

Chapter 10

The Selous-Niassa Transfrontier Conservation Area and Tourism: Evolution, Benefits and Challenges

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Abstract The chapter demonstrates how transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) favor international tourism but also how its effectiveness in promoting local development has remained a subject of critical debate. The chapter contributes to this debate with specific focus on the process that creates TFCAs and how that process generates conditions for economic empowerment or disempowerment. The experience of the Selous-Niassa TFCA is used to examine how evolution and promotion of tourism has differentiated impacts on different actors. Most of the communities on the edges of TFCAs are struggling with the loss of basic rights to land, which is their main source of livelihoods. Tourism as an economic activity has mainly remained in few powerful hands as benefits are hampered by the capital tendency of the industry for which TFCAs are not immune. Conclusively, transfrontier conservation may be a flagship project for the southern African region, but mainly for what conservation is called to serve: nature protection.

Keywords Community-based conservation • Selous-Niassa wildlife corridor • Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) • Tanzania • Mozambique • Wildlife management areas

10.1 Introduction

On 15 March 2012, the largest of the transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) in southern Africa – the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) across the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe – was launched. Its boundaries encompass an area of 444,000 km² and within it are 36 protected areas, including 17 national parks, different varieties of nature reserves and communal wildlife management areas. By any standard,

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this is a mega-park that caters for mega-fauna with expansive requirements for habitats and a-synchrony in the dynamics of their local populations (SADC 2012). TFCAs are indeed the largest of new development projects in Africa, surpassing the Jwaneng's diamond mine in Botswana, the mega dams of Kariba, Cahora Bassa or Congo's Inga project (Lunstrum 2011). In total, the southern African region has 18 such TFCAs of different sizes and in different stages of development covering an area of over 1 million km². Within these TFCAs are national parks and game reserves (38 of them designated as World Heritage Sites), hunting areas, conservancies and communal lands in which the underlying principle is that there should be free movement of wildlife.

The Selous-Niassa TFCA encompasses the Selous Game Reserve (SGR) in southeastern Tanzania (47,000 km²) and the Niassa Game Reserve (NGR) in northern Mozambique (42,400 km²). The two reserves are currently acknowledged for their large animal concentration and representation of pristine wilderness of Africa (Baldus and Hahn 2004). The area between the two reserves (currently recognized as the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor (SNWC)) in total covers around 150,000 km² (Schuerholz and Baldus 2007). The SNWC is currently the main activity of the TFCA, which relates directly to the involvement of local communities and the acquisition of land for expansion of conservation areas. It should be noted that the Ruvuma River forms the border between Tanzania and Mozambique but also marks the northern border of the NGR. This implies that the SNWC is entirely on the Tanzanian side across the districts of Namtumbo and Tunduru to the Ruvuma River (Fig. 10.1). This chapter focuses on this area to demonstrate how the TFCA has evolved, how the institutional arrangement at the Tanzanian side is constituted, and to what extent it succeeds in generating results.

The amount of land that transfrontier conservation manages to mobilize for nature protection, and the potentials for TFCAs to remove different kinds of movement barriers within them, guarantees a wide range of tourist attractions, the expansion of tourist activities and related possibilities for private investments. Through transfrontier conservation, sub-Saharan Africa and particularly the southern African region is currently considered a competitive 'green' tourist destination. Tourist arrivals to the African continent increased from 46 million in 2009 to 49.8 million in 2010 and the sub-Saharan region experienced the highest growth (14 %) (RETOSA 2010, 2011). Estimates further show that by 2020, the SADC region will receive tourist accounting for 52 % of total arrivals in Africa. Although the actual growth is partly linked to the publicity that the region has enjoyed through the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA) associates the trend specifically with the regional joint tourism branding through TFCAs (SADC 2012). It is against this backdrop that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) continues to embrace TFCAs as its flagship project for regional sustainable development.

Conceptually, TFCAs are strongly built on their potential to promote economic development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where poverty persists (Hanks 2003; Vreugdenhill et al. 2003). Tourism investments are considered central to the achievement of this goal. Notably, TFCAs are promoted as a strategy for



Fig. 10.1 Location of the Selous-Niassa TFC (Source: Adopted from Noe 2010b)

biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation, calling for the harmonization of national and regional conservation and development policies and plans. This framing of the environment-development agenda for southern Africa embraces the concept of sustainable development and supports a wide diversity of ideas in relation to the economic use of natural resources. These ideas include green developmentalism (Adams and Mulligan 2003; McAfee 1999) and nature commodification (Castree 2008). The two concepts advocate that conservation and the use of

biodiversity can be better managed by the market. More specifically, emphasis is placed on nature's intrinsic value as a service to be valued in monetary terms (McAfee 1999). The proponents of transfrontier conservation draw support from this logic to underscore that nature can be 'sold' not only to save it but also to save human communities from poverty.

Whereas the TFCAs are considered an innovation that favors international tourism with assumed local spin-offs, debates about the use and effectiveness of these areas in promoting development have emerged from two main camps. The first is that of TFCA proponents which focuses on the role that TFCAs have played on securing much needed land for conservation and the restoration of ecological health through the re-establishment of connectivity in fragmented ecosystems (Hanks 2006; PPF 2012). The second camp has, however, conceptualized TFCAs as spatially situated projects that have inherently caused displacements due to their requirements for transformation of landscapes and their human communities (Gellert and Lynch 2003; Lunstrum 2011; Noe 2009; Ramutsindela 2009). Scholars in this camp argue that the transformation of space is neither neutral nor innocent with respect to practices of domination and control; the process inevitably calls for the re-arrangement of institutions which empower some actors while disempowering others (Harvey 1996; McCarthy 2005; Swyngedouw 2004). Economic inequalities, particularly through loss of land and limited opportunities for local communities, have been the main critiques of TFCAs from a social science perspective. This mismatch between two opposing views on the effectiveness of TFCAs as a vehicle for economic development remains inconclusive.

The objective of this chapter is to contribute to the existing debate with a specific focus on the process of creating TFCAs and how that process generates conditions for economic empowerment or disempowerment. I use the experience of the Selous-Niassa TFCA to examine how its evolution and promotion of tourism has differentiated impacts on different actors. The chapter seeks to answer questions about what kind of tourism the TFCA structure supports and how this structure in turn facilitates the achievement of conservation and development goals generally and poverty alleviation in Tanzania, particularly.

The chapter is organized in five sections. The next section examines the evolution of the Selous-Niassa TFCA. It summarizes the process of creating the TFCA and exemplifies the role of community-based conservation (CBC) in the establishment of buffer zones and wildlife corridors that are key features of the TFCA structure. The third section discusses the main events of the development of the Selous-Niassa TFCA, particularly focusing on those that relate to the national and regional plans and strategies for the promotion of tourism. I analyze these in connection to the progress of events in the study area. The fourth section outlines the main strengths and challenges of TFCAs with regards to their development and the overall contributions to local community (dis)empowerment. The fifth section concludes the chapter.

10.2 The Selous-Niassa TFCA

The biological distinctiveness index of ecoregions classifies the Selous-Niassa ecosystem as locally important and globally outstanding, thus making its conservation of global significance (Burgess et al. 2004). Like in most other parts of the world, science-policy discourse provided evidence that this ecosystem was losing its ecological value throughout the 1970s and 1990s resulting in high rates of loss of biodiversity. In particular, the Niassa reserve faced tremendous challenges during the civil wars in the 1970s and 1980s resulting into high rates of poaching and areas opening up for the re-establishment of settlements. However, after the Nkomati Peace Accord was signed in 1992, the Mozambican government entered into an arrangement with the Sociedade para a Gestão e Desenvolvimento da Reserva do Niassa (SRN) to manage NGR as a public-private partnership (Graham 2005). Likewise, the Selous game reserve experienced a peak of poaching during the same period with its elephant populations dropping from more than 100,000 in the 1970s down to less than 30,000 in mid-1980s (Balduš 2008). It is precisely during this time that the African elephants were also placed on Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)'s Appendix I, which classified this species as threatened with extinction.

With both countries facing the challenges of elephant protection, different studies established their increasing movements in the surrounding village lands and the rate at which these areas were becoming increasingly insecure due to the high dependency on natural resources of local communities. Particularly for Tanzania, these studies supported three important policy decisions which are relevant for the current discussion. First, the promotion of tourism as a rural development strategy. Second, the establishment of community-based conservation (CBC) around protected areas. Thirdly, the establishment and protection of wildlife corridors that had all along been left unprotected throughout the country. In terms of the overall objective of this chapter, the three policy decisions are central to the establishment of the Selous-Niassa TFCA. That is, in addition to the bilateral collaboration, spatiality and borderlessness that characterize TFCAs generally, Selous-Niassa also required transformations in the policy and legal environment that enabled the mobilization of support from local communities, the securing of land for the establishment of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in village lands¹ and the amalgamation of these areas to create the SNWC.

TFCAs generally, and Selous-Niassa in particular, all depend on local community participation, as most of the critical land required for the establishment of

¹ Land in Tanzania is still generally placed on the central government and the Village Land Act No. 5 of 1999 defines 'village land' as areas of which the borders have been demarcated as village land under any law and village councils are responsible for the management and administration of such lands.

ecological connectivity is currently communal agricultural and grazing areas (Ramutsindela 2009). Since the emergence of CBC as a globally acceptable means of reversing the impacts of fortress conservation, and because poverty in rural areas is often invoked to promote nature-related businesses, tourism has increasingly become a tool for soliciting community participation and sharing of their lands for conservation. In Tanzania, major reforms occurred throughout the 1980s and 1990s in different sectors of Tanzania's economy to harmonize these conservation and economic objectives. In particular, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), responsible for the management of wildlife and forest resources, implemented these reforms as part of the wider local government reform project that had been running as component of the World Bank's Economic Recovery Program (ERP) since 1993. The reforms targeted improvements in conservation and poverty alleviation with national rural development strategies exemplifying the role of tourism. As such, national policies that emerged from these reforms in the late 1990s, particularly those on wildlife and forests, emphasized that wildlife should compete with other land uses to encourage community participation in conservation. In addition, the country's Rural Development Strategy, that had been in place since the Arusha Declaration in 1967, was revised to open up opportunities for private sector involvement in rural development. Indeed, the revised strategy considered ecotourism and tourism planning as potential areas for attracting private sector and unlocking opportunities for economic gains in rural areas (URT 2005).

Community-based projects have served as an important vehicle for aiding transformations that re-organize local land uses to fit the purpose of establishing wildlife buffer zones and corridors which are cogs in TFCAs. The establishment of the Selous-Niassa TFCA entirely depended on these policy and legal reforms that saw the creation of WMAs as a new category of protected areas in village lands. Today there are over 30 WMAs formally designated countrywide in communal lands (Noe 2013). Whereas WMAs are neither homogeneous across the country nor specific to Tanzania, they currently serve as official wildlife corridors in areas that would otherwise not have possibilities to have such corridors. Initiatives similar to WMAs exist in southern and eastern Africa, some of them well known as successful models in expansion and creation of network of protected areas (Ramutsindela 2007; Schuerholz and Baldus 2007). I mainly discuss these WMAs to exemplify their role in facilitating the establishment of terrestrial TFCAs in the context of Tanzania.

As implied earlier and presented in Table 10.1, the Selous-Niassa ecosystem attracts conservation interests of different global actors who have facilitated the government of Tanzania and local communities to undertake the necessary transformations for the protection of nature. These actors have involved donors, bilateral development partners and foreign government institutions providing both technical and financial support. The interest and support for the management of the Selous game reserve of the German government can be traced back to the colonial era. Selous was the first hunting reserve established by the German colonial administration in 1905 (Baldus 2001) and it remains the largest protected area that accommodates almost 60 % of the elephant population in the country. With the increasing

Table 10.1 Main Features of the institutional arrangement for the Tanzanian side of the Selous-Niassa TFCA

Feature	Description	
Main focus	Biodiversity conservation and community development	
Actors involved	Donors:	
	1. German government through its different agencies:	
	(a) GTZ /GTZ-IS	Support for CBC, design and the implementation of the SNWC
	(b) KfW	Infrastructure development, WMA establishment and protection of the SNWC
	(c) InWent	Local trainings and cross border dialogue
	2. GEF/UNDP: Development and management of the SNWC	
	Executing agency: The government of Tanzania (Wildlife Division, District and Village Councils, WMAs/CBOs): Law enforcement and policy support for the establishment of WMAs and the SNWC	
	Consulting agencies: JBG Gauff Ingenieure and Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania (WCST): coordination and implementation of land use planning and border demarcation for WMAs and infrastructure development	
Legal entity	The Regional and Local Governments of Mtwara and Ruvuma regions of Tanzania and the Provincial Governments of Cabo Delgado and Niassa of Mozambique signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cross-border cooperation in conservation and development	
Ownership	As in other TFCAs, the ownership of the Selous-Niassa TFCAs remains questionable. Section 2.3 (ii) and annex 1:6 of the MoU state that, “the inland areas of Selous and Niassa Game Reserves will be managed as a vast new transfrontier conservation area.a Joint Environment and Conservation Working Group will oversee its development”. Hence, neither central governments of the two countries nor communities and private arrangements can make claims to the cross-border space	
Management	A Joint Environment and Conservation Working Group currently made up of representatives of local authorities, consultants and donors manage the Selous-Niassa TFCA	
Sources of finance	Mainly donor funding (GTZ/GTZ-IS, GEF/UNDP and KfW)	
Contribution to conservation	Seven WMAs with a total area of approximately 6,000 km ² have been established. These WMAs are currently serving as the wildlife corridor between the two game reserves. Successful establishment of the corridor is the most important achievement in the TFCA process	
Contribution to livelihood	This remains prospective. The TFCA is not yet fully operational. However, villages that contribute land to WMAs receive allocation for limited wildlife user rights, mainly for subsistence. Sport hunting remains the main form of tourism in village lands and this largely favours the private sector	

challenges of its management and the declining elephant populations during the 1970s and 1980s, the German government through its technical agency GTZ (German Organization for Technical Cooperation) facilitated the government of Tanzania to initiate the first pilot CBC around the reserve in 1988. The Selous Conservation Program (herein GTZ/SCP) had several objectives, including the

rehabilitation of the Selous game reserve and the reduction of conflicts with the local population by promoting sustainable wildlife utilization as a vehicle for rural development.

GTZ/SCP worked between 1988 and 1998 to establish buffer zones in communal lands of 51 villages in seven districts that surround the reserve. Put together, approximately 8,600 km² of communal land was converted into some sort of wildlife buffer zone (Balduš 2008). By involving communities in the creation of buffer zones, the GTZ/SCP project became a model for CBCs in the country and by 2008 about 17 villages had set aside large parts of their lands and officially registered two WMAs (Nalika and Mbarang'andu) making them among the first few in the country. Details of how policy and legal reforms facilitated the establishment of these WMAs are beyond the scope of this chapter (for details see Ramutsindela and Noe 2012). It suffices to point out here that 10 years of GTZ/SCP developed an important initial stage that supported institutional restructuring necessary for supporting broader objectives of establishing TFCA across the Tanzania-Mozambique border.

The end of the GTZ/SCP project in 2000 was the beginning of the second phase of the TFCA which targeted 12 villages owning and occupying land most critical for the establishment of the corridor between the two reserves (Picard and Hahn 2007). Drawing on financial and technical support from various donors, including the Global Environment Facility, UNDP, KfW and GTZ-International Services, the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor (SNWC) project aimed to establish three WMAs in the area of the 12 villages. These WMAs (Chingoli, Kisungule and Kindamba) extend southwards to the Tanzania-Mozambique border.

On 29 March 2007 the regional administrations and local governments of Mtwara and Ruvuma of Tanzania and the provincial governments of Cabo Delgado and Niassa of Mozambique signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the cross-border cooperation. By signing the MOU, the two regional governments became legal entities that facilitate the establishment of the Selous-Niassa TFCA. However, section 2.3 (ii) and annex 1:6 of the MOU indicates that “the inland areas of Selous and Niassa Game Reserves will be managed as a vast new transfrontier conservation area” ... and a “Joint Environment and Conservation Working Group” will oversee its development.

10.3 Analysis of the Main Events of the Development of Selous-Niassa TFCA

The evolution of the Selous-Niassa TFCA is closely related to policies, strategies and development plans at national and regional levels, particularly those relating to conservation, tourism and poverty alleviation. For example, by recasting tourism as a source of economic gains for local people, national and regional policies reinforce the importance of local community participation in conservation and development through tourism. Since wildlife tourism around protected areas has long been a

Table 10.2 Overview of the main events

Year	Main event
1970s/1980s	The Niassa game reserve abandoned and settlements re-established following the civil wars
1987	Peak of poaching in Tanzania. Elephant population in the Selous game reserve reduced by over 60 %
1988	Placement of the African elephants on CITES Appendix 1
	Start of CBC – GTZ/SCP
	Negotiations for policy and legal reforms to support CBC starts in Wildlife and Forest sectors by development partners, the private sector and the government
1992	End of civil war in Mozambique and the signing of an agreement between the government and the Sociedade para a Gestão e Desenvolvimento da Reserva do Niassa (SRN) to manage the Niassa game reserve as a public-private partnership
1998	The first wildlife policy of Tanzania is passed with particular focus on empowering private sector and local communities to manage and invest in different forms of wildlife utilization and conservation
1999	Land and Village Land Acts passed – empowering village council to make decisions over their land. This supports the establishment of WMAs
2000	SNWC project launched
2002	Tanzania Tourism Master Plan passed with emphasis on the development of the Southern Tourism Circuit
2004	Official registration of two WMAs (Mbarang'andu and Nalika)
	MoU signed between Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi for the implementation of the Mtwara Development Corridor, which deals with infrastructure development for tourism and other purposes
2005	Approval of UNDP/GEF grant (USD 1 million) for the Development and Management of the Selous Niassa Wildlife Corridor
	Presidents of Tanzania and Mozambique inaugurate the construction of the Unity bridge over the Ruvuma River
2006	Approval of KfW EUR 5 million for the protection of the SNWC
	Official registration of three WMAs in the area of the SNWC (Chingoli, Kisungule and Kindamba)
On 29 March 2007	MoU for the Selous-Niassa TFCA signed by the regional administrations and local governments of Mtwara and Ruvuma of Tanzania and the provincial governments of Cabo Delgado and Niassa of Mozambique
2008	The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) presents a Markhor Award to the five CBOs managing WMAs in the SNWC and three others in Mozambique during the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the CBD held in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany

target for private investments, Tanzania's natural resource policies and rural development strategies promote conservation and tourism simultaneously. Accordingly, the TFCA initiative draws support from this national focus. Table 10.2 testifies how most of the TFCA activities are commensurable with the national development plans and strategies, including efforts to protect wildlife through CBC

and the development of the Southern Tourism Circuit. The Tourism Master Plan of 2002 envisaged the development of the southern circuit through the establishment of wild adventure trails, which includes the Selous game reserve and the surrounding protected areas, and links these trails with coastal heritage trails (currently the Mnazi Bay-Quirimbas Transfrontier Marine Park).

It should also be noted that the Selous-Niassa TFCA is facilitated within southern Africa's regional development framework, which envisages that TFCAs should attract private capital investments in development infrastructure, hence increasing the number of tourist facilities (hotels and lodges) and improving the quality and sophistication of the service industry (including transportation, tour operating services, visa and payment arrangements). As early as 2001, SADC had highlighted the need to encourage the development of TFCAs and tourism based Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs) as 'tourism product varieties' (SADC 2001: 68). Currently, SDIs are considered a legitimate intervention to achieve regional economic integration and, more importantly, to attract cross-border investments by encouraging public-private partnerships (Draper et al. 2004). SDIs have put particular emphasis on the establishment of development corridors by improving accessibility through development of transport infrastructure (including road and rail systems, ports, efficient border post services and controls, improved airline routing and scheduling) across the region (Smith 2003). Planning and execution of development corridors are currently linked with potential and existing TFCAs. For example, the Lubombo TFCA and the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTFP) are connected to the Maputo Development Corridor (Büscher and Dressler 2007) while the KAZA TFCA is connected to the Zambezi Valley SDI (Hanks 2006; Smith 2003).

The Selous-Niassa TFCA is linked to the Mtwara Development Corridor (MtDC). Notably, the presidents of Tanzania and Mozambique and their neighbors in Zambia and Malawi signed an MOU for the implementation of the MtDC on 15 December 2004. The conceptual plan for the MtDC is closely related to the development of tourism in the Selous-Niassa TFCA through investments in hotel facilities, road networks and air transport (Graham 2005). With these complementary services that have potentials to improve future flow of tourists in the southern circuit, the Selous-Niassa TFCA continues to gain support from different actors with different roles and interests.

Although cross-border cooperation in conservation and tourism has been practiced differently in east Africa with, for example, Tanzania and Kenya ensuring the existence of the most spectacular wildlife migration between Serengeti and Maasai Mara, this co-operation has not been organized in the form and scale of other southern African TFCAs. Countries have maintained their independent authority over resources within their jurisdictions hence limiting expansions of tourism investments (EAC 2012). While this positions the Selous-Niassa as the first terrestrial TFCA in east Africa, it also makes Tanzania the point of departure for other TFCAs in the region.

10.4 Benefits and Challenges of the Selous-Niassa TFCA

The growth in land coverage under conservation and the removal of wildlife migration barriers have contributed significantly to the enhanced movement of mega-fauna and charismatic species such as elephants. This is considered a major milestone not only in the field of conservation but also for the tourism industry. The assessment of tourism impacts is, nevertheless, complicated by the fact that TFCAs are also inherently complex due to the different socio-economic and political contexts in which they are established, the diverse nature and interest of stakeholders involved and, so far, the unrealistic expectations by the people on their edges (Andersson et al. 2012; Scovronick and Turpie 2009). These different aspects make each TFCA unique, such that poor or good tourism performance of one cannot be the basis for generalization.

In order to substantiate claims of benefits and challenges to achieving them in the current setup of the Selous-Niassa TFCA, I use data from three recent studies that were conducted on the Tanzanian side of the TFCA. These studies focus on examining how the ongoing establishment of the SNWC relate to the national development goals of poverty reduction (Kangalawe and Noe 2012), realities and operationalization of the presumed economic benefits to the local community (Sengelela 2013a) and how the recent publicity of the area as a ‘world-class uranium deposit’ present new challenges which attract global level debates about nature protection amidst uranium mining (Noe 2013). Attention is paid to these studies to demonstrate how the promotion of tourism as a means of achieving the economic goals of TFCAs ignore internal and external forces that determine the distribution of gains and losses between powerful actors and the already marginalized communities that are at the center of development debates of TFCA initiative.

Kangalawe and Noe (2012) studied seven villages that contributed land to the Mbarang’andu WMA. The study demonstrate that overall 84.2 % of the land in the seven villages has been converted into wildlife and forests while only 9.5 % and 6.3 % remains for crop cultivation and settlements respectively. Since the WMA forms part of the wildlife corridor, access to resources such as arable land, pasture, forest and game products are restricted. Yet, community dependence on these resources is very high, especially for arable land which is still the most reliable source of livelihood for over 90 % of villagers. The study concludes that there is little evidence for rural poverty reduction because conservation has mainly constrained community livelihoods while benefiting distant resource users such as private investors (Kangalawe and Noe 2012). Studies in the same area by Sengelela (2013a, b) reinforce this view by bringing some insights in the role of hunting tourism in the local economy. Currently, the main economic use of WMAs is hunting and Mbarang’andu has for long time been a concession of the hunting company – Game Frontiers of Tanzania (GFT) (Sengelela 2013a). However, local activities that can be generated and directly connected with hunting tourism are few and mainly suitable for potters. Thus, neither employment nor other tourist-related activities have been generated enough to stimulate the local economy (Sengelela 2013b).

Table 10.3 Summary of community benefits in Mbarang'andu WMA (2010–2012)

Type of benefit	Purpose and impact	Source
WMA building	Community office	GTZ and in-kind contributions of community members
A tractor	To aid anti-poaching activities	Private investors (hunting and mining)
Direct finances	Construction of an armory in the WMA office	Watu na Wanyama ^b , a German NGO
1. EUR 1,500	Distribution to seven villages forming the WMA (each getting approximately EUR 1,675) ^a	Investors
2. EUR 22,000		
Education and training of village game scouts	To aid anti-poaching activities	Private investors
One school building and fees	Education services to the community. Construction of the 'KORIDO secondary school'. Also two students from each village are sponsored for secondary education each year	Hunting investor
Renovation of one village dispensary	Health services to the community	Mining investors

Source: Sengelela (2013a: 67–68)

^aA follow-up of the use of funds revealed that villages purchased a gun (for anti-poaching and farm protection against problem animals), office furniture, renovation of schools and facilitated other village administration activities

^bSwahili name for People and Wildlife

The two studies suggest that benefits of community involvement in conservation are still materially abstract and mainly determined by powerful actors who are either the proponents of the Selous-Niassa TFCA or those with investment interests in the area. Due to dilemmas of poverty coupled with inefficient service delivery by the government, any form of contribution by private investors is appreciated even though communities have no control and knowledge of what amount and time they should receive these benefits because they are mainly given informal arrangements. Table 10.3 summarizes community benefits from hunting tourism as documented by Sengelela (2013a). The data support findings of other studies which suggest that tourism has not yet directly contributed much to the local developments (Kangalawe and Noe 2012). Additionally, the data recalls the debate about efficacy of these benefits on immediate household needs for food and cash as opposed to other community needs such as infrastructure, education and health services which should have long been delivered by the government.

The study by Noe (2013) further substantiates this claim by suggesting that, while the proponents of the TFCA dictated terms of engagement with communities in processes of land acquisition through planning and border demarcations, the government of Tanzania worked with double faces. On the one hand it tried to keep

control over people and resources and on the other hand it facilitated re-allocation of resource rights through various investment concessions that local people have neither capital nor political influence over (Noe 2013). It should be recalled that villages anticipated legal wildlife user rights (through tourism investments and quota hunting) in exchange of their land. Indeed, on 29 March 2010, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism-Wildlife Division granted a 3 years certificate of wildlife user rights (No. 00000567) to the community through its Authorized Association (AA). This made the Mbarang'andu AA a legal grantee of wildlife user rights of the said area for the 2010/2013 period. However, these rights overlapped with another legal grantee – the Game Frontiers of Tanzania – whose hunting concession of the same area had been given by the government for the 2009/2012 period. This made the GFT another legal grantee of wildlife in the same area for the mentioned period, which overlaps with that of the Mbarang'andu AA.

While the overlap of rights in the WMA remained unresolved, the discovery of uranium complicates the situation even further, because mineral resources are not within the mandates of the Ministry of Natural Resources but that of Energy and Minerals. Over ten private foreign companies have active prospecting and mining licenses for the 2011/2016 period. Of these mining companies three are large-scale foreign companies, namely Mantra Tanzania Ltd. (Canada), Uranix Ltd. (Tanzania) and Frontier Resources Ltd. (Australia). These concessions are in Mbarang'andu and clearly conflict, not only because they are granted for the same piece of land, but also due to the nature of land use incompatibility. Regarding the local rights of wildlife resources, communities are caught up unprepared as their certificate of user rights expires unutilized due to the conflicting rights. Meanwhile, mining and hunting investors signed an agreement on 23 March 2007 to cooperate in undertaking their activities in the Mbarang'andu property. Precisely, two mining companies (URA and WMTL) pay the hunting company to access the property and for any loss of business caused by the mining operations. In this agreement over USD 6,305,000 is exchanged while USD 10,000 is presented to the seven villages that contribute land to the Mbarang'andu AA as a contribution to development by the investors.² Even though the certificate of user rights (No. 00000567) granted to the Mbarang'andu WMA is a legal document, the community is not party to the above deal. This agreement provides evidence for the exchange of millions of dollars between private investors and, by any standards, an overly low amount for the community (Noe 2013).

Since the Selous-Niassa TFCA is not yet fully operational, there are still prospects for more substantial economic benefits. However, the role played by different actors and their networks will remain the major determinant of who will retain control and powers over tourism revenues in the Selous-Niassa TFCA and elsewhere in Africa. During the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in May 2008 in Bonn Germany, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) jointly with the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, presented a Markhor Award to the

²Under a joint name of 'Friends of Mbarang'andu'.

community leaders of WMAs in the SNWC and their counterparts on the Mozambique side. While this award points to the importance and possibility of the growth of hunting tourism in the area it also shows how the local resources are connected to the global market through individuals and global corporations that support TFCAs.

10.4.1 Community Benefits: Mixed Evidence from Southern Africa

In the last decade there has been an increasing recognition of the positive impacts of tourism on economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. However, there are challenges that threaten further development of this industry (Kimbu and Ngoasong 2013). Major challenges relate to the differentiation of tourism impacts between states, private investors and local communities. Specifically for TFCAs in Southern Africa, the Green Tourism Services report of 2011 identified a number of issues, including the fact that, despite the unified regional efforts, there are still state differences in benchmarking the quality of products (including fees charged by different countries, classification and grading of accommodation facilities and limited development of ICT infrastructure which is the major enabler to be able to access the region's tourist products). These differences explain the inequality in the income driven from tourism services between one country and another. Hence, the evidence for the effectiveness of TFCA across Africa in generating livelihood is mixed.

A comprehensive assessment of how TFCAs in the southern Africa have influenced tourism and vice versa is handicapped by scattered statistical information and gaps in available data. However, the growing critique, particularly on socio-economic aspects of TFCAs, point to the importance of a greater degree of caution when outlining promises of economic gains. Surveys which were conducted in different TFCAs in the region substantiate this claim. These surveys include that of KAZA TFCA (Suich et al. 2005), the Great Limpopo TFCA (GLTFCA) (Spenceley et al. 2008) and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) (Scovronick and Turpie 2009). The first two studies are less significant as they are mainly baseline surveys that focused on taking stock of the available tourism facilities and activities rather than changes over time. The third study provides some useful insights on the trend by comparing tourism activities and practices during and 10 years after the establishment of the KTP.

Suich et al. (2005) focused mainly on economic impact generated in KAZA. The survey indicated that the industry had awakened the economy of the region particularly through the provision of more than 5,500 jobs, 94 % of which were filled by local employees who earned more than USD 14 million in wages. In addition, about USD 100 million was generated by the accommodation and tour operator sectors in 2004. Although the survey reports also that almost 90 % of tourism businesses within KAZA were privately owned and that local owners were earning a relatively small proportion of total turnover, many of the sites of high tourism development

potential within the TFCA were still seen on communal land where local entrepreneurs do not have the necessary expertise or financial resources to start a tourism business (Suich et al. 2005). Nevertheless, the study proposes that, the way it currently operates, the tourism industry within the KAZA region could be considered as contributing to economic growth through revenue generation, government tax revenues and job creation.

The study by Spenceley et al. (2008) aimed at establishing the economic impacts of tourism accommodation and tour operating activities in the GLTFCA. In addition, the survey established levels of local benefits and whether the TFCA had development impacts on tourism. Although the study was short in reaching the Mozambican side of the park, it involved an estimated 25 % of the population of enterprises based in South Africa and Zimbabwean sides of the GLTFCA. The study established that the South African enterprises generated USD 85 million from accommodation, and USD 52 million from tours in 2006 while in Zimbabwe, USD 6.8 million was generated from accommodation, and USD 337,000 from tours in the same year (Spenceley et al. 2008: 4). In both countries, the majority of the surveyed facilities were locally owned. Likewise, the majority of employees in the sector were local residents in both countries. However, it was noted that a great proportion of local employees undertake low rank positions due to the lack of appropriate academic qualifications and skills. The study concluded that the GLTFCA has significant good results within a short time and that more could be expected in the long term (Spenceley et al. 2008). Yet recent studies in the same park have raised concerns about the economic benefits for communities, a decade after the establishment of the TFCA (Büscher 2012; Lunstrum 2010).

Scovronick and Turpie's (2009) study on the assessment of tourism performance of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) provides some useful comparative data for tourism practices and trends for the time around the establishment of the park and the time of survey in 2009. Two major conclusions emerged from this data. First, since the inauguration of the KTP in 1999, visitor numbers to the park have not grown. Precisely, the proportions of visitors to all of South Africa's national parks that visit the KTP have tended to decrease gradually in a span of 10 years. The percentage of total visitors decreased from approximately 1.8 % in 1997/1998 to 1.2 % in 2007/2008 (Scovronick and Turpie 2009:152). The percentage of total visitors to the Botswana side of the park increased steeply to approximately 3.5 % in 2000 but decreased to 3 % thereafter. The study associates periodic increases in tourism mainly with the growth in bed numbers which increase average length of stay and total visitor days. Second, the study claims that the increased size of and access to the park did not dramatically influence the guests' decision to visit.

Conceptually, Scovronick and Turpie (2009) suggest that the change in area coverage does not necessarily increase the diversity of attractions offered. The rate of tourism growth in KTP could therefore be enhanced without the transfrontier arrangement by targeting expansion of park tourist facilities. This leads to another interesting observation that TFCA's are definitely an innovative conservation strategy but may not necessarily be a suitable tourism strategy, and therefore development strategy, for the region. This is probably the main reason why a country-centered

tourism approach persists. On the basis of the foregoing, the expansion of area coverage based on the economic arguments that rely on tourism raises questions over other interests involved in TFCAs, which I will discuss in the next section.

10.4.2 Tourism as a Neo-liberal Project

South Africa is seen as the force behind major innovations in the tourism industry. For example, it remains the dominant destination for tourists to the region accounting for 47 % of the total arrivals in 2008 (Green Tourism Services 2011). The recent report on African Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (Blanke and Chiesa 2011) compared South Africa's 66th position out of 139 countries in the world with two of the region's member states (Lesotho and Angola) at the base of the global rankings at 135 and 138 respectively. South Africa has been driving TFCA across southern Africa through leadership and financial support and subsequent tourism-related projects such as SDIs and Borderless Southern Africa (BSA). Through these projects, South Africa is continually surfacing as the major market determinant and the rest as 'new South African frontiers' dragged towards proactive conservation strategies whilst left to deal with their internal conservation-related problems (Bocchino 2008; Kimbu and Ngoasong 2013; Spenceley et al. 2008).

While inequalities in tourism development within the region continue, critics of TFCAs have understood tourism as a critical site of struggles over the meaning of neoliberalism (Bocchino 2008; Gardner 2012; Spenceley et al. 2008). It is particularly argued that TFCAs and their focus on development through tourism is a way of creating a commodified wilderness (Brooks et al. 2011), which mirrors the growing commercial interests in biodiversity (Ramutsindela 2007). This drives the view that South Africa's position in the region is underpinned by a market oriented strategy that fits well with the outlook of neo-liberalism. Examined from this angle, the use of TFCAs as a unified marketing brand for regional tourism development serves to connect these areas to global neoliberal discourse (Duffy 2006; Lauermann 2011; Scovronick and Turpie 2009).

Critical research has therefore raised questions about the motivations for TFCAs and the social and economic inequalities arising from them. Some have associated TFCAs with the re-colonization of African countryside (Singh and Houtum 2002; Spierenburg and Wels 2006) and as part of the on-going processes of globalization (Duffy 2006; Ramutsindela 2007). Indeed, the green developmentalism through which TFCAs are to realize their ambitions for economic development fall within the commodification of nature debate. Harvey (1996) defines commodification of nature as a strategy of accumulation by dispossession where states collude with capital to pillage nature and the commons. Consequently, markets in environmental services become the dominant approach to managing and protecting the environment. According to Harvey (1996) the monetary valuation of nature appeals to the theory of markets, to the goal of maximizing utility and to the centrality of money

as a common means to measure human desires and values of nature. To speak in money terms is to speak in a language that holders of social power appreciate and understand. Here, environmental economics become a pragmatic tool for getting environmental issues on the global monetary agenda and, in essence, money as a form of social power has a certain asymmetry to it – those who have it can use it to force those who do not, to do their bidding (Harvey 1996).

Other related views consider the move to sell nature and market its services as a transformation of human-environment relationships to serve the self-interests of the conservation constituency (Adams and Mulligan 2003). This constituency recognizes that the political economy of regions and landscape conservation are difficult to maintain in the face of objections by local people and their political leaders. The economic arguments for TFCAs could therefore be considered as a strategic alliance and a powerful tool for winning the confidence of national states that are striving to meet development obligations and for silencing local community resistance (Ramutsindela 2007). The importance of TFCAs in the environmental agenda generally and their emphasis on tourism-led development limits the ability of affected communities to resist although not (so far) because of their lived experience of positive impacts.

10.4.3 Who Is on the Payroll? The Place and Role of Local Communities

The Selous-Niassa experience coupled with the three surveys conducted in other parts of the region have all touched on the lack of capital, skills and motivation for local communities to engage in tourism activities (Ramutsindela 2004; Sengelela 2013b). Therefore Adams and Infield (2003) have rightly asked the question ‘who is on the payroll’? There are indeed few exceptions of cases where communities benefit from different tourism related activities in their land after successful land claims (Ramutsindela 2002). However, the reviewed cases in this chapter suggest that most of the communities on the edges of TFCAs are struggling with the loss of their basic rights to land, which are currently included in TFCAs.

Research has documented cases of direct displacements through loss of land including the relocation of over 27,000 people in Mozambique’s Coutada 16 which is currently part of the GLTFP (Spenceley 2006; Spierenburg et al. 2008) while other communities have considered voluntary relocations due to massive wildlife restocking to newly established conservation areas (Lunstrum 2010; Noe 2010a). Bocchino (2008) brings to our attention the growing security concern that emanates from the increased number of animals that are now roaming freely. Security is extended to include life-threatening situations and food insecurity due to the damage animals cause to crops (Bocchino 2008). With these different livelihood-related challenges, therefore, tourism activities in TFCAs can neither be immune to the claims that they reinforce inequality nor critics that they perpetuate external dependency.

10.5 Conclusion

Although this study has primarily focused on the Tanzanian side of the Selous-Niassa TFCA, it shares conceptual and development aspects that are important in the analysis of the current and potential impacts of the TFCA. The chapter has demonstrated that the spatiality and borderlessness of TFCAs have opened up the region for tourism investments in ways that no single initiative has done before. These areas support and reinforce national and regional strategies for conservation and development. TFCAs have encouraged private investments in tourism infrastructure in addition to motivating improvements in branding and marketing of regional attractions and, through regional promotion initiatives, they are also expected to improved policy and investment environment that will ensure consistency with respect to investment promotion, public-private partnerships and local communities' participation. Yet, tourism as an economic activity has mainly remained in few hands and expectations that enhanced tourism will necessarily translate into the much needed regional economic development arose without empirical basis. Further research is needed to allow for more robust conclusions as to if, when and how else TFCAs will contribute to economic development (Scovronick and Turpie 2009). Research should be guided by the fact that, worldwide, local economic benefits of tourism are hampered by the capital tendency of the industry to which TFCAs are not immune. Based on the results and challenges that have emerged, transfrontier conservation may be SADC's flagship project – as it is for the PPF – but this may be mainly for what conservation is called to serve: nature protection.

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