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**CREATING SYNERGIES BETWEEN COMMUNITY BASED
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND THE UNCCD**

**LESSONS LEARNED FROM A REGIONAL CBNRM ASSESSMENT IN THE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION**

**Submitted by:
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ASSESSMENT IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM A REGIONAL CBNRM ASSESSMENT IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

An initiative by USAID-FRAME, IRG and IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa
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ACRONYMS

BERDO	Bwanje Environmental and Rural Development Organisation
CAMPFIRE	Communal (Community) Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
COMPASS	Community Partnerships for Sustainable Resource Management
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
IDP	Integrated Development Plans
IUCN ROSA	The World Conservation Union Regional Office for Southern Africa
LIFE	Living in a Finite Environment
NAP	National Action Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMIF	Sustainable Management of Indigenous Forest
SRAP	Sub-Regional Action Programme
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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1. BACKGROUND

This paper provides a synthesis of key findings and lessons learned from five case studies of successful CBNRM projects in the Southern African Region (Arntzen et al. 2007a, Grossman & Holden, 2007, Jones & Mosimane, 2007, Mauambeta et al. 2007, Taylor & Murphree, 2007). A synthesis study and an economic assessment have also been conducted (von Maltitz 2007, Arntzen et al. 2007b).

These studies demonstrate various UNCCD-related environmental, socio-economic and institutional / policy benefits derived from CBNRM initiatives. They further demonstrate the link between the UNCCD response strategies, as expressed through NAPs and national reports, and the CBNRM initiatives in the individual countries. Also highlighted are opportunities for greater alignment between the UNCCD and CBNRM implementation.

The case studies were carried out as part of a USAID funded FRAME/IUCN ROSA (Regional Office for Southern Africa) initiative. The initiative focuses on knowledge management for biodiversity conservation and the mainstreaming of CBNRM in the implementation of the UNCCD.

Of special interest to both FRAME and IUCN ROSA is the need to improve cross-sectoral information sharing and coordination. This will help to maximize synergies between CBNRM and UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs) and to develop linkages with poverty reduction, environmental governance and related programs.

Over the past two years FRAME and IUCN ROSA have accordingly collaborated to assess various CBNRM programmes in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The emphasis was placed on regional achievements in the promotion of sustainable resources management as a way to combat environmental degradation, reduce poverty and promote good governance.

2. CBNRM AND THE UNCCD IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

The UNCCD was adopted in Paris in 1994, effective as from 1996. It recognized desertification as a major global economic, social and environmental challenge. The UNCCD is unique among the global environmental conventions in that it emphasizes a bottom-up approach to policy development and implementation. The decentralization of land and resource management authority to local institutions is a key element of this approach.

Signatories of the UNCCD are obliged to follow an integrated approach when developing their desertification strategies, one that considers socio-economic as well as environmental factors and issues. The UNCCD further places emphasis on tackling the root causes of desertification, rather than simply the symptoms. It also recognizes linkages between poverty and desertification.

In 1997 the Southern African Development Community (SADC) produced a Sub-Regional Action Programme (SRAP) on drought and desertification in 1997. However, implementation and coordination of the SRAP did not take place as a result of inadequate capacity in the SADC Secretariat. On the country level Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe all adopted National Action Programmes (NAPs) to address challenges related to desertification in their countries. Only Namibia has never produced a formalized NAP, despite having one of the most formalised anti-desertification strategies in the region.

Over the last two decades and more CBNRM, as a strategy towards sustainable natural resource management and rural development, developed in parallel to the implementation of the UNCCD in Southern Africa. CBNRM is practiced in some or other form in most, if not all, SADC states. In some cases pilot projects have developed into full-scale programmes. Some countries have a formalized CBNRM policy, though most practice CBNRM without a specialized legislative framework.

The summary list below gives an indication of the scale of CBNRM programmes in the Region:

- **Namibia:** 50 communal conservancies on 10 million ha
- **Zimbabwe:** 37 districts (63%) registered under CAMPFIRE in five natural regions, 4 million ha
- **Botswana:** CBNRM covers entire country, over 100 villages with 135,000 people involved
- **Malawi:** Over 3,000 Village Natural Resources Management Committees
- **South Africa:** Varied programmes in communal areas, nature reserves/parks and on resettled land.

The implementation of CBNRM projects and programmes predates the formulation of UNCCD NAPs in most of the countries concerned. In most instances they do not specifically target desertification, but are linked to biodiversity conservation objectives. However, when analyzing CBNRM practices it becomes clear that CBNRM is well aligned with the UNCCD objectives.

In summary, CBNRM and the UNCCD share the following principles and elements:

- Increased management authority, responsibility, and participation by local communities
- Local-level institutional development and capacity building;
- Sustainable resource management as a foundation;
- Diversification of rural incomes and employment opportunities;
- Integrated approaches and co-operation of stakeholders;
- The creation of enabling policy and legal environments, including land and resource tenure.

In spite of these similarities, the case studies reveal that CBNRM does not feature properly in the reporting of the SADC countries to the UNCCD. The 20-odd years of CBNRM experience is also poorly integrated into national UNCCD strategies, and almost non-existent in the SADC SRAP. Although CBNRM was mentioned in some NAPs and inferred in most, it was seldom highlighted as a central approach. The unique complexities of communal land management are highlighted in many NAPs, but receive very limited consideration in the NAPs when it comes to specific implementation strategies.

This difference in detail between NAPs and CBNRM is best explained by the different levels of focus of the two processes:

- NAPs provide an overarching framework for desertification interventions, but do not provide details of how to operationalize implementation. National issues such as policy, national coordination and inter-governmental alignment are prioritized. The SRAP looks at SADC-wide issues that are best tackled on a multi-country basis.
- CBNRM, in contrast, focuses on direct project interventions and the nitty-gritty of implementing sustainable management of the community level. Policy and institutional reforms provided the enabling environment that allowed CBNRM to take off. These policy reforms were in many instances informed by the experience and feedback of practitioners to policy makers on how well the reforms work.

3. CBNRM ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMBATING DESERTIFICATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMBATING DESERTIFICATION

CBNRM in the Southern African Region aimed to enhance biodiversity conservation in communal lands. The case studies show that most communities involved in CBNRM programmes have a higher appreciation of the local natural resources and improved skills for the monitoring, and sustainable cultivation and harvesting of resources. They also demonstrate that communities are able to contribute to local natural resource management instead of leaving NRM entirely to government and government-related institutions.

Many of the southern African CBNRM projects have focused on wildlife / game (conservation) management in conservation areas and on communal land. It is generally assumed that areas under a wildlife management regime are less likely to be degraded than under alternative land use options such as subsistence grazing. Though not proven, this assumption is likely to be robust, particularly where free ranging wildlife is concerned.

Another assumption is that the entire environment is likely to be in a less degraded state where wildlife numbers are increasing. However, there are qualitative indications that intensive game ranching for hunting, prevalent in much of South Africa, has contributed to environmental degradation (Steenkamp, Marnewick & Marnewick, 2005). From the case studies it is clear that large tracts of southern Africa are being maintained through CBNRM for wildlife management, either for hunting or ecotourism.

CBNRM has also been used in most southern African countries to promote more sustained natural resource management, through restoration of degraded areas or through assisting in the commercialization of non-timber forest products (veld products). In most cases the impact of these projects on the state of desertification is poorly documented, though anecdotal evidence indicates that environmental benefits are being achieved. This is highlighted also in the case studies.

Examples of the impact of CBNRM on sustainable natural resources management include:

In **Namibia** based on the LIFE project (LIFE 2004, Jones and Mosimane, 2007).

- There are 50 registered communal area conservancies covering over 10 million ha of land in five different biomes.
- Well documented increases in wildlife, particularly in the northwest of the country.
- In the #Khoadi //hoas Conservancy management initiatives are anticipated to have positive impacts on reducing desertification. Re-introduction of Rhino into the conservancy has been approved as a result of the good management of the other game.

- The Nyae Nyae conservancy has experienced large increases in many game species.
- An interesting anomaly from the Namibia study is that residents are using wildlife income to build up livestock herds. This has possible degradation implications, but the conservancies have recognized the need to manage livestock in a sustainable manner. This example amplifies the need for CBNRM to take a more holistic view on livelihoods and natural resource management that includes management of both wildlife and livestock.

In South Africa (Grossman and Holden, 2007)

- Most land claims on conservation areas were settled in a manner which allowed the conservation status of the land being maintained. This includes the Makuleke land claim in northern Kruger Park, Dwese-Dcwebe and Mkambati on the Wild Coast, The Kalahari Gemsbok Park, and the Richtersveld National Park.
- Some reserves have been established on communal areas. Examples include the Mawewe cattle-game project, Mthethomusha Nature Reserve, the Mahushe Shongwe Nature Reserve, the Tembe Game Reserve, Pilanesberg National Park, and the Madikwe Game Reserve. The level to which CBNRM principles have been implemented varies greatly.
- The Khomani San project, a land reform initiative adjacent to the Kgalakgadi National Park, has shown no environmental benefits so far. This is due to the near total collapse of communal institutional structures. The South African Land Reform process has created unique examples of CBNRM in which new communities (i.e. people without a history of working together) are often resettled on land. In such cases resource management issues may recede into the background as a result of power struggles and capacity vacuums in the new institutions.
- The Richtersveld contractual national park arrangement has clearly resulted in reduced environmental degradation. However, but a history of disputes and low tourism revenues have generated little additional success.
- In South Africa the LandCare programme focused mainly on soil-and-water conservation and rangeland management, both of which are likely to achieve environmental benefits.

In Zimbabwe (Taylor and Murphree, 2007)

- CAMPFIRE projects have been initiated in 37 districts of which 51% are considered to have full local participation. An estimate that 55% of the surface area of participating wards (~ 4 million ha) is under the CAMPFIRE programme.
- Elephant and buffalo numbers have increased in participating areas.
- Despite many problems, revenue from hunting continues to flow to communities and community structures continue to exist and support hunting as a land use option.

In Botswana (Arntzen et al. 2007a)

- The CBNRM program covers the entire country with over 100 villages and 135 000 people involved.
- The Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management Trust is located in a wildlife management area just south of Moremi Game Reserve. CBNRM has allowed the community to move from cattle management to wildlife-based incomes, with associated benefits to the habitat. Cattle management became impossible after the erection of the buffalo fence. Decreased poaching increased local appreciation of wildlife and reduced wildlife human conflict has been reported from focus group discussions.
- In Botswana the Kgetsi ya Tsie project focused on the planting of economically important tree species (Morula) and its members were trained in sustainable harvesting techniques. However, this project also demonstrated the constraints of resource management in open-access areas and in situations where aspects of tenure remain problematic.

Malawi does not have the extensive wildlife outside of reserves, as is the case in other southern African countries. Accordingly CBNRM does not concentrate on wildlife management, but other forms of natural resources.

- CBNRM projects in protected areas have given local communities access to selected resources. They have not, however, contributed to the expansion of the reserve network.
- CBNRM Projects in communal areas do not focus on game management, but on other natural resources that have value to the local people
- In the Malawi Sustainable Management of Indigenous Forest (SMIF) project, increased household livelihoods and income did not result in decreased charcoal production.
- Extensive woodlots have been established to mitigate for deforestation in the area.
- Community members state that animal species are starting to move back into the forests where they had become locally extinct.
- There are also reports that rivers are starting to become perennial again.

Environmental benefits derived from CBNRM differ widely between projects. Projects include both conservation objectives (linked to eco-tourism) and management of resources for sale and consumption. In most instances the resource-based initiatives have not included agriculture, but as in the Malawi example, this is not always the case. The wildlife and tourism potential of an area versus the potential of the area for other activities would seem to be an important component in wildlife management successes. The Malawi example indicated that in areas without wildlife, CBNRM interventions can have very positive impacts in reducing the environmental components of desertification.

3.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMBATING DESERTIFICATION

The UNCCD identifies a direct link between desertification and poverty. The southern African case studies highlight many areas in which CBNRM has helped to alleviate poverty and has helped diversify household income streams. The low returns per household in some projects still remain problematic and it is clear that in most situations CBNRM-based activities, on their own, are insufficient to sustain livelihoods. Consequently CBNRM needs to be seen as one component of a broader livelihood strategy based both on natural resources and other income streams (as illustrated in the Malawi study).

The extent of areas under some form of CBNRM or wildlife management is impressive, but the sustainability of these regimes will depend on communities continuing to gain tangible benefits for maintaining the land use form. The case studies show mixed success as far as direct contributions to rural livelihoods are concerned, though impressive benefit streams are being generated in some instances.

In many instances non-monetary benefits, such as access to free meat or non-timber forest products, are as or more important than the financial benefits. Other non-material benefits include the empowerment of local populations, increased self esteem, reduced dependence on government, exposure to commercial partners, development of better working relationships with government, and product development (Arntzen et al. 2007b).

A summary of some of the benefits identified is given below, with greater detail being available from the individual case study documents (refs) and the economic (Arntzen et al. 2007b) and synthesis documents (Jones 2006).

Namibia (LIFE 2004, Jones and Mosimane, 2007)

- The total contribution of the national CBNRM programme to net national income and increased capital value of wildlife in northwest Namibia from 1990 to 2003 was approx. US\$60 million, almost matching the total investment in CBNRM by government and donors of approx. US\$66 million.
- By 2005 the income generated by conservancies was just over US\$3 million. This income was generated through conservancy/enterprise cash income; household/wage income; and conservancy non-financial benefits mostly in the form of game meat from either harvested trophy animals or game cropped by the conservancies.
- The #Khoadi //hoas Conservancy generates an annual amount of US\$11,000 from hunting licenses. Also the new Grootberg lodge is likely to provide substantial benefits in the future. It currently provides employment for 16 people and the community will get 15% of turnover (US\$50,000 in the first year of operation). A number of other benefits will be linked to community activities such as craft and agriculture. Incomes have also been used to improve community infrastructure, rather than directly to households.
- In the Nyae Nyae conservancy, the conservancy account for 28% of local jobs and 35% of the cash income of the residents. All members of this conservancy received cash dividends of US\$10 - 90 between 1998 and 2005. Sometimes the conservancy also funded social infrastructure such as schools and community gardens.

South Africa (Grossman and Holden, 2007)

- South Africa has taken a unique approach in some projects in that the state pays individual community members to engage in resource management activities. Examples of this approach include Working for Water (which probably falls outside the definition of a CBNRM programme), Landcare and Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism's CBNRM projects. Rapid implementation combined with high community financial benefits is thereby achieved. Yet a critical concern is the long term sustainability of this approach as funding to individual projects is short term (von Maltitz et al. 1998).
- The Makuleke community receives substantial dividends from leasing its tourism rights in Kruger and in the past received substantial benefits from trophy hunting. Trophy hunting has been stopped as a condition of the lease agreement with a private tourism operator. Other communities such as Dwesa/Kwebe and Mkambati have struggled to set up joint ventures with the private sector due, in part, to land tenure issues and a lack of community cohesion.
- The two South African case studies, the Khomani San and Richtersveld, have shown very modest livelihood impacts thus far. This is due largely to institutional problems in developing land management practices.

Zimbabwe (Taylor and Murphree, 2007)

- Despite wide acceptance of CAMPFIRE and its rapid growth, even into areas with limited wildlife habitat, actual household dividends from the program have been modest. In most instances the money has been used rather for community level infrastructure and no direct household dividends have been paid. A more recent trend has been for the district councils to retain the greater proportion of dividend generated.
- Of the dividends that reach the producer community, most are used for community level initiatives. A high degree of transparency and accountability is evident in this process which is a very encouraging trend.

Botswana (Arntzen et al. 2007a)

- 94 legal CBO NRM entities exist, 35 of which generate income (Schuster 2007)
- Revenue from commercial use is estimated at US\$3.2 million with subsistence in kind income estimated at US\$2.7 million in 2005.

- 800 jobs are created, most (520) as joint ventures with the private sector. This only represents about 1.2% of the adult population in CBNRM areas, but these areas have low formal job opportunity.
- The Kgetsí ya Tsie project concentrates on veld products. The estimated income ranges from US\$25 - 60 / month / member. It thereby represents an additional source of income which provides members access to goods that they would otherwise not have afforded. These benefits are particularly important to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as old women.
- The Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management trust has only 372 people, the total population of the village. The CBNRM activities provided 102 people with employment and generated a revenue of US\$1.3 million in the period 2000 – 2005 with household dividends of US\$85 per household being paid in 2005. It also provided additional household benefits such as access to game meat and scholarships.

Malawi (based on results from the COMPASS project, Mauambeta et al. 2007)

- During COMPASS 1 (2000 to 2004) US\$511,000 worth of community benefits were generated by participating communities.
- Bee keeping is expected to increase production of honey from the current 40 tons to 800 tons in 2009.
- In 2005 fish farmers produced metric 500 tons of fish.
- 63 tons of raw baobab material has been supplied to a process facility for processing into oil and powder in 2006 with cash income going directly into local communities pockets.
- Water-efficient irrigation practices are being used to produce high value vegetables and herbs on 985 smallholder farms.
- Individual participants testify that involvement in the projects has helped to lift them out of poverty and has provided them with food security. Fifty percent of the 10,000 households targeted were able to produce adequate food for home consumption and sale.
- A total of 350 ha of village woodlots and many private woodlots have been established in the BERDO project.
- In the SMIF Project, communities have generated income close to US\$25,000 from various conservation-based enterprises such as guinea fowl rearing, Baobab and Tamarind juice production, wines, tree seedling and timber sales, and similar products.

Long-term sustainability of CBNRM projects is only likely where the perceived benefits of project participation exceed the perceived costs in both monetary and non-monetary terms. Many benefits are communal, such as community infrastructure, while the benefits at individual level remain modest.

Since shared resources are being used and there is always the possibility of individuals effectively privatizing the commons for their personal gain. Poaching of wildlife is also a mechanism to “privatize” a shared resource. At present most of the wildlife-based projects are reporting a reduction in poaching which bodes well for longer-term success. However concern is raised that where community members are receiving very low household benefits, their buy in to these programmes may diminish in time.

3.3 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMBATING DESERTIFICATION

All case studies CBNRM demonstrated positive impacts on the establishment of local institutional structures for resource management. This impact is extensively reviewed in Jones (2006). However,

as is the case with Kgetsi ya Tsie project in Botswana, environmental management is often a low priority issue, with greater priority on job creation and resource exploitation (Arntzen et al. 2007a). Despite this the institutions tend to show an increased awareness of the importance of sustainable resource management, in some instances leading to changes in other activities such as livestock management.

In the case of the Richtersveld, South Africa, the youth took up the issue of involvement in natural resource planning. This became a core issue in the local Integrated Development Plans (IDP, a South African municipal planning process). This is the only example of a case where sustainable land management issues form the core of an IDP process (Grossman and Holden, 2007).

The CAMPFIRE experience in Zimbabwe has been particularly successful in establishing functional, democratically elected natural resource management committees. Environmental issues have also been taken up in District Environmental Action Plans which have ward level committees. Current changes in national policy are likely to erode CAMPFIRE successes. For instance there is a trend back to central government control of resources and land (Taylor and Murphree, 2007).

CBNRM implementation has almost always resulted in some awareness-raising on desertification-related issues, particularly as a result of unsustainable land management practices.

CBNRM initiatives are positively associated with policy changes in all southern African countries. Legislation that devolves resource management authority is what makes CBNRM possible, even where that legislation does not refer directly to CBNRM. Despite growing awareness of the importance of the devolution of resource rights, actual land and resource ownership is not the norm in southern Africa. In Botswana and in regard of communal land in South Africa, one has a *de facto* open access system. In the case of Botswana this is due to the legislative environment, whereas a breakdown of community level institutional structure and unclear policy leadership counts among the causes in South Africa.

In Namibia the formation of conservancies plays an important role in enhancing tenure control. In the case of Zimbabwe devolution has been stalled at the level of District Councils. In Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe where hunting is a key driver of CBNRM, government departments are responsible for setting of quotas, and CBNRM institutions have varying access to this process. Indications are that where the devolution of authority to communities is the most advanced, CBNRM is most successful (Jones and Murphree 2004).

4. LESSONS LEARNED

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

4.1.1 Enabling policy and legal environment

The legislative environment in all the case study countries falls short of what is required to fully support community based land and resource management. Understanding the core drivers of poor land management in communal areas is a key to the success of both UNCCD and CBNRM's success in the region. It thereby makes sense for both programmes to collaborate on the development of legislative environments that enable locally sustainable land management. At this stage it does not look as if UNCCD initiatives are extracting sufficient benefit from CBNRM's experience with the necessary conditions for sustainable community resource management.

4.1.2 Local institutions as entry points for NAP implementation

The UNCCD places a major emphasis on the participation of local communities in the implementation of desertification response strategies. In this regard most CBNRM case studies suggest that substantial strides have been made towards the strengthening of local institutions and empowerment of local communities. Local institutions initially established to carry out CBNRM activities, could just as well serve as local focal points for desertification control and drought coping efforts. In this way, the CBNRM programmes would facilitate the local implementation of the NAP. However, often the potential of other local institutions, such as village development committees, farmers committees, village health committees, locally based women and youth organizations, remains untapped. This also applies to the involvement of traditional authorities who often remain responsible for management, law enforcement and dispute resolution at the local level.

4.1.3 Targeting individuals vs targeting communities

Policies favor community benefits over individual benefits. This reduces the poverty reduction capacity of CBNRM and creates the risk that individual households are not well motivated to get involved in sustainable natural resources and land management. While it is necessary to mobilize communities to participate in communal activities of natural resources management, the fact remains that people will be more committed on an individual level, if ownership and use rights are clear and well-defined. The case studies demonstrated that CBNRM projects based on veld and forest products (e.g. Malawi and Botswana) provide higher incentives, as members are rewarded proportional to their inputs.

4.1.4 Need for long-term capacity building

Capacity building of local institutions for sustainable land and resource management is a critical element of the UNCCD. Despite the remarkable achievements of some CBNRM projects, all case studies indicated that CBNRM projects need long-term and continuous support to be successful. Most CBOs develop slowly and need support for up to ten or even fifteen years. The general trend appears to be that of older community organizations performing better than younger ones. A strong argument is to be made for continuous capacity building of the board, staff and general community members in the areas such as organizational management, financial management, natural resource management and marketing. In terms of UNCCD implementation capacity building efforts should increasingly involve also the skills and capacities needed to identify and address local desertification issues.

4.1.5 Transparency and participatory decision-making

The importance of sound communication between the CBOs and the general community membership has been highlighted in most of the case studies. Often a lack of feedback or consultation with the general membership resulted in apathy or generated mistrust. Practically all case studies indicate the importance of proper information flow between CBOs and the broader community or their membership, the accountability of the leadership and the participation of the whole community in key decisions. Record-keeping was mentioned as a prerequisite for transparency.

4.1.6 Involvement of marginalized groups

The case studies demonstrate that successful CBNRM promotes the involvement of marginalized groups in natural resources based livelihood strategies. The Kgetsi ya Tsie project in Botswana works mainly with elderly women, who are otherwise dependent on crop production (Arntzen 2007a). CBNRM projects in Namibia and South Africa target San communities who live in areas without any economic development opportunities (Jones and Mosimane 2007, Grossman and Holden 2007).

4.2 Poverty Alleviation

4.2.1 CBNRM is economically efficient, but has unclear household-income and welfare impacts

There is some evidence that CBNRM is economically efficient, and that it contributes positively to the national income and employment, while at the same time generating significant positive financial benefits at community level (Arntzen et al. 2007b). The impact of CBNRM on the income and welfare of individual households is less clear and requires further studies. In general it appears that economic benefits to individual households are modest and take the form of jobs and household dividends. In addition, distribution of benefits to community members continues to be a challenge in most of the case studies. However, in order to break the downward spiral of poverty and land degradation as recognized by the UNCCD the importance of achieving an impact on the household level cannot be over-emphasized. Therefore there is a need to reconsider the apportionment of benefit to the communal and individual levels.

4.2.2 Livelihood diversification and increased security

Diversifying rural incomes and employment opportunities is one of the key strategies of the UNCCD to prevent desertification. The case studies clearly demonstrate that CBNRM contributes to rural economic diversification and greater livelihood security through the provision of additional livelihood sources, which are less susceptible to droughts than agriculture. This makes CBNRM largely complementary to other established land and resource uses in communal areas.

4.2.3 Financial sustainability should be incorporated in the project design from the start

The case studies demonstrated that initiatives should be designed to achieve financial sustainability in the long-term. After almost ten years Kgetsi ya Tsie is still donor dependent and is struggling to cope with the general donor withdrawal from Botswana (Arntzen et al. 2007a). Some of the wildlife-based community projects have developed into financially sustainable rural development projects such as SMT (Arntzen et al. 2007a). These community organizations will have to invest in long-term projects, for instance in property development in urban areas, to achieve greater financial sustainability.

4.2.4 Collaboration with private sector partners

There is strong evidence that joint venture partnerships benefit communities. The private sector partners compensate for limited community entrepreneurial capabilities by bringing in extensive marketing and management skills, and market knowledge and contacts. The private sector also serves as a source of investment capital for the processing of natural products, ecotourism and hunting ventures.

4.3 Synergies with the UNCCD Implementation

4.3.1 Increased collaboration and information exchange

The CBNRM community needs to actively engage with National and regional UNCCD initiatives. Success with the improvement of rural livelihoods and the reduction of desertification should be highlighted. Also the prerequisites for success should be communicated. In this regard National CBNRM projects need to provide information of successes to the UNCCD focal point proactively and in time for National UNCCD progress reports.

4.3.2 Documenting impacts of CBNRM on combating desertification

There are surprisingly limited assessments of the impacts of CBNRM on the degradation status of resource base in spite of the long history of CBNRM in the Southern African Region. Further, the cost-effectiveness of CBNRM's biodiversity benefits has been questioned. Its achievements in preventing desertification is even less researched or documented. Effective monitoring and evaluation on both the environmental and social-economic impacts of project implementation is needed.

4.3.3 Need for a more holistic land management approach

In many situations CBNRM has taken a wildlife and nature conservation focus. A more holistic approach with a wider focus is needed for the implementation of the UNCCD NAPs. CBNRM initiatives should consider the totality of natural resource based livelihood strategies, including agriculture. Some case studies indicate that community organisations are succeeding in cutting through sectoral barriers to implement more holistic and integrated approach to land and resources management. For instance, isolated community-based rangeland management projects have been initiated in Botswana and Namibia. These aim to ensure that livestock farming is carried out sustainably and in a participatory manner (Jones and Mosimane 2007, Arntzen et al. 2007a). In Malawi CBNRM-initiatives are linked with improved arable production and management, including agro-forestry and soil conservation practices (Mauambeta et al. 2007). If widely replicated these initiatives could contribute to UNCCD objectives.

4.3.4 Need for national and international advocacy

It seems that CBNRM activities have typically been conducted under the banner of the UN Convention of Biodiversity. The CBNRM community needs to demonstrate that CBNRM, as a wildlife management strategy and in its wider sense, is equally a strategy for countering or reversing desertification, despite its traditional links with biodiversity funding agencies. National and international advocacy is needed to achieve this.

4.3.5 NAPs need to move from policy to action

NAPs, by their nature, represent a broad-brush approach to the various nations' desertification problems. As such they lack detail on how their objectives can be achieved. The development of NAPs was an initial signal of the signatories' commitment to the UNCCD. The focus now needs to move from national planning to local implementation. In this regard learning the CBNRM-community's experience with local level implementation could be of great benefit to the national and international UNCCD processes.

4.3.6 Improved understanding of benefits and tradeoffs between different land-use options

Where alternative land uses such as wildlife management and tourism are proposed, one has to demonstrate the relative environmental and socio-economic benefits. Understanding impacts particularly on the poor is important. At the same time understanding and managing trade-offs between different environmental goods and services needs additional research. In many instances increased food production is traded off against other regulatory services. The use and promotion of wildlife requires tradeoffs with conventional agricultural and livestock practices. Better understanding of the true costs of these tradeoffs is required for appropriate decision making on alternative land-use

options. Understanding these trade-offs may well favor CBNRM over other land uses. However, perverse agricultural subsidies may also skew trade-offs.

4.3.7 Enhanced resilience of NR based livelihood strategies in times of climate change

Little investigation has been done into the resilience of land-use options in the context of climate change. It is possible that a natural resource based / wildlife-based livelihood strategy may have far greater resilience than a crop or livestock-based strategy. CBNRM is therefore not only a strategy for countering desertification, but may equally be a strategy for adapting to the impacts of climatically driven desertification. The implications are not explored in the existing NAPs. Given the emerging climate change scenarios for the region, it is likely to become a critical issue in the near future.

4.3.8 Earmarking CBNRM revenues for desertification projects

The case studies demonstrated that CBNRM projects generate revenues, in some cases substantial amounts. Earmarking part of such revenues to the issue of local desertification, drought issues and general natural resource management issues, would further enhance its contribution to UNCCD implementation. This has not yet been done in any CBNRM initiative in the Region.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Regional CBNRM assessment indicated that successful CBNRM initiatives in the SADC region contribute to achieving the environmental, socio-economic, institutional and policy objectives of the UNCCD. CBNRM should therefore be considered as one amongst many strategies being undertaken by southern African countries in fulfilling their obligations under the UNCCD.

It is emerging that CBNRM has had a strong impact on liberalizing the policy and legislative environment to promote involvement of communities in the management of shared resources. There is, however, a long way to achieve enabling conditions that would allow not only full participation of communities in sustainable land management, but create at the same time sufficient incentives for individuals. CBNRM and UNCCD initiatives should increasingly join efforts to work towards developing conducive legislative and policy settings.

The CBNRM case studies further indicate that local institutions that have been created to carry out CBNRM activities could fill a critical gap in the institutional landscape for decentralized implementation of UNCCD strategies. At this stage their potential remains largely untapped in the NAP process. However, long-term support will be required to allow these institutions to grow into effective and accountable entities that are actively involved in preventing desertification.

The case studies also indicate that CBNRM is not a panacea for poverty alleviation in rural areas of southern African countries. It does, however, have the potential for contributing to a more sustainable flow of benefits than inappropriate agricultural practices that may lead to long-term resource depletion and degradation. Broadening CBNRM to cover a wider set of resources including livestock management and even agriculture into a holistic livelihoods process is seen as a way of increasing the benefits from CBNRM project implementation.

From the case studies it became clear that there is poor contact between the CBNRM community and UNCCD initiatives. As a result lessons learnt from CBNRM in the local implementation of natural resources management are neither incorporated in the national reporting nor applied in the development of NAPs or the SADC SRAP which have remained national/sub-regional planning tools. Creating synergies between CBNRM and the UNCCD could therefore be a critical step in moving national and sub-regional desertification strategies from policy to action.

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