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Natural Resource Management Policy in Mozambique: an overview

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1 Introduction: Fortress conservation versus local heroes?

There is a new approach to natural resource management that has swept across sub-Saharan Africa. As David Hulme and Marshall Murphree note, 'the indigenous technical knowledge of rural Africans indicates that they have sophisticated understandings of environmental processes' (1999: 278), such that 'no longer should rural Africans be seen as degraders of the environment but as local heroes' (Hulme and Murphree 1999a: 1). As a result, the new approach to conservation activities is based upon involving local people. It accepts the fact that active natural resource use and market mechanisms can contribute to achieving both development and conservation goals. This approach is becoming widely accepted by politicians, government officials and academics across southern Africa in general and more recently in Mozambique as well.

During the colonial period, local people were marginalised from their own land and resources, some of which land the colonial authorities turned into parks or reserves (see Chigoya 1999:2). Fences were built to separate the local people from the rich natural resource base to which they had formerly enjoyed free access. The Kruger National Park in South Africa, the largest park in Southern Africa, built an electrified fence along 63 km of the border with Mozambique to protect the wildlife from illegal immigration (Griffiths 1995: 96-97). This is what has been called a policy of 'fortress conservation'. It is based on 'the preservation of wild species and the exclusion of humans from protected areas', and has been the norm in force across sub-Saharan Africa. It is premised on the notion of species extinction as an outcome of human activity (Adams and Hulme 1999: 14-15). At the same time, 'most government conservation departments in sub Saharan Africa had their origins in agencies established to defend hunting reserves and suppress poaching' (Adams and Hulme 1999: 16).

During the 20th century, conservation thinking internationally was dictated by an imperative to set aside protected areas, reserves and parks, as a fortress defence for nature (Adams and Hulme 1999: 15). In these areas, people were fenced out, impeded from using the so-called 'protected' natural resources and punished if they attempted to put some of it in their pots or use it for trade (ibid.: 15). This has continued up to the present. From being hunters, the style of life of local people was dramatically transformed. They were denied legal access to their former natural resource base and they became designated as poachers when they tried to reclaim their former rights. Hunting rights were granted to European hunters whereas the local African populations were denied access to their traditional hunting practices (see Chigoya 1999: 2; Adams and Hulme 1999: 16).

The development of big game hunting by Europeans in Africa is associated with the unfolding history of colonialism: initially, for the ivory trade; secondly, as a subsidy for colonial expansion, providing game as a source of food for labour; and thirdly, in the practice of trophy hunting of large mammals (Adams and Hulme 1999: 15-16). After the Second World War, the colonial governments started to institutionalise and organise para-military 'fortress conservation' in three distinct arenas. First, there was the establishment of Game Departments to regulate hunting and to protect people against the ravages of wildlife. Second, National Parks Departments were set up to manage the protected areas where wildlife could flourish (ibid.: 16). With a similar agenda of land reservation, resource use and population exclusion, a third governmental conservation agency was also created – the Forestry Department (ibid.: 16).

It was this government conservation structure which Africa inherited with independence. Both colonial and post-colonial governments have underestimated local community experience in conservation, management and utilisation of the natural resource base. William Adams and David Hulme argue that the idea that 'local communities can and do (and should be allowed to) manage wildlife was not invented in the 1990's' (1999: 19). Rather, 'conservation by communities is … long established in Africa' (1999: 20). The new focus on conservation issues lays stress upon the important role of people's participation, emphasising 'the need not to exclude local people, either physically from protected areas or politically from the conservation policy process, but to ensure their participation' (Adams and Hulme 1999: 19). Community conservation, therefore, 'represents a broad spectrum of management and benefit-sharing

arrangements of the involvement in natural resource management of people who are not agents of the state, but who, by virtue of their location and activities, are critically placed to enhance or degrade the present and future status of natural resources' (Barrow and Murphree 1999: 44).

Concern over the issue of involving local community participation in environment conservation in Southern Africa can be dated back to the late 1970's. A wildlife husbandry scheme was initiated in Zambia in 1979, to address the issue of elephant protection and management in an area adjacent to the South Luangwa National Park (Rihoy 1995: 21). The institutionalisation of community conservation as an officially-sanctioned methodology in Africa, has been a process with 'false starts' and 'dead-ends', and originated from local experiments at different times and to different extents in different countries (Adams and Hulme 1999: 20). In their analyses of community participation, William Adams and David Hulme found three crucial elements:

- The scientific viability of isolated protected areas. This reflects the ecological view that conservation cannot be achieved and sustained on small fortress 'islands'. Evidence for this is the mobility feature of wildlife, the need for large mammals, in particular, to move from one place to another, for feeding and breeding purposes, even if this means travelling great distances away from the protected area. Local communities, whose land the big mammals cross and crop, are and must be key stakeholders in conservation.

- Recognition of the imperative for local people who live in and around protected areas, or for people who depend on the same resources for a living or with cultural links to the specific land area, to participate in the management of conservation resources.

- Linkage of conservation goals to local development needs. The involvement of this link recognises the need to minimise the imposition of costs onto local people, which can have disastrously negative consequences for them, and to try to solve the problems of hostility between displaced or disadvantaged local people and the conservation agencies exercising a fortress conservation approach (1999: 21-22).

Since 1992, following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Mozambique has begun to design and implement community based resource management projects in order to achieve improved living standards for rural communities whilst ensuring the conservation of natural resources. In order to alleviate widespread poverty, the economic growth of local communities combined with conservation of the country's biodiversity has been the clearly stated objective of the government (Mocumbi 1998 and 2000). Agriculture, livestock, logging, wildlife and fisheries account for most subsistence livelihoods, employment, export earnings and the overall economic output of the country.

2 Community-based Natural Resource Management in Mozambique

Community based natural resource management, referred to henceforth as CBNRM, is a broader concept expressed in different ways and terms such as 'community conservation', 'community-based conservation' and 'park outreach', and it covers a wide range of meanings and definitions as elaborated by David Hulme and Marshall Murphree (1999; 1999a). Those terms referred to 'ideas, policies, practices and behaviours that seek to give those who live in rural environments greater involvement in managing the natural resources (soil, water, species, habitats, landscapes or biodiversity) that exist in the areas in which they reside (be that permanently or temporarily) and/or greater access to benefits derived from those resources' (Hulme and Murphree 1999a: 5; see also Adams and Hulme 1999: 19).

In the 1990's, this was really a stimulating and challenging development and research idea. Many discussions were held among Mozambican officials and academics on two key themes: first, how to involve local people in natural resource management; and second, what appropriate practices should be disseminated by the extension services in order for local people to obtain economic benefits from the vast natural resources of the country without exhausting them. Welcomed by funding agencies, this new idea was soon converted into practice, being

incorporated into both development and research projects, and it began to influence the reformulation of national policies. From 1992, and over the next five years, the former rhetoric of para-military style state management of protected areas was transformed into one of local community participation in wildlife and forest management (Anstey 1999: 135). Community participation was seen as being essential for the success of projects. Community-based initiatives started to proliferate with support from both government and donor agencies.

Joe Matowanyika argues that, in southern Africa, community-based natural resources management projects have been externally activated and the ideas of community conservation are imposed onto local communities and societies (1998: 3). The same issue has been addressed by Yussuf Adam, José Mate and Ofélia Simão (1998: 1-2) in the case of Mozambique. Edmund Barrow and Marshall Murphree indicate that, with some important exceptions, the present acceptance and institutionalisation of community conservation programmes in Africa is mostly a ‘product of initiatives by international conservation agencies endorsed by state governments, shaped by conservation professionals and funded by international environmental grant sources’ (1999: 51).

According to David Western and Michael Wright there are two agendas in community-based conservation: one, for most conservationists, is to make nature and natural products meaningful to local people, and the other, for local communities, is to reclaim control over natural resources and to improve their economic well-being (1994: 7). Edmund Barrow and Marshall Murphree argue that for people in urban and in industrial societies, from governmental, non governmental, national and international agencies, for whom ‘wildlife has little direct economic significance’ the importance given to wildlife is placed on its intrinsic or recreational and aesthetic value (1999: 51). They tend ‘to define conservation in terms of abstract concepts such as biodiversity and ecosystem maintenance, and to emphasise such goals as species preservation and the maintenance of micro-habitats for aesthetic and recreational use’ (Barrow and Murphree 1999: 51). Joe Matowanyika argues that the CBNRM initiatives in the region of southern Africa have been the key to achieving the conservation goals as a ‘very crude form of cheap labour and cutting down the costs of conservation’ (1998: 3). These initiatives ‘have failed to look at the broader issues of food security, poverty and the total livelihoods of the communities’ (*ibid*.: 3).

3 Environment in Mozambique

Mozambique, with a total land area of 799,380 km2, has just 16.1 million inhabitants. However, of these, 71.4% live in rural areas, whilst 92.7% of these rural dwellers depend directly on natural resources for food, shelter and income. In addition, 41.0% of the labour force from the urban areas is also engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishery production (INE 1999: 5).

Mozambique is thus essentially an agricultural economy, with most of its workers engaged in subsistence activities. Research by the Environment Working Group (GTA) confirms that the majority of Mozambican people derive their livelihood exclusively from the land (1990: 39). But only about 9% of the inhabitants use some kind of equipment beyond the most basic rudimentary tools to cultivate the land and only 2% use fertilisers (Mocumbi 1998: 1).

According to the Prime Minister of Mozambique, Pascoal Mocumbi, 69% of inhabitants live below the poverty line, and 82% of the poor are located in rural areas making the poverty in the country predominantly a rural phenomena (1998:1). The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in 1996 was US$185.8, and in 1998 US$236.9, with a growth rate of more than 10% per year (INE, 2000: 1). However the rural people are the slowest to benefit from this recent economic growth in per capita income.

Although former United States President, Bill Clinton, identified Mozambique as the world's fastest growing economy in early 2000 (2000: 2), the country is still viewed by the international community as one of the world's poorest countries, and it remains greatly dependent on foreign donors. One of the reasons for the high growth rate compared to other countries in the developing world, is the fact that it was the poorest country in the world in the early 1990s. But the civil war has now ended and the country has embarked upon an economic revival strategy. The reasons for the country's poverty are

traditionally explained as being the result of patterns of underdevelopment dating from Portuguese colonisation, the destructive period of war after independence, and the country's vulnerability to natural disasters such as drought and flood.

Natural disasters continue to impede the revival of the country's economic fortunes. For instance in February 2000, abnormally heavy rains in southern Africa, along with the tropical cyclone Eline, caused extensive flooding and submerged immense areas of land, ravaged much of the country's infrastructure, and produced more destruction than the war itself over vast swathes of land in the south of Mozambique (BBC News 24/02/2000). In March 2000, the President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, confronting the disaster was forced to appeal for about US$250 million to rebuild the economy of the country (BBC News 08/03/2000). Apart from the loss of lives, homes, roads, bridges, railway lines, and electricity transmission lines were washed away, as well as crops ruined. Mozambique lost 80% of its cattle according to United Nations' World Food Programme estimates (BBC News 08/03/2000). Cattle are the principal cultural and economic asset for many rural people in the south of the country. With the floods, they have lost the domestic reserves that they possessed to deal with contingencies. Cattle are effectively a family's savings scheme.

The landscape of the territory is essentially coastal lowland, with uplands in the centre, high plateaux in the northwest and mountains in the west, with Mount Binga, the highest point, situated on the border with Zimbabwe. Numerous rivers traverse the country notably from north to south, the Rovuma, Zambezi, Save (Sabi), Limpopo, Incomati (Komati), Umbeluzi and Maputo. As a result of the country's geographical location, shape and topography, there are various climates, from tropical to subtropical, from semi-arid to high rainfall, thus creating a variety of natural ecosystems.

The land is covered with various forms of vegetation ranging from grasslands to closed forests, from savannah to woodlands, open or secondary forests, depending on the natural environment and the degree of human intervention. The particular forms of vegetation have been shaped by people's struggle for survival (GTA 1990: 64). These different types of woody vegetation are commonly called natural forest in Mozambique. Therefore when the term 'natural forest' is used here, it refers not only to the ecological system composed of forests and/or scrub, and the related flora, fauna, climate and soil conditions, but also to the effects of human activities overtime.

As in many other countries, Mozambican forests have been cleared in part to facilitate agricultural production in the form of shifting or permanent cultivation, for subsistence or cash crops and pasture. The *machamba* [peasant farm] is considered by INE as being the basic unit of agricultural land use and the social unit for the organisation of the rural household's work (1999a). The *machamba* is associated with shifting agriculture, which means rotation of plots after several years, systematically employing slash and burn methods for clearing the new land. It is essentially rain-fed agriculture and involves growing basic staple foods such as maize, rice, cassava and sorghum, and some cash crops principally cashew nuts, coconut palms and cotton (GTA 1990: 68).

Natural forests and miombo woodlands have also been the main source of fuelwood, comprising firewood and charcoal, and also they provide round wood for construction, providing poles for building, fencing and so forth (GTA 1990: 35; Ribeiro 1992: 37). About 80 percent of the energy consumed in the country comes from woody biomass, as estimated by DNFBB (see also GTA 1990: 33; Ribeiro 1992: 37; Kumaghwelo *et al.* 1995: 1; DNFFB 1996: 2).

Natural woodland is still the main source of house building materials for most of the rural population (DNFFB 1996: 2). It is noteworthy here that 93.9% of rural families live in huts made of with local materials and 92.9% of the huts are covered with a thatched roof made of grass, reeds, and palm leaves (INE 1999b). Even in urban areas, huts are still very common with about 61% of households living in huts made of local materials (INE 1999b).

Approximately 80% of the country's population use wildlife meat and fish as their principal source of animal protein (DNFFB 1996: 2). In addition to subsistence hunting, an open market in game meat flourishes in the countryside, primarily along the roads, as a result of the government's inability to

control hunting (DNFFB 1996: 5). Forestry and wildlife are therefore essential to the sustainable development future of the country. Hence we turn next to examine the existing policy framework for this sector.

4 Policy framework for forestry and wildlife

In recent years, the DNFFB, within the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, has been exploring whether community participation will be a feasible strategy to conserve and protect forestry and wildlife resources from illegal cutting, hunting and fires. The DNFFB is the Mozambique government's division responsible for implementing sectoral policy concerning forestry and wildlife resources, with a mandate to protect, develop and promote the sustainable use of resources (DNFFB 1996: 7). The DNFFB mission statement is 'to contribute to social, ecological and economic development of the country by means of protecting, conserving and utilising on a sustainable basis the forest and wildlife resources' (DNFFB 1996: front cover).

The DNFFB strategy recognises that if the existing level of consumption of forest and wildlife products is to continue, sustainable use and management of the resources will be required (1996: 2). After several regional and national workshops and seminars with participants from central, provincial, and local government, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, and rural communities, from the north to the south of Mozambique, during the period from 1991 to 1996, the Forest and Wildlife Policy and Strategy (DNFFB 1996) was finally concluded. One of the medium-term strategic objectives defined for forestry and wildlife development was 'to increase the participation of the *rural communities, as direct agents and beneficiaries* in the integrated management, fire protection, use and conservation of forest and wildlife resources' (DNFFB 1996: 12). The italicised phrase is the author's emphasis to indicate the primary focus of the present strategy. Without the active involvement of rural communities it will not be possible to reverse the present trend of illegal cutting, hunting, and starting fires to clear land. The state, through the DNFFB alone, does not have the staff, facilities, equipment and resources to enable it to enforce the current laws.

According to DNFFB its overall long-term goal is 'to protect, conserve, utilise and develop forest and wildlife resources for the social, ecological and economic benefit of present and future generations of Mozambican people' (1996: 10). Three specific objectives have been established in three realms:

- Social – to address the role of these resources in alleviating poverty, and in increasing the participation of communities in the management and use of the resources;

- Ecological - this aims at the protection and conservation of the resources, and highlights the contribution of forest resources in the maintenance of soil and water resources, biological diversity and other environmental benefits; and

- Economic - this aims at reinforcing the role of forest and wildlife resources in the promotion of economic development, satisfaction of people's needs for forest and wildlife products, generation of revenues, and contribution to the Treasury through their efficient revenue collection (DNFFB 1996: 10).

Fulfilling these long-term objectives means that forestry and wildlife development has to be based on sustainable resource use. DNFFB is also committed to support applied research, needed for the development of new social and technical approaches for community resource management (1996: 12), as well as to implement schemes that will:

1. Promote and enable the development of community resource management regimes involving recognised communities, and which reflect the role of women;

2. Introduce mechanisms that progressively empower communities by

    - First affirming existing customary rights and ensuring exclusive access to natural resources in customary areas,

    - Second permitting the sustainable commercialisation of these resources for community benefit, and

- Third providing concession arrangements with government;

3. Involve the rural communities in the management of the State Protected Areas; and

4. On the basis of its accumulated experience in these schemes, DNFFB will develop proposals for further enabling legislation (DNFFB 1996: 13/14).

Within this policy framework, and with the aim of improving the living standards of the local communities involved in the sustainable use and management of natural resources, a number of research and development projects have been implemented by different governmental and non governmental organisations. These projects have been implemented within different settings and with varying degrees of local participation. If such interventions are to be effective it is essential that the subject of the policy framework, the local community, be clearly understood and identified.

5 Identifying the local community

Local community is a difficult concept to define in the Mozambique context. It must embrace all different kinds of communities that exist in Mozambique after the destructive impact of Portuguese colonisation, and particularly after the quite recently ended 28 years of successive wars which created a massive number of *refugiados* [refugees] and *deslocados* [internally displaced people]. Wars as well as natural disasters disrupted and dispersed existing communities causing new ones to be formed. Society is in a constant state of flux. Gerês village, in Gaza Province, is mainly comprised of displaced people, yet with the formation of a neighbourhood organisation, this now constitutes the community. The people living here were forced to abandon their traditional land and seek protection in villages along the Limpopo corridor during the war (CEF 1997). Tanga community in Maputo Province comprises former refugees who have returned from South Africa to their place of origin following the peace agreement in 1992.

In neighbouring Malawi, a study by ULG Consultants defined community as a village or group of villages under the jurisdiction of a village headman or a group village headman (1997: 3). In general, rural communities have been 'claimed to be clearly bounded, socially homogeneous, and based on shared norms' (Virtanen 2000: 116). As ULG Consultants observed, the rural areas remain relatively traditional and traditional authorities are still very influential. In many parts of Mozambique this is also the case although it varies from one place to another. In the case of Manica province, the traditional leaders still have a strong influence in rural areas (see Sousa, Juma and Serra 1995: 7; Virtanen 2000: 116; Serra 2001: 4).

In Sussundenga, Manica Province, the traditional hierarchy of leadership consists of three levels, which are: the *rei* [king] or paramount *Mambo* [chief of the chiefs], *Nhakwawa* in local language, today commonly known as a *Régulo*; the *Mambo* [chief], *Tsapanda* in local language, also known popularly as a *Régulo*; and the *sabhuku* [headman] or *Saguta or Mfumo*, in other areas of Manica province (see Sousa, Juma and Serra 1995: 5; Hughes 1995: 5; Cuahela 1996: 16; Ribeiro 1998, *Research notes*; and Serra 2000, *Research notes*). During the colonial period, the Portuguese tried to change this structure. It is important to note that *régulo* is the Portuguese term for the local chief, and the *régulo* constituted the lowest rung of the colonial administration. Today, the paramount *Mambo* or *Nhakwawa*, and the *Mambo* or *Tsapanda* are acknowledged as *régulo* ever since the period of consolidation of colonialism in Mozambique. Under the system of Portuguese colonial administration, the *Nhakwawa* had normally the rank of *Regedor* who was the real *Régulo* (Alves 1995: 72). Under the *Regedor* or *Régulo* there were *Chefes de grupo de povoações* [Chiefs of a group of villages] normally were the *Tsapanda* (*ibid.*: 72). The *Saguta* by local tradition, were representatives of the *Tsapanda* and were also categorised as *Chefe de povoação* [Chief of the village] under the Portuguese colonial system (*ibid.*: 72). The a body of auxiliaries was accepted by the Portuguese as being *cabos de terra*, a kind of local police, normally employed by the Portuguese Administrator to help the *Régulo* (see Ribeiro 1998, *Research notes*; and Serra2000, *Research notes*).

He was normally appointed from the pre-existing traditional leadership or from the same family lineage as the traditional leadership, as long as he did not offer any resistance to the colonial power (Harrison

1996: 217). For instance, the paramount chief Dodoeroi in Manica Province was removed in 1920 by the Portuguese administration because he had joined with chief Macombe, leader of one of the most famous rebellions against Portuguese occupation in the Barué revolt, which occurred between 1917 and 1920 (in Serra 2001: 6-7). Thus, the position of *régulo* gained a great power and legitimacy based as it was upon existing traditional power sources recognised by members of the community and was reinforced by the administrative authority bestowed by the Portuguese colonial regime. An important function of the *régulo* was tax collection for the colonial state.

That traditional social structure is not strictly hierarchical and combines religious and secular or worldly powers in a flexible, adaptable system (Hughes 1995: 5). According to Hughes, *régulos* and *reis*, in the secular sense, are on an equal footing, both are the final authorities in land allocation and in dispute resolution within discrete, bounded territories. However, in religious matters, the *régulos*, *Mambos*, defer to a *rei*, paramount *Mambo*, who conducts the ceremonies asking the ancestral spirits for rain and agricultural fertility (1995, 5). *Mambo* is "the religious and political spirit of the ancestor of the lineage" (Cuahela 1996: 15), however today means any superior person with the same meaning of chief (Serra 2000, *Research notes*).

The *Mambos* and *Sagutas* had to preserve both the social harmony of the community and the natural resources of the area. In order to support the *Mambo* and *Saguta* in the fulfilment of their duties, they had their own council of elders and *massuriares*, a body of auxiliaries and messengers (Ribeiro 1998, *Research notes*; and Serra 2000, *Research notes*). The council of elders is a body of counsellors to assist him and to give him opinions on any subject and in the resolution of social conflict. The body of auxiliaries is, in fact, a body of police, informants and messengers of the *Mambo* and *Sagutas* (see Sousa, Juma and Serra 1995: 5; Ribeiro 1998, *Research notes*; and Serra 2000, *Research notes*).

In Sussundenga, there are three *reis* [Kings] namely Dombe, Mahate and Mucimua, but Chief Mahate has been recognised to be the paramount rei due to his religious power and the fact that most of the sacred forests and pools are located in his territories (Sousa, Juma and Serra 1995: 5). During the war, both parties to the conflict, Frelimo and Renamo courted Chief Mahate, and he still continues to have political influence in Sussundenga District (Hughes 1995, p 5; see also Sousa, Juma and Serra 1995: 4).

Portuguese colonisation understood the role of the traditional authorities and introduced dramatic changes in the traditional structures of community leadership in Mozambique. They created the *régulo* as a Portuguese appointed chief, to be a pliant colonial representative and to manage the local forced labour, and the *capataz*, colonial police under the *régulo* or colonial companies, to force people to work (Munslow 1983: 36). The *régulos* were often selected from amongst the traditional leaders or someone was chosen, approved, and sometimes imposed by the colonial authorities on to the local communities in order to ensure Portuguese rule at the local level (Harrison 1996: 204-5).

Even though the *régulos* have been politically and to some extent socially excluded after the independence of Mozambique in 1975, in some rural areas they still enjoy some popularity and authority, particularly in areas of Renamo support. An analysis of the social data collected and research undertaken for the preparation phase of the Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) project in Chimanimani indicates that the traditional leadership retains strong support in the District of Sussundenga, and is likely to be the most effective structure for local decision-making with regard to the management and use of natural resources (Hughes 1995: 4). As quoted by Whiteside: 'There is growing recognition of the importance of working with the traditional leadership, particularly in the management of natural resources' (1998: 5).

In 1998, Hélder Muteia, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, discussed how the existing social structures have changed over time under external pressure and consequently were forced to adjust to the newly-fashioned economic and political society, moving from the pre-colonial, to the colonial and then post-independence periods, and any community based initiative has to take into account these historical dimensions as a starting point (1998: 2). Since the time of the ancestors, local communities in Mozambique, and more generally in Africa, have developed and implemented different natural resource

management regimes based on their accumulation of traditional knowledge, adapted both to the geographic, but also to the prevailing social, cultural, economic, and political context (Muteia 1998: 2).

In 2000, the Mozambique Council of Ministers recognised the role of community authorities by approving decree 15/2000, of 20 June. This decree characterises community authorities as 'traditional chiefs and other leaders recognised as such by their respective local communities.' Under the terms of this decree, local government should be prepared to collaborate with community authorities and to 'ask their opinions on how best to mobilise and organise the participation of local communities in the realisation of plans and programmes for economic, social and cultural development.' José Chichava, Minister of State Administration, also declared that community authorities would be involved in tax collection as well, and that any income they received would be based on the amount of tax they collected (Notícias 10 July 2000).

According to Joseph Hanlon, editor of the Mozambique Peace Process Bulletin (MPPB), the designation of 'other leaders' in the definition of community authorities is clearly intended to include those leaders introduced by Frelimo after the independence of Mozambique, and who have gained local credibility, as well as religious leaders, senior teachers and nurses, and even traditional healers (in MPPB August 2000).

Yet, community is not a monolithic, undifferentiated entity. It contains different categories of people distinguished by age, sex, interest, and power (Murphree 1994: 404). Communities contain within them internal conflicts and schisms and different sets of interests, which may often breach along economic, gender, and social lines (Western and Wright 1994: 8). Community can be more precisely understood as a relatively self-contained socio-economic and residential unit, comprising social groups, households, and individuals (Uphoff 1986: 11). Community, defined by geographical context, will have to include immigrants, cultures in transition and those with no ancestral ties to the land or to each other (Western and Wright 1994: 8). Thus, this definition is very open and comprises those communities formed not only by closely related families who share a common lineage but also by immigrants who have been settled or resettled after the Peace Agreement, which ended Mozambique's civil conflict.

In addition, there are many communities sharing a common resource base. For instance, the communities living around the Licuati forest in Maputo Province, or in Chimanimani in Manica Province, depend on the same natural forests. No community today exists in isolation. Every community nowadays depends on markets and consequently is subject to pricing policies and marketing structures outside its own control (Western and Wright 1994: 10). Community based initiatives operating within this broader framework carry many risks and uncertainties. Western and Wright argue that if there is a lack of sense of responsibility towards society, and if there is inappropriate management capacity, devolving power to local communities by way of greater managerial command over the use of resources carries the risk of even worse natural resource destruction (1994: 10).

6 Conclusion: enabling community participation

Community based initiatives have been targeted within the Mozambique government policy framework as an essential dimension in the struggle to overcome poverty. In 1997, the government of Mozambique endorsed community participation in natural resource management in an interesting and challenging manner. However, this was also done in fairly ambiguous terms that could mislead or undermine the government's efforts. Firstly, the new Land Law recognised the customary rights of the local communities and the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution. Secondly, the Municipality Law opened the possibility for local communities to control, use and manage the natural resources to their benefit. Thirdly, the Policy and Strategy for Forestry and Wildlife Development considered community involvement in the conservation and management of those resources (Muteia 1998: 3-4).

Although these laws mark important steps forward towards a genuine sustainable development policy, they still leave the final decision-making to existing staff in the governmental agencies concerning when, how, in what circumstances and in what form

community participation will be implemented. This can delay the process of registration of land or of local community institutions being recognised by law, and indeed, impede a favourable agreement and outcome of such initiatives. Meanwhile, community participation projects have overwhelmingly been externally initiated by different agencies, and the local participation component was only developed after the project had been approved.

Yussuf Adam, José Mate and Ofélia Simão highlighted that existing CBNRM projects have not only been externally initiated, but the financing and executing agencies, both governmental and non-governmental organisations, have tried to convey the impression that the idea and origin of the CBNRM projects under their auspices have been developed from the bottom upwards (1998: 1-2). In most of the existing CBNRM projects in Mozambique, on the contrary, the economic development of the local community has been a universal and explicit objective, and long term goal of all of these projects, yet rarely has the same level of importance been given to maintaining biodiversity targets (Aycrig 1998: 1). Biodiversity conservation is rarely a priority of local communities (*ibid.*: 1). Nevertheless, local people habitually tend to conserve their surroundings. By way of illustration, the African wild lands are seen as fertile sources of basic products highly valued by the community, and it is only under abnormal pressure that activities are undertaken that may lead to their destruction (Roger 1998: 3).

Local people are unlikely to have the same values of the executing agency, or the same objectives of the CBNRM project. Murphree suggests that people are keen to manage the environment if such management improves the conditions of their livelihoods, and when the degradation is such as to threaten the life sustaining process or offend local people's own aesthetic values (1991: 1). For them, conservation is an abstract and alien word, however they see and take care of natural resources as an investment for present and future value, the objective being the enhancement and the maintenance of their livelihoods (Barrow and Murphree 1999: 51). In fact, even lacking state assistance or backing from abroad, many African communities have continually performed community conservation (Hulme and Murphree: 1999a: 8).

Eduardo Mansur's methodological proposal for community involvement, promotes the conception that project staff have to take the initiative to identify the project, leaving the local community participation '*passiva*' [passive], however it should be active to generate the required information for the project (1998: 1). But HaBarad, Dikope and Gaboiphiwe see it in the following, rather different, way, the "CBNRM model becomes most realisable when we do not propose it – when instead, we focus on creating conditions enabling rural people to see that cooperation and conservation are the best available options for improving their daily lives " (1995: 130). Melkamu, Croll and Matowanyika have argued that "the failure to include communities from the beginning contributes to the failure of sustainable environmental development" (1995: 17). Back to 1992, based on community experiences in India, Rangadhar Sahu observed: "They must realise their problems. They must be made responsible for their own development. Let them manage their own resources"(1992: 89).

That '*passiva*' participation assumption, if accepted, may contribute to a process of the continuity of both colonial and post-colonial centralised top-down approaches and an extractive development model leading to an idiosyncratic peasant resistance to 'so-called development'. This strategy is not dissimilar to that of the colonial progenitor which was concerned to raise revenue and extract surplus from peasant production, giving little or no significance to peasants as agents of their own destiny or development in favour of capitalist market expansion into local peasant societies (see Harrison 2000: 3-7). Repeatedly the state forces rural development programmes from above and the peasants dialectically either avoid or destroy them. This has directed some authors to stress the presence of the state in rural communities as "very much a contested presence in which peasants might avoid state power, subvert it, or only enter into contact with the state in certain situations" (Harrison 2000: 5).

However, as argued by William Adams, in the sustainable development conception "lies a deeper and more subversive vision concerned with the nature and the scale of power over environment and people" and this power has been "held by the states and their international advisers" (1990: xiii). The power has

been used to enhance the capacity of centralised government structures rather than to develop "the capacity of people to plan and run their own lives, or control their own environment" (*ibid*.: xiii). "Development is elaborated by technicians and administrators, and implemented on rural areas with little scope for action or innovation by peasants themselves" (Harrison 2000: 4). Moreover, according to Graham Harrison, although the majority of sub Saharan Africa's people live and work in rural areas, the existing democratisation process tends to be concentrated upon urban minority politics (2000: 1).

For Bernardo Ferraz and Barry Munslow, the existing policy, programme and project formulation approaches in Mozambique need to be transformed (1999: 3). "This requires responding to people's own priorities rather than determining them from the top down, facilitating self-help and working in new partnerships between state institutions and those of civil society" (*ibid*.: 3). Barry Munslow *et al*. have argued that people's participation and smallholder-farmers' knowledge and experience "is the only starting point from which a real and indigenous development plan can begin" (1988: ix). Today, there is increasing evidence, for example that many of the existing patches of forest in West Africa are not simply the remnants of widespread forest destruction but rather they represent the result of local people's knowledge, and the work of themselves and their ancestors, in a long process of deliberate forest management as demonstrated by the research of James Fairhead and Melissa Leach (1996; and 1998).

Responsibilities and capabilities should be directly linked with the right to use and manage resources. This linkage of rights, responsibilities and capabilities was inherent within traditional communities and was imposed by both natural and social resource constraints. The integrity and interrelatedness of these factors broke down once local communities joined the larger constellation of communities within nation states, and more recently a global community of nations (Western and Wright 1994: 10).

At the same time, local people also want development. But they have their own vision of what constitutes progress, and this may be very different from the outsiders' model of development. They are well aware of their social limitations and deprivations, and the existing economic, technological and professional constraints. For instance, participants at the first community workshop between Matutuíne, in Mozambique, and Maputaland, in South Africa, held in Ponta do Ouro, Mozambique, in July 1998, argued that skills training and local entrepreneurial capacity building is necessary to enable communities to acquire employment at senior levels, and to run local enterprises that can supply goods and services (Anon 1998: 5). People from those communities, recognising the need to acquire new organisational capacities and abilities, also saw community capacity building as a means to realise their vision, in an authentic partnership with external actors. In particular they identified the following prerequisites:

- Establishing effective and democratic structures;
- Identifying and prioritising their needs and opportunities;
- Conceptualising and undertaking their own development initiatives and projects;
- Handling and resolving conflict within and between communities, and with state, private and non-governmental agencies (Anon 1998: 2)

Finally, but not the least, in the words of Elia Ciscato "*… o obstáculo ao desenvolvimento não provém da cultura popular-tradicional, como poderia parecer, mas de outros factores, como por exemplo: a maneira como o desenvolvimento é apresentado ou imposto, o querer substituir sem que haja uma evolução que vem de dentro, o deixar o interessado fora do jogo…*" (1987: 14). This literally translated is: "… the obstacle to development does not originate from people's traditional culture, as it might appear, but from other factors, for instance: the manner in which development is introduced or imposed, the will to substitute from the outside without an evolution from the inside, leaving the subject out of the game…".

The main drawback to such a development trajectory is the outsider tendering a kind of pre-designed development model without taking into account the inner evolution of the community and participation from the very beginning of any development initiative. Even the most 'primitive' (wo)man wants 'progress' but not '*the* progress', because this 'claimed' development model from his(er) outside world if

accepted may kill his(er) identity and authenticity (Ciscato 1987: 14).

In such an endeavour, identifying local communities is one part of the problem. However, actually enabling community participation is entirely another. This task has still to be achieved in Mozambique.

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