux dans l'océan Indien occidental", Thibaud B. (dir.), http://echogeo.revues.org/8523; BELAÏDI N., 2008. "Entre terre et eau, la gestion du delta de l'Okavango: un mécanisme d'ordre public écologique?", Cahiers d'anthropologie du Droit, Foncier et environnement en Afrique. Des acteurs au(x) droit(s), O. Barrière et A. Rochegude (dir.), pp. 189–214; Belaïdi N. 2008. "L'eau en milieu aride entre survie des populations et équilibre des écosystèmes" in Serfati C. (dir.), Une économie politique de la sécurité, Paris, Karthala, pp. 189–198.

sometimes opposed (Conca and Dabelko 2002), in the name of and on behalf of the living environment: coviability. Considered here as a *pre-requisite* of the normal performance of any social, economic and cultural activity, *this* peace would consequently constitute a true catalyst for development.

15.2.3 An Initiative Offering Alternatives

By proposing a social recognition of environmental dynamics, which tends to give priority to the use value, i.e., to the utility of a good or a service to satisfy the necessities of everyday life, as opposed to the exchange value (the transaction of goods or services), favored by market economies,[5] this "model" of conservation represents a change in the understanding of nature-society relationships.

In this respect, it echoes numerous social demands that highlight the need for a *justice* that seeks to preserve the rights of current and future generations by preserving the *environment* in which they live. This environment is not only the physical environment, in all of its complexity; it is also the social and cultural environment, which in reality, is intimately linked to the physical environment. Preserving the environment requires that economic and political "environments" do not jeopardize it, meaning that they should not be considered superior to these components (nature, society and culture) (Belaidi 2012).

These demands for justice are articulated around the four pillars of Man-Society-Nature co-existence: the "four vital requirements of every society" (Houtart 2001):

- the relationship with nature;
- the ability of all to access goods and services based on the maintaining of the material bases of physical, cultural and spiritual life – in sum, life and its reproductive capacity;
- the collective social and political organization, i.e., the participation of each individual or collective subject in the processes of socio-political organization;
- the possibility of individual cultural and ethical expressions.

These demands therefore tend to ensure that this management mode evolves. They also serve to combat the appropriation of "natural resources" by individuals or firms with the objective of maximizing their profits and the commodification of the elements necessary for the reproduction of life.

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[5]For capitalism (the most developed form of commodity production), a good or a service that cannot be converted into a commodity has no value since it does not contribute towards the accumulation of capital, which is the objective and motor of the economy. Capitalism considers ecological destruction to be inevitable collateral damage (destined to be eventually reduced), or worse still, as "externalities" since they do not enter into market calculations and are therefore not taken into account in the capital accumulation process. Godelier M., "Transition" in Bensussan G. et LABICA G., Dictionnaire critique du Marxisme, PUF, Paris, 1982. See for an example applied to climate change, Stern N., The Economics of Climate Change. The Stern Review, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

In the case of southern Africa, the transfrontier initiative was immediately perceived as a way to heal the wounds of pre-and post-independence wars (Koch 1998) and render the reconciliation process effective. Reconciliation lies within certain African values such as the *Ubuntu*.[6] It aims for *peaceful coexistence* and seeks to produce *civil peace*.

However, even if in South Africa the process undertaken via the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) proved effective in rethinking a shared history, it has shown itself to be limited in terms of considering a more egalitarian future along with social justice in the long-term (Krog 2002). All the more the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP, the socio-economic platform to access democracy in 1994) was certainly presented in favor of the poorest populations but failed to question the structures of the South African economy. By privileging economic growth, the free market and rejecting nationalization, in South Africa redistribution constitutes the last link in a context marked by liberalism (Porteilla 2010). Emerging from South Africa, transfrontier initiatives are modeled on the same economic logic. This may explain why the promoters of peace parks have reversed the peace-development liaison in the dialectic supported by the transfrontier approach. It is the (sustainable) development that will seek to achieve peace, which is not without consequences for coviability.

15.3 The South African Approach, a Corrupted Coviability

In southern Africa, whilst conservation professionals have quickly adopted the idea that transfrontier dynamics may be a driver of peace by creating their own category of cross-border area (Sect. 15.3.1), peace is seen as a result. It is the creation and the maintaining of livelihoods through environmental conservation that leads to peace (Sect. 15.3.2). By subjecting the promotion of peace to the achievement of (sustainable) development, the transfrontier area is subjected to a purely managerial logic (Sect. 15.3.3).

15.3.1 An Appropriation of Transfrontier Dynamics

According to the Peace Parks Foundation, "by establishing conditions that are favorable to sustainable development," transfrontier parks allow a fair and harmonious society to be maintained – which is a category of the Soft peace (Ali 2007). The

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[6]According to the Bantu philosophies of sub-Saharan Africa, the word UBUNTU refers to the term "humanity". It is better understood in the sentence: "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu": man becomes man only by and with other men, Republic of South Africa, Truth and reconciliation commission, Report, vol. 1, chap. 5, p. 128.

Peace Parks Foundation bases itself on a broad understanding of the various forms of peace and stability which, according to the Foundation, can be achieved through a viable management of natural resources via the establishment of parks along national borders. This would alleviate international antagonisms and promote a spirit of international cooperation on the African continent, hence the "Peace Park" label[7]. On this basis, this organization justifies the use of the peace concept to describe all of the transfrontier areas in the zone.

The peace objective links these transfrontier areas to the specific category proposed by IUCN: Parks for Peace, defined as "transfrontier protected areas that are officially dedicated to the protection and conservation of biological diversity and the related natural and cultural resources, as well as to the promotion of peace and cooperation" (IUCN 1994).

The term "park for peace" refers to a particular subset of protected areas where there is a clear objective of conservation and protection of biodiversity, cooperation between at least two countries or sub-national authorities and a clear goal of peace.

Peace knows different gradients, from "soft peace" to "hard peace." These extremes range from habitual excellent relations to their incitation when tensions or hostilities are present. In the intermediate position, we find, on the one hand, the creation of interaction conditions where relations between countries are satisfactory but not excellent and, on the other hand, the reconstruction of a relationship of trust following a war. The Kavango-Zambezi transfrontier conservation area (KaZa TFCA) belongs to this last category.

During the apartheid regime, frontier parks and wildlife areas were integrated into the regime's defense system against opponents who might attempt to intrude from the outside. Relative isolation and strict access control sometimes turned these areas into paramilitary or infiltration training places in neighboring countries. In Namibia, for example, during the last years of their presence, the South African armed forces transformed the present Bwabwata National Park into a training ground. Large military bases were installed and used against the SWAPO[8] in Namibia; they were also used to support the Unita[9] anti-government movement in Angola. On this occasion, veritable poaching networks were created in some South

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[7]It should be distinguished from the "Peace Park" of the United Nations University for Peace, which designates protected areas whose history has been marked by conflicts whether or not these areas are in a transfrontier location, such as the memorial monuments at the Nagasaki or Hiroshima Peace Parks.

[8]Historically, the South West African People's Organization is a Namibian union that has become an armed separatist movement. It has been Namibia's main political party since independence in 1990.

[9]Until 2002, the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) was essentially a military force that fought during the Angolan civil war against the regime of the People's Republic of Angola. It then renounced the armed struggle and showed itself in favor of the democratic process. It is now the 2nd biggest party in the country.

African force units, in connection with "friendly" movements, revolving around the traffic of ivory and rhinoceros horns.

Spurred on by these elements, since 1988 the KaZa TFCA has been identified by the IUCN as a *park for peace* on the basis of temporary classification criteria concerning these parks (Thorsdell 1990). This is not the case, for instance, of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe), which was established by treaty in 2002. The treaty establishing the KaZa TFCA (signed on 18 August 2011 between the 5 States) is different from the other active transfrontier parks in the area (notably Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park) in that it explicitly aims to achieve peace – understood as a combination of solidarity and security via environmental issues[10].

However, although the conditions for peace, pluri-national cooperation and biodiversity protection are met, it is not a park for peace that the treaty has established, but a transfrontier conservation area (TFCA). The KaZa TFCA is indeed defined as a " component of a large ecological region that straddles the boundaries of two or more countries, encompassing one or more protected areas, as well as multiple resource use areas."[11] It constitutes a peace park which aims to establish cooperation for the economic development of the area.

15.3.2   Cost-Effective Environmental Conservation

By introducing the term *TransFrontier Conservation Area* (TFCA) as part of its initial project on transfrontier conservation in Mozambique in 1996, the World Bank supports the idea that, in terms of wildlife, transfrontier cooperation must zoom out of protected areas in order to emphasize the multiple use of resources, in particular those of local communities (Hanks 2000). This extension spreads beyond national parks and hunting reserves to include private lands, communal lands, forest reserves and wildlife management areas as well as biosphere reserves or conservancies (communal management of natural resources) (World Bank 1996).

This is the pattern adopted by the peace parks in southern Africa. Consequently the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KaZa TFCA) encompasses 36 different types of protected areas (national parks, nature reserves, forest reserves, conservancies, world heritage sites, Ramsar sites . . .) situated in the five jurisdictions that constitute it. (Fig. 15.1)

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[10]"For the execution of the objectives expressed in this Treaty, the Partner States undertake to uphold the following principles: [. . .] b. advocacy for solidarity, peace and security within the KAZA TFCA;", Article 1 of the treaty on the establishment of the Kavango-Zambezi transfrontier conservation area, August 18th, 2011.»

[11]Article 1 of the treaty on the establishment of the Kavango-Zambezi transfrontier conservation area, August 18th, 2011.
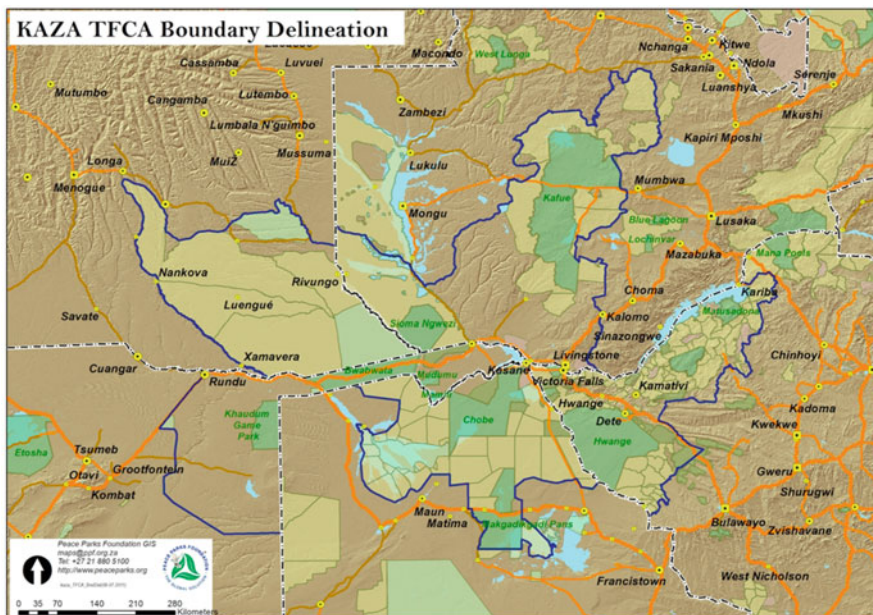
Fig. 15.1 Map: Kavango-Zambezi transfrontier conservation area (TFCA)

The transfrontier conservation area (TFCA) constitutes a category which is specific to southern Africa. The term originates from a biodiversity support program developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and is part of transfrontier cooperation processes that facilitate or improve the management of natural resources (Griffen 1999). These processes were adopted by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in order to promote "regional co-operation in the development of common frameworks for conservation of natural resources and enforcement of laws governing sustainable use" (Protocol on wildlife 1999). These transfrontier areas strengthen the regional economic integration inscribed in the 1992 SADC Treaty. Furthermore, the SADC's trade protocol, ratified in 1999 and which constituted the basis for the creation of a free trade area, ensures that the USAID provides *technical assistance* within the framework of the negotiation process (Wolmer 2003a).

These transfrontier conservation areas (TFCA) have rapidly become the focus of numerous new natural resource management initiatives funded by the region's donors. Eighteen have either been established or are in the process of being developed in southern Africa. They fulfill the objectives of two important organizations in the region: the SADC, whose main goals consist in furthering cooperation, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which advocates a developmental approach based on investment. As part of the peace objective, the elimination of non-tariff trade barriers (e.g. poor quality road infrastructure and

long and complicated customs formalities) or the free movement of capital could be suggested, facilitated by the fact that they also favor the opening of borders and the promotion of transfrontier tourism.

In addition, since both the SADC and the NEPAD are dominated by South Africa, transfrontier areas reinforce South African political and economic domination throughout the region. International tourists arriving in Johannesburg will be able to visit the main natural parks of neighboring countries whilst remaining based in South Africa. The touristic hinterland has, to some extent, been expanded to encompass several neighboring countries.

With this shift from the conservation of specific sites to connectivity preservation, the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) has capitalized on the image of a "boundless southern Africa" (http://www.peaceparks.org), where mega-fauna could freely traverse its natural territories in order to develop the lucrative potential of nature tourism and therefore peace and development.

The PPF can better define its own vision given that, at this moment in time, the procedure for classifying Parks for Peace proposed by the IUCN is not internationally recognized. In addition, after the preparatory work whose results were made public in 1988, in 2001 a project was launched on this issue with the involvement of several IUCN Commissions and the Peace Parks Foundation. The Peace Parks Foundation is therefore a co-author of the reference documents on the parks for peace meaning that peace can be defined according to its specific needs.

The links between peace and "sustainable development" have been largely recognized in international texts and instruments[12]. They include peace and security objectives within conservation initiatives now permitting the significant political status of these challenges to be taken advantage of, bestowing them with a greater visibility and an access to new funds such as humanitarian aid (and funds to alleviate conflictual situations). Moreover, the characteristics traditionally attributed to environmental issues are reversed when they are posed in a security context. This could help support governments and local communities for initiatives dedicated to environmental conservation (Matthew et al. 2002). However, with this top-down approach to conservation, bioregionalism is supplanted by a "technical eco-regionalism" where peace and the coviability logic that it carries, become tools of political and monetary domination.

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[12]With all the ambiguities and contradictions that the term contains, see for instance, Hajer M. A., 1995, The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy process, Oxford University Press; Young S. C., 2000, The Emergence of Ecological Modernization: Integrating the Environment and the Economy? Routledge, London, 2000

15.3.3 *Promoting Technical Eco-Regionalism*

Transfrontier conservation suggests the promise of a transfer of power from central government to local communities through the reorganization of space into bioregions. In practice however, transfrontier areas represent an extension of the power of central government and international organizations, most often in distant and marginal regions which were previously more or less ignored. This distance leads to a "technical eco-regionalism" (Wolmer 2003a). It is a purely managerial approach where scientific constructions of space are used to justify imposing a top-down approach to conservation.

Moreover, the KaZa TFCA is part of an ecoregion (Article 1 of the Treaty of 2011 that established the KaZa) and not a *bioregion* as advocated by the transfrontier approach. Defined according to biological and geographical criteria (WWF 2009), this ecologically coherent region encompasses plots of protected areas and unprotected lands. Whilst it emphasizes the preservation of connectivity as opposed to the conservation of specific sites, it does not refer to human societies (WWF 2009).

Whilst the first phases of creating the conservation areas effectively focused on opening borders, they also lead to the launch of the "KaZa Uni-Visa" pilot project (a single visa to visit the KaZa transfrontier area). Launched between Zambia and Zimbabwe in November 2014 the objective of the project is to avoid obliging tourists to apply for multiple visas to cross the zone in order to make their journey through the partner countries of the KaZA TFCA zone more "comfortable", consequently fostering the growth of tourism for the region (http://www.kavangozambezi.org).

However, the policies and legal frameworks already in place in the party States enable the development of a common management plan to be envisaged (Jones 2008). This plan could help stakeholder countries to address, in a simple and rapid manner, the problem of elephant overpopulation and its status in the area[13]. More substantial common approaches could then be developed on the basis of this first cooperation. Questions such as the destruction of vegetation by elephants, disease control, illegal hunting, tourism control or the improvement of staff qualifications, equipment and infrastructure in parks would also be open for discussion. This dialogue would even possibly trigger exchanges on sensitive issues because they are subject to the specific historical and political contexts of each country, such as the recognition of forest authorities or the access of communities to resources and their participation in the process.

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[13]In Zambia, the elephant is listed in Appendix I (Endangered Species) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). An easily achievable objective would be to move it to Annex II (species that are not necessarily threatened with extinction but whose trade in specimens should be regulated to avoid an exploitation which is incompatible with their survival) and thus to harmonize its classification over the entire area.

In the same way, the absence of any transfrontier area representatives in redefining (in progress) the management plan of one of these units (the Hwange National Park) raises questions. The KaZa TFCA "integrated development plan" was presented to all of the unit's "stakeholders", including village authorities, by the national coordinator (Zimbabwe) of the program in Hwange National Park (main camp) on May 9th, 2013. The discussions on the management plan are carried out in consultation with these same "stakeholders" but independently of the transfrontier area.

On the initiative of the Southern African Development Community and with the support of the Zambian and Zimbabwean governments, the World Bank and the KaZa TFCA Secretariat, regional cooperation has played a role in facilitating transfrontier movements of large mammals . . . and of tourists. It has therefore played a role in the commercialization of the largest contiguous natural area in southern Africa (approximately 287,132 km^2) as a tourist destination.

Within this context, large-scale conservation tends to shift away from community conservation even if it has been favored in the area in recent years (see, for example, Derman 1995; Child 1996). The tendency to marginalize the interests of local communities was denounced very early on. It was, for instance, demonstrated that the establishment of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (35,000 km^2 between Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa) on the Mozambican flank and the introduction of animals was carried out without the local community issue having been resolved. These populations were not fully informed or integrated during the park creation process and they have been the subject of a highly controversial "resettlement" process (Spenceley and Schoon 2007, Ramutsindela 2007, Chap. 6). In their haste to fulfill the project's objectives, namely to generate income thanks to the development of ecotourism, the project architects and sponsors (powerful donors, large NGOs such as the Peace Parks Foundation and government agencies) have neglected the needs and wishes of local communities. Yet, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park is the transfrontier area that served as a basis for reflection on the TFCA category (origins, http://www.peaceparks.org).

In conclusion, current interest in eco-regional planning and transfrontier areas seems to reflect a resurgence of the protectionist approach to conservation (Brosius and Russell 2003). We are witnessing a return to the top-down approach, where the involvement of local communities becomes minimal and where the particular interests of international NGOs and government agencies take priority.

Although claiming to promote peace by preserving an environment based on common value, the economic priorities of donors supplant the wishes of those living within conservation areas thereby creating fundamental conflicts of interest (Belaïdi 2008). Transfrontier conservation and the coviability objective it supports find themselves subordinated to development, owing to a prioritization which transformed the southern African experience into an initiative led by a neoliberal approach to conservation (Buscher 2013) as opposed to an original initiative supposed to present alternatives (Belaidi 2015b).

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